

CHRISTIAN MONEY \$ENSE

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What a Strange Will!

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Have you ever read the will of a deceased person? Not exactly exciting reading (no offense to those who are lawyers). A will usually states that the individual is of sound mind, understands that he or she is making a last will or testament, and then proceeds to dispose of the property in the estate.

A will is not just a mechanism to give property to people. It is a means of passing on your legacy to others. A will sometimes contains loving remarks to family members. Often, a deceased person leaves most if not all of his or her property to family. Imagine reading a will in which the deceased person gave his family some back handed compliments and did not leave the money to family. Would you think that strange? An example of it is recorded in the Bible. King David did this in 1 Chronicles 29.

Let's quickly examine the background in 1 Chronicles 28. King David is about to die, and the plans for the temple have been made. Although he had gathered much of the material for the temple, David would not be allowed to build it (1 Ch. 28:2-3). Interestingly, David still praised God (1 Ch. 28:4-5). What a lesson for us when God says "no" to our desire.

Most of the leaders of the nation are assembled at the coronation of Solomon as the new king (1 Ch. 28:1). By God's decree, Solomon will be the one to build the temple (1 Ch. 28:6). David has an opportunity to exalt his son before the people and leave his vast wealth to Solomon. Both of these opportunities could extend the influence of David's kingdom.

To our amazement, he does neither. David tells the leaders of the nation, "My son, Solomon, the one whom God has chosen, is young and inexperienced.

The task is great, because this palatial structure is not for man but for the LORD God" (1 Ch. 29:1, NIV). I'm sure this was an awkward moment for Solomon! David also left most of his vast riches to the Lord's work to build the temple (1 Ch. 29:3). It would have been customary for David to leave his riches to Solomon to perpetuate his own name. What was more important to King David than perpetuating his own name?

"O LORD our God, as for all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name, it comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you" (1 Ch. 29:16, NIV). David believed that God's legacy matters most. Thousands of kings have tried to extend their legacy by leaving wealth to their family. How many of them do we really remember? David valued God's legacy, and God let David's legacy endure.

Did you know that 95% of Christians do not leave money to the Lord's work through a will? What does that communicate to family? What does that communicate to God? God's legacy matters most. You can take care of your family needs and honor the Lord's work through your will or an inexpensive amendment (called a codicil). Both of these can be done through your attorney. Remember your church, a mission agency, or a ministry school like BBC&S in your will. Remember, God's legacy matters most.

BBC Foundation has been ministering to churches and individuals regarding biblical stewardship since 1992. Send your questions on finances and stewardship to: BBC Foundation, 538 Venard Rd., Clarks Summit, PA 18411. Phone: (800) 451-8668, website: bbcfoundation.org; e-mail: info@bbcfoundation.org