THE DAILY BREAD

The Mission of the Apostles



Writing Your Spiritual Will

A FORMATION BOOK BY

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The Everyday Apostle

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Writing Your Spiritual Will

Leaving the Inheritance That Lasts

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INTRODUCTION

The Will You Have Not Written

Most men who are responsible about their affairs have made a will, a legal document directing where their money and property should go when they die. It is a good and necessary thing. But there is another kind of will that far fewer men have ever made, one that distributes not money and property but something infinitely more valuable: the faith, the wisdom, the love, and the blessing a man wishes to leave to those he loves. This is the spiritual will, the deliberate passing on of a man's deepest inheritance to those who come after him, and the failure to write it leaves undistributed the most precious things a man has to give.

This book is a practical guide to writing your spiritual will, to the deliberate work of passing on your faith, your wisdom, your love, and your blessing to your family and those you love, so that the inheritance that truly matters is not lost when you die. It assumes an understanding of what legacy is and why it matters, and it addresses the concrete, practical task of actually capturing and passing on the spiritual inheritance you wish to leave, whether through a written document, recorded words, deliberate conversations, or the intentional transmission of what you most want to endure. The aim is to move a man from vaguely wishing to leave a good legacy to actually doing the work of passing on his deepest inheritance, so that when he dies, the most valuable things he has are not buried with him but handed on to those he loves.

A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children. — Proverbs 13:22

We will begin with what a spiritual will is and why every man should write one. We will take up the passing on of faith, the most important part of the inheritance. We will consider the sharing of wisdom, the lessons a man has learned. We will address the expression of love and blessing, which many men leave unsaid. We will take up the practical forms a spiritual will can take. We will consider making it a living legacy, passed on while one lives. And we will see that the writing of a spiritual will is finally an act of love that reaches beyond a man's death into the lives of those he leaves behind.

CHAPTER ONE

The Inheritance That Matters Most

What a Spiritual Will Is

Before a man can write a spiritual will, he must understand what it is and why it matters, for the spiritual will is an unfamiliar idea to most men, who think of a will only in legal and financial terms. The spiritual will passes on not money but the deeper inheritance of faith, wisdom, love, and blessing, and it is in many ways more important than the legal will, for it distributes what truly lasts. Understanding what a spiritual will is and why every man should write one lays the foundation for the practical work of writing one.

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children. — Deuteronomy 6:6-7

More Than a Legal Will

A spiritual will is something more than and different from a legal will, for while the legal will distributes a man's money and property, the spiritual will passes on his faith, wisdom, love, and blessing, the deeper inheritance that money cannot capture. The legal will is necessary and good, directing the distribution of a man's material estate, but it deals only with the material, leaving untouched the deeper inheritance a man has to pass on, his faith, his hard-won wisdom, his love, his blessing, the things that matter far more than money. The spiritual will addresses precisely this deeper inheritance, deliberately passing on the spiritual and personal legacy that the legal will cannot capture, so that a man distributes not only his property but his soul's treasures. A man who makes only a legal will has provided for the distribution of his lesser inheritance while neglecting his greater, and the spiritual will completes what the legal will leaves undone, passing on the inheritance that truly matters. A spiritual will is more than a legal will, for while the legal will distributes money and property, the spiritual will passes on faith, wisdom, love, and blessing, the deeper inheritance money cannot capture, and the man who makes only a legal will has provided for his lesser inheritance while neglecting his greater, which the spiritual will exists to pass on.

Capturing What Would Otherwise Be Lost

The value of a spiritual will is that it captures and passes on what would otherwise be lost at a man's death, the faith, wisdom, and love that die with him unless they are deliberately transmitted. When a man dies, much of his deepest inheritance can die with him, the wisdom he accumulated, the faith he lived, the love he felt but perhaps never fully expressed, the blessing he wished to give, all lost unless he deliberately captured and passed them on. The spiritual will is the means of capturing this inheritance before it is lost, of deliberately setting down and transmitting the faith, wisdom, and love that would otherwise vanish at death, preserving for those who come after what would otherwise be buried with the man. This capturing of what would otherwise be lost is the great value of

the spiritual will, for it preserves and passes on the deepest inheritance rather than letting it die with the man. The man who writes a spiritual will captures and passes on what would otherwise be lost, while the man who does not lets his deepest inheritance die with him. Capturing what would otherwise be lost is the great value of a spiritual will, for the faith, wisdom, and love a man has accumulated can die with him unless deliberately transmitted, and the spiritual will captures and passes on this inheritance before it is lost, preserving for those who come after what would otherwise be buried with the man.

