

WHOSE SHALL THEY BE?

God pronounced judgment on the foolish farmer who had stockpiled his harvests with only one aim—selfish indulgence. In one breath God told him he would die that night and asked him, "The things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?" (Luke 12:20). The great lesson here is the folly and sin of covetousness (v. 15). The farmer had laid up these things for himself, but he would have no further use for them where he was going. Therefore, "whose shall they be"?

This is a good question for all of us to ask and candidly answer concerning whatever estate we may have. We must all die (Heb. 9:27). We should all soberly contemplate what will happen to whatever we have accumulated in life when we are no longer living in this world. When we think of wise stewardship, do we think only of our earthly lifetimes? Do we not also have a **continuing** stewardship concerning what we may accumulate, that it may be used wisely and to the glory of God after we die? Verily, "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2), applies in death, as in life.

Sometimes godly men and women who generously supported the proclamation of the Truth in life failed to take proper steps to continue this support in death. In many cases they have left estates to offspring who cared nothing for the Lord, the church, or the Truth, which estates have been "wasted in riotous living" (cf. Luke 15:11–13). In other cases, I have known faithful couples with no children who have died, leaving considerable estates to nieces and nephews who were steeped in religious error. In all such cases, those who so strongly supported the Truth with their wealth in life then, in death, allow their remaining resources to tear down what they had built up in life. Not only is their remaining wealth lost to the cause of Christ by such negligence, but it

becomes a support for sin and error, making the advancement of Truth more difficult. Some of these good people had or have every intention of making provisions for the Lord's work in their wills, but neglected it too long.

Here are some things a good steward of wealth will do regarding death: (1) He will make a will if he has not done so (even **young** people/couples should do this). Without a will you have no control over what happens to your estate. (2) If you made a will several years ago, you should re-read and re-evaluate it in light of any changed circumstances. (3) You should ask yourself if those to whom you have willed or have thought about including as beneficiaries of your estate have your spiritual convictions and if they will continue to support the Truth as you now do? If not, wise stewardship requires that you alter your will to implement this continued support after you die. Every faithful child of God should think seriously on these things.

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