

Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, June 18, 2016

So, whose inheritance is it anyway? That's a question we all need to ask as we look at ownership issues and consider what we will leave behind. After all, we certainly can't take it with us. As a life insurance professional specializing in estate and business planning for more than thirty years, I've dealt with many clients who struggled with exit strategies so their legacy might continue to future generations. As interesting as these cases might be, I believe the greater challenge is getting a proper handle on the whole inheritance issue. So, let's return to the question "Whose inheritance is it truly?"

Psalm 33:12 (NIV) reads, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He chose for His inheritance." Have you ever considered yourself as God's inheritance? I distinctly recall being asked, "Are you planning on leaving a legacy?" as a 40-year old believer in Christ. I was passionate about writing Christian poetry in those days and even self-published a book entitled *SO WE MIGHT GROW* in 1986. As a single man I had never given any thought to leaving a legacy. Thirty years later with a much better grasp on life, I can answer that question with a resounding "Yes!"

In Proverbs 13:22 (NIV), Solomon instructs us that "A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous." Writing for Him is a legacy, an inheritance, and it brings me closer to Him each day as He inspires me with what to write for His glory. At this time I can't say there's any real financial gain from my writing, but I'm passionate about it just the same. So have you considered your legacy, your inheritance for the Lord?

Whether you own a business or other tangible or intangible property, we all need to be cautious not to lose sight of who really owns all our stuff! We're only here on this earth for a very short time and we would be wise to not get caught up in all those earthly possessions. Let me give you a personal example. Intellectual property has limitations to the exclusive rights of the innovator/author. Even if properly copyrighted, such property remains under the owner's heirs for only fifty years after his/her death. The question that obviously follows is "How do we address the future use of such assets after death?" Our heirs will carry a great responsibility to properly use and not abuse those assets.

In Luke 12:13-21, Jesus responds to a question about dividing an inheritance. He shares the parable of a rich man whose property produced such a great harvest that his barns were not adequate to store all the crops. The man concluded that he needed to tear down his barns and build larger ones to store all the grain. The rich man then said to himself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink and be merry." Then God answered him, "You fool! This very day your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you prepared for yourself?" Jesus concludes, "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

So, please consider Jesus' words and *be rich toward God* in all your dealings, your relationships and all your possessions, since He's the One who has graciously bestowed it all on us anyway. We need to be faithful stewards of all He provides and realize He wants us to share the bounty. Consider giving Him the glory and become part of his wonderful inheritance this day forward!

Passages to Ponder: Exodus 32:13; Psalms 37:11; Joel 2:17; Matthew 6:33; Luke 12:13-21; Ephesians 1:7-11

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Exodus 32:13 New International Version (NIV)

¹³ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.'"

Psalms 37:11 New International Version (NIV)

¹¹ But the meek will inherit the land
and enjoy peace and prosperity.

Joel 2:17 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁷ Let the priests, who minister before the LORD,
weep between the portico and the altar.
Let them say, "Spare your people, LORD.
Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn,
a byword among the nations.
Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'"

Matthew 6:33 New International Version (NIV)

³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Luke 12:13-21 New International Version (NIV)

¹³ Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."
¹⁴ Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" ¹⁵ Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."
¹⁶ And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. ¹⁷ He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'
¹⁸ "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. ¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."
²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'
²¹ "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

Ephesians 1:7-11 New International Version (NIV)

⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, ⁹ he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.
¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,