Every Man Has One to Write

Finally, every man has a spiritual will to write, for every man has faith, wisdom, love, and blessing to pass on, whatever his station or accomplishments, so that the spiritual will is not only for the notable but for every man who has lived and loved. A man might suppose that only the notable or accomplished have a spiritual inheritance worth passing on, but this is wrong, for every man who has lived a life has accumulated faith, wisdom, and love worth leaving to those who come after him, and every man therefore has a spiritual will to write. The ordinary father has faith to pass to his children, wisdom from his years, love to express, blessing to give, and these are a precious inheritance regardless of his worldly station, so that the writing of a spiritual will is the task of every man, not only the great. No man should think he has nothing worth passing on, for every man who has lived and loved has a spiritual inheritance, and every man therefore should write his spiritual will, capturing and passing on the faith, wisdom, and love that are his to leave. Every man has a spiritual will to write, for every man has faith, wisdom, love, and blessing to pass on whatever his station, and the ordinary man's inheritance of faith, wisdom, and love is precious regardless of his worldly accomplishments, so that the writing of a spiritual will is the task not only of the notable but of every man who has lived and loved.

CHAPTER TWO

Passing On the Faith

The Heart of Your Spiritual Will

At the center of a man's spiritual will stands the passing on of his faith, the most important part of the inheritance he leaves, for the faith is the greatest treasure a man has to give and the one that matters most for the eternal good of those who receive it. A man may pass on much, but if he passes on the faith he has given the greatest gift, and the heart of his spiritual will is the deliberate transmission of the faith to those he loves.

Understanding how to pass on the faith through a spiritual will, the heart of the whole endeavor, is the most important part of writing one.

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth., 3 John 4

Your Testimony of Faith

The first thing a man passes on in his spiritual will is his own testimony of faith, the account of what God has meant in his life, his own experience of faith, which is a precious gift to those who come after him. A man's own testimony of faith, the honest account of his journey with God, what the faith has meant to him, how God has been real in his life, is a precious part of the inheritance he passes on, for it shows those who come after him the reality of faith in an actual life they knew. This testimony is powerful precisely because it is personal, the witness of a man they loved to the reality of God in his own life, and it can speak to his descendants long after he is gone, a continuing witness to the faith he lived. The man who passes on his testimony of faith gives those who come after him a precious gift, the witness of his own life to the reality of God, which can draw and strengthen them long after his death. Your testimony of faith, the honest account of what God has meant in your life and how he has been real in it, is a precious part of the inheritance you pass on, powerful because it is personal, the witness of a man they loved to the reality of God in his own life, a continuing witness that can draw and strengthen those who come after you long after you are gone.

The Faith You Want Them to Keep

Beyond his personal testimony, a man passes on in his spiritual will the faith he wants those he loves to keep, the deliberate commending of the faith to them, the urging that they hold to it, the expression of his deepest desire for their faith. A man's spiritual will can express his deepest desire for those he loves, which for the believing man is that they keep the faith, walk with God, and come at last to heaven, and this deliberate commending of the faith, this urging that they hold to it, is a central part of the spiritual inheritance. The man can set down his desire that his children and descendants keep the faith, can commend it to them in his own words, can express the longing of his heart that they walk in the truth, and this deliberate expression can carry weight with those who receive it as the heartfelt desire of one they loved. The man who passes on the faith he wants them to keep gives those who come after him a powerful commending of the faith, the expression of his deepest desire for their eternal good. The faith you want them to keep, deliberately commended to those you love with the urging that they hold to it, is a central part of your spiritual will, the expression of your deepest desire that your children and descendants keep the faith and walk with God, and this heartfelt commending can

carry weight with those who receive it as the longing of one they loved for their eternal good.

