

OUR GOD-GIVEN RESIDUALS

WHAT DOES GOD EXPECT OF US?

God has blessed all Christians with leftovers. What we cannot take with us when we pass through the gates of Heaven must be left behind for the use of others. On the day of our death, everything we “own” will belong to someone else. What arrangements have we made for these leftovers? How will they be distributed? Who will get them? Will they be used wisely, prudently and for the most God-pleasing causes and benefits? Because God has supplied us with all we use and enjoy on this earth, might we say, “Thank You Lord,” at the end of our lives by returning to Him a portion, or even all, of our leftovers through our estate plan and will?

The general affluence of our culture allows the Christians to have significant “leftovers” – or residuals – at the end of life to pass on to others. Ecclesiastes 2:19 poses a question for us to ponder: How will I know whether the one who rules over the results of all my labor will be wise or foolish?

God has more than abundantly supplied our needs in this life. Most Christians do a fairly good job of being good stewards during our time on this earth, but what about our residuals? One day soon God will call each of us to enjoy the indescribable extravagance and riches of His Heaven. There He will grant us our very own magnificent mansion. Our current earthly blessings will pale in comparison with the eternal luxury of our heavenly home.

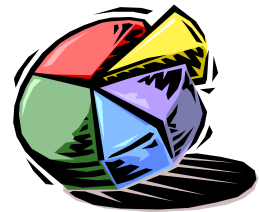
SO WHAT DOES GOD EXPECT OF US?

As stewards or managers consider the assets and passions God allows us to care for and use in this life, what does He expect us to do with those assets when they are “left over” at the end of this life?

WHO WILL RECEIVE OUR RESIDUALS?

There are really only three heirs who will receive our residuals—our children (or other family members or friends), the government and our Lord.

1. **Children:** Most of us choose to leave a portion of our residuals to our children. St. Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 5:8 – “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” But how much is enough? Do we pass it all on to our children? Or, as is the case with so many families, do the children already have more than mom and dad? Do our children really need our entire estate? Just how much is too much? What is the best way to pass it on to them? Is a large gift to children a bane or blessing?
2. **Government:** The state and federal government along with the probate court are ready to collect a share of the residuals in the form of various taxes and fees. Money and assets contributed to these entities is strictly voluntary, we only do it because we want to; good planning eliminates this possibility.
3. **Our Lord:** The third heir (actually we should list Him as the first) would be our Lord and His Kingdom work. Not only did Jesus say, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s.” He also said, “and to God what is God’s.” Because “the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it,” doesn’t it seem appropriate for us to return cheerfully to Him a portion, or even all, of our residuals when we enter heaven? Giving to our Lord is a beautiful act of worship. What we do with the money and possessions that are on loan to us during this life at the time of our death is a powerful barometer and witness of where our hearts are. Jesus reminds us “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21).



An illustration, when considering how much to leave for the Lord through wills, many parents “adopt” the Lord and divide the inheritance into equal shares among their children and the Lord. If they have two children and “adopt” the Lord, they would divide the inheritance into equal thirds.

If you desire to explore options to maximize gifts of your leftovers to family and to the Lord’s work you can call Brian Hyde, our Gift Planning Representative for the California-Nevada-Hawaii District, at (925) 245-4016.