Planned Giving Reprintables

*WELS Ministry of Christian Giving has edited and approved the following resources for your church to customize (when necessary) and use as needed. They are intended to encourage members about good stewardship practices and to inform them about ways to make planned gifts to benefit your church and other WELS ministry. Consider using them at your website, in bulletins or newsletters, etc. To use, modify as you’d like. Then highlight the text and copy and paste it (Ctrl-C, Ctrl-V) where you want it to go.*

*The first article is from Stewardship Advisors. To learn more, visit* [*www.stewardshipadvisors.org*](http://www.stewardshipadvisors.org) *or call Ron Chewning at 888-783-2790. WELS Ministry of Christian Giving obtained permission to share this.*

Our Attitude toward Money

Money is what we make it. Money can own us or be owned by us. Money can be our servant or our master. It depends entirely on our attitude. This is why the Bible says that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter God’s kingdom (Matthew 19:24). It is not the rich man’s money but the rich man’s attitude toward money that turns him away from God and other people toward himself and his money. Likewise, it is not the poor man’s poverty, but the poor man’s attitude toward money that turns him away from God and other people and makes him covetous, grasping, and every bit as selfish in his poverty as the wealthy man.

Much of Jesus’ teaching focused on money, so we need to develop the right attitude toward it and be concerned about its use and misuse. Whether God gives us little or much money, we need to be faithful stewards of it and learn an attitude of contentment. This contentment comes from faith in Jesus that he has won heaven for us and provides for our daily needs. According to the apostle Paul, we are very rich if we are satisfied with what we have. In 1 Timothy 6:6-10 he wrote, “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

Unfortunately, so many people have become so eager to have money and the things that money can buy that they have lost much of life’s real value and purpose. Poverty is a problem, not only with those who have no money, but also with those who have much. There are many who don’t lack money but lack satisfaction because no amount of money satisfies.

As we examine our attitudes toward money, we need to remember that money can do many things, but it can’t buy happiness or heaven. That is only found through Jesus.

Your Will, Your Won’t

There is a reason why the main estate planning document that is used to disburse one’s assets at death is called a “will.” This single word encases the wishes of the deceased. It expresses the intention, the goal, or the purpose of the one making the declaration. The document contains legal words of one’s personal will. “I will that Mary receives my pearl necklace.”

In this document, a person establishes the future owners of his or her assets. No one can change a person’s will once death occurs. The will of the deceased continues until every part of it has been completed, every deed done.

In his or her will, the person directs the distribution of earthly belongings that aren’t apportioned through other means (e.g., beneficiary designations). When the reading of the will occurs during probate, it is legally as though the person is right there handing out each and every personal asset to a family member, a charity, or other entity.

When a person dies without a will, they go to the grave powerless to control the distributions of their worldly possessions. They abdicate their “will power.”

A word we might apply to the absence of a will might be “won’t.” This invisible “document” declares that the descendant died intestate, or without a will. This non-will lets family members and others know that all the worldly possessions of the deceased will be distributed by the will of the state . . . and this will may vary vastly from what the decedent might have wished.

Do you have a valid, up-to-date will in place? Or have you settled for a “won’t”? For the sake of your family and others who could be helped through your will through the charitable causes you support, we urge you to turn your “won’t” into a will, and to coordinate it with your other legal documents.

For assistance with your will and Christian estate planning, call [Counselor Name], the WELS Christian giving counselor serving our congregation. This a free service of our church body in order to help WELS members praise God through their estate plans.