Pointing Them to Christ

The deepest aim of passing on the faith is to point those who come after a man to Christ himself, to use the spiritual will not to exalt the man but to direct his descendants to the Lord he served, so that the inheritance leads them to God rather than merely to a memory of the man. The ultimate purpose of passing on the faith is not that a man be remembered but that those who come after him be led to Christ, and so the spiritual will should point beyond the man himself to the Lord he served, using his testimony and his commending of the faith to direct his descendants to God rather than merely to a memory of himself. This pointing to Christ keeps the spiritual will from becoming mere self-memorial and makes it what it should be, an instrument for leading those who come after to the faith and to God, a final act of the man's apostolate reaching beyond his death. The man who points those who come after him to Christ, using his spiritual will to direct them to the Lord rather than to himself, gives the deepest gift, the pointing of his descendants toward God. Pointing them to Christ, using the spiritual will to direct those who come after you to the Lord you served rather than to a mere memory of yourself, is the deepest aim of passing on the faith, keeping the spiritual will from self-memorial and making it an instrument for leading your descendants to God, a final act of your apostolate reaching beyond your death.

CHAPTER THREE

Sharing Your Wisdom

The Lessons You Have Learned

A second precious part of a man's spiritual will is the wisdom he has accumulated, the lessons he has learned through his life, which he can pass on to spare those who come after him from learning everything the hard way. A man's hard-won wisdom, the understanding of life, faith, and people that he has gained through his years, is a valuable inheritance, and the spiritual will is the means of passing it on. Understanding how to share one's wisdom through a spiritual will, the lessons one has learned, is an important part of the inheritance a man leaves.

Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance. — Proverbs 1:5

The Wisdom of Your Years

A man accumulates wisdom through his years, hard-won understanding of life, faith, people, work, and the things that matter, and this wisdom is a valuable inheritance he can pass on to those who come after him. Over a lifetime a man learns much, gaining through experience, success and failure, joy and suffering, a real wisdom about how to live, what matters, how to navigate life's challenges, how to walk with God, and this accumulated wisdom is valuable, worth passing on to those who come after him so that they may benefit from his years rather than learning everything from scratch. The wisdom of a man's years is a genuine inheritance, the distilled understanding of a life, and the spiritual will is the means of passing it on, capturing and transmitting the lessons a man has learned so that they are not lost. The man who passes on the wisdom of his years gives those who come after him a valuable inheritance, the benefit of his hard-won understanding. The wisdom of your years, the hard-won understanding of life, faith, and people that you have gained through experience, is a valuable inheritance you can pass on to those who come after you, sparing them from learning everything from scratch, and the spiritual will is the means of capturing and transmitting this accumulated wisdom so that the lessons of your life are not lost but handed on.

The Lessons Worth Passing On

In sharing his wisdom, a man does well to focus on the lessons most worth passing on, the deepest and most important things he has learned, rather than trying to transmit everything, so that his most valuable wisdom is not lost among trivia. A man has learned many things, but some lessons are far more valuable than others, the deep truths about faith, love, character, and what matters that stand out from the mass of lesser learning, and in sharing his wisdom through a spiritual will a man does well to focus on these, the lessons most worth passing on, rather than diluting them with trivia. This focus on the deepest lessons ensures that a man's most valuable wisdom is clearly passed on rather than lost among lesser matters, and it requires a man to reflect on what he has most deeply learned, what he most wants those who come after him to know. The man who focuses on the lessons most worth passing on gives those who come after him his deepest wisdom clearly, rather than burying it among trivia. The lessons worth passing on, the deepest and most important things you have learned rather than everything, should be the focus of your shared wisdom, so that your most valuable understanding is clearly transmitted rather than lost among trivia, which requires reflecting on what you have most deeply learned and most want those who come after you to know.

Wisdom for Their Path, Not Just Yours

Finally, a man shares his wisdom best when he directs it toward the path of those who come after him rather than merely recounting his own, offering guidance for their lives and challenges rather than simply narrating his own experience. Wisdom is most useful to those who receive it when it is directed toward their path, their lives and challenges, rather than being merely a recounting of the man's own experience, and the man sharing his wisdom does well to orient it toward those who will receive it, offering not just his own story but guidance for their journey. This directing of wisdom toward their path makes it useful to those who come after him, applicable to their lives rather than merely a record of his own, so that his wisdom genuinely helps them navigate their own challenges. The man who shares wisdom for their path, orienting his lessons toward the lives and challenges of those who come after him, gives them wisdom they can actually use, rather than merely a record of his own experience. Wisdom for their path, not just yours, directed toward the lives and challenges of those who come after you rather than merely recounting your own experience, makes your shared wisdom genuinely useful, applicable to their journey rather than only a record of yours, so that the man who orients his lessons toward the path of those who will receive them gives wisdom they can actually use.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Words Left Unsaid

Expressing Love and Blessing

One of the most precious and most neglected parts of a spiritual will is the expression of love and blessing, the saying of the things men so often leave unsaid, the love felt but never spoken, the blessing wished but never given. Many men love deeply but express it poorly, and die leaving much love and blessing unspoken, a loss both to themselves and to those who never heard the words they longed to hear. Understanding how to express love and blessing through a spiritual will, saying the words so often left unsaid, captures one of the most precious parts of a man's inheritance.

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you. — Numbers 6:24-25

Say What Is Often Left Unsaid

The first thing is to say what is so often left unsaid, the love men feel but do not express, so that the spiritual will captures the words of love that might otherwise die unspoken. Many men, especially of certain generations and temperaments, feel deep love for their

families but struggle to express it, and so much love goes unspoken, felt but never said, leaving family members uncertain of a love that was real but hidden, and dying with the man are the words of love he never managed to speak. The spiritual will is an opportunity to say these things, to express the love so often left unsaid, to tell family members plainly of the love felt for them, so that the words of love are captured and passed on rather than dying unspoken. The man who says what is often left unsaid, expressing his love plainly in his spiritual will, gives his family a precious gift, the words of love they may have longed to hear and might otherwise never have received. Say what is often left unsaid, the love you feel but may struggle to express, so that your spiritual will captures the words of love that might otherwise die unspoken, for many men feel deep love but express it poorly, leaving family uncertain of a real but hidden love, and the spiritual will is an opportunity to say these things plainly and give the words of love that family may have longed to hear.

Give Your Blessing

Beyond expressing love, a man can give his blessing through his spiritual will, the deliberate bestowing of his approval, affirmation, and good wishes on those he loves, which carries deep meaning and which many long to receive. The blessing of a father carries a deep and ancient power, the affirmation, approval, and good wishes a man bestows on his children, and many children long their whole lives for a father's blessing, which some never receive. The spiritual will is an opportunity to give this blessing, to bestow deliberately on one's children and loved ones the affirmation, approval, and good wishes that constitute a blessing, so that they receive the blessing they may have longed for, carried in the man's own words. This giving of blessing is a precious gift, meeting a deep need in those who receive it, and the man who gives his blessing through his spiritual will bestows something his loved ones may treasure all their lives. Give your blessing, deliberately bestowing your approval, affirmation, and good wishes on those you love through your spiritual will, and a man gives a precious gift that carries deep meaning and that many long to receive, for the blessing of a father carries an ancient power, and the spiritual will is an opportunity to bestow the blessing that children long for and some never receive, carried in the man's own words.

Reconcile and Heal

Finally, a spiritual will can be an instrument of reconciliation and healing, a place to seek and offer forgiveness, to heal broken relationships, to resolve what a man does not want to leave unresolved at his death. A man may have broken or strained relationships, unresolved hurts, things he regrets or wishes to make right, and the spiritual will can be a means of addressing these, of seeking forgiveness for his own failures, offering

forgiveness for wrongs done to him, expressing the desire for reconciliation and healing that he does not want to leave undone. This use of the spiritual will to reconcile and heal can bring resolution to broken relationships, lifting burdens from both the man and those he addresses, and leaving behind healing rather than unresolved hurt. The man who uses his spiritual will to reconcile and heal, seeking and offering forgiveness and expressing the desire for reconciliation, leaves a gift of healing rather than a legacy of unresolved wounds. Reconcile and heal, using your spiritual will to seek and offer forgiveness and to heal broken relationships, and a man leaves behind healing rather than unresolved hurt, for the spiritual will can be an instrument of reconciliation, a place to resolve what a man does not want to leave unresolved at his death, lifting burdens from both the man and those he addresses and leaving a gift of healing.

CHAPTER FIVE

Putting It Into Form

The Practical Shapes of a Spiritual Will

A spiritual will must take some concrete form to be passed on, and a man has several practical options, from a written document to recorded words to a collection of letters, and understanding these forms helps a man choose how to capture and transmit his spiritual inheritance. The spiritual will is not a vague intention but a concrete thing that must be set down in some form, and the practical choice of form matters for how effectively the inheritance is captured and received. Understanding the practical shapes a spiritual will can take equips a man to actually put his spiritual inheritance into a form that can be passed on.

Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. — Habakkuk 2:2

The Written Document

The most traditional form of a spiritual will is a written document, a letter or set of letters in which a man sets down his faith, wisdom, love, and blessing in his own words to be read by those who come after him. A written spiritual will, a document or letter in which a man captures his testimony of faith, his wisdom, his love and blessing, and his hopes for those who come after him, is the classic form, allowing a man to set down carefully and permanently what he most wants to pass on, to be read and reread by his descendants. This written form has the advantages of permanence and care, allowing a man to reflect and craft his words, and producing a document that can be preserved and passed down through generations. The written document is accessible to any man who

can write, requiring no special equipment, only the willingness to set down his inheritance in words, and it remains the most common and reliable form of a spiritual will. The written document, a letter or set of letters in which a man sets down his faith, wisdom, love, and blessing in his own words, is the most traditional and reliable form of a spiritual will, offering permanence and care, allowing a man to craft what he most wants to pass on, and producing a document that can be preserved and reread by descendants through generations.

Recorded Words

A modern alternative or complement to the written document is recorded words, audio or video recordings in which a man speaks his spiritual inheritance, which captures his voice, presence, and manner in a way writing cannot. Modern technology allows a man to record his spiritual will in audio or video, speaking his testimony, wisdom, love, and blessing in his own voice, and this recorded form has a particular power, capturing not only the words but the man's voice, face, presence, and manner, so that those who come after him can see and hear him, not merely read his words. Recorded words can be deeply moving to those who receive them, preserving the living presence of the man in a way that text cannot, and they can complement a written will or stand on their own. The man who records his spiritual will gives those who come after him the gift of his living presence, his voice and manner preserved along with his words, which can mean much to those who outlive him. Recorded words, audio or video recordings in which a man speaks his spiritual inheritance, are a modern form of spiritual will that captures his voice, presence, and manner in a way writing cannot, deeply moving to those who receive them, preserving the living presence of the man along with his words, and able either to complement a written will or to stand on their own.

Letters for Particular Moments

A particularly powerful form of spiritual will is a collection of letters written for particular future moments, letters to be opened at specific times or occasions in the lives of those a man loves, speaking to them at key moments he will not live to see. A man can write letters addressed to particular people for particular future moments, a letter to a child to be opened on their wedding day, on the birth of their own child, in a time of difficulty, at a certain age, so that the man speaks to his loved ones at key moments in their future lives, present to them through his words even after his death. This form has a particular power, for it lets a man be present at the important moments of his loved ones' lives that he will not live to see, offering his words, wisdom, love, and blessing exactly when they are most meaningful. The man who writes letters for particular moments gives those he loves the gift of his presence at the key moments of their future, speaking to them from

beyond his death exactly when his words will mean the most. Letters for particular moments, written to be opened at specific future times or occasions in the lives of those you love, are a particularly powerful form of spiritual will, letting a man speak to his loved ones at key moments he will not live to see, a wedding, a birth, a time of difficulty, so that he is present to them through his words even after his death, offering his love and blessing exactly when they are most meaningful.

CHAPTER SIX

A Living Legacy

Passing It On While You Live

A spiritual will need not wait until a man's death to be passed on, and in many ways it is better passed on while a man lives, as a living legacy transmitted through ongoing relationship rather than only through a document read after death. The deepest transmission of a man's spiritual inheritance happens not through a document discovered after his death but through the living relationship in which he passes on his faith, wisdom, love, and blessing while he lives. Understanding how to make the spiritual will a living legacy, passed on while one lives, deepens and strengthens the whole endeavor.

One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. — Psalm 145:4

Better Given in Person

Much of a man's spiritual inheritance is better given in person, while he lives, through direct relationship and conversation, than left to be discovered after his death, for the living transmission is richer than the posthumous document. While a written or recorded spiritual will is valuable, much of what it contains is better passed on in person, while a man lives, through the direct relationship, conversation, and example by which a man transmits his faith, wisdom, love, and blessing to those he loves. The living transmission, the father actually telling his child of his love, actually sharing his wisdom, actually giving his blessing face to face, is richer and more powerful than the same things discovered in a document after his death, for it happens in living relationship and can be received, questioned, and treasured while the man is present. The man who gives his spiritual inheritance in person, while he lives, passes it on more richly than the one who leaves it only to be found after death. Better given in person, while a man lives, through direct relationship and conversation, much of a man's spiritual inheritance is more richly

transmitted than when left to be discovered after death, for the living transmission of faith, wisdom, love, and blessing, given face to face, is richer and more powerful than the same things found in a document after the man is gone.

Start Passing It On Now

The practical implication is that a man should start passing on his spiritual inheritance now, while he lives, not waiting until death or old age but beginning the living transmission in the present, through ongoing relationship and deliberate sharing. A man need not wait to pass on his spiritual inheritance, and indeed should not, for the living transmission is best begun now, in the present, through the ongoing relationships and deliberate sharing by which a man passes on his faith, wisdom, love, and blessing over the years of his life. Starting now means living in a way that transmits the inheritance continually, telling his children of his love regularly, sharing his wisdom as occasions arise, giving his blessing, living his faith visibly, so that the spiritual inheritance is passed on through a whole life of relationship rather than compressed into a final document. The man who starts passing on his spiritual inheritance now gives it more fully and richly than the one who waits, transmitting it through the living relationship of many years. Start passing it on now, while you live, not waiting until death or old age but beginning the living transmission in the present through ongoing relationship and deliberate sharing, and a man passes on his spiritual inheritance more fully than the one who waits, transmitting his faith, wisdom, love, and blessing through a whole life of relationship rather than compressing it into a final document.

The Written Will as a Supplement

In this light, the written or recorded spiritual will serves best as a supplement to the living transmission, capturing and preserving what has been passed on in person, and providing a permanent record to complement the living legacy. The written spiritual will is not opposed to the living transmission but complements it, serving to capture and preserve in permanent form what a man has been passing on through his life, to provide a record that remains after his death, to say some things perhaps better said in writing, and to be present to his loved ones at moments after he is gone. In this understanding, the document supplements rather than replaces the living legacy, capturing and preserving the inheritance that a man passes on primarily through his life and relationships, and providing a permanent complement to the living transmission. The man who both passes on his inheritance in person and captures it in a written or recorded will gives the fullest gift, combining the richness of living transmission with the permanence of a preserved record. The written will as a supplement to the living transmission captures and preserves in permanent form what a man passes on primarily

through his life and relationships, providing a record that remains after his death and complements the living legacy, so that the man who both passes on his inheritance in person and captures it in a document gives the fullest gift, combining the richness of living transmission with the permanence of a preserved record.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Love That Outlives You

The Spiritual Will as a Final Act of Love

The writing of a spiritual will is finally an act of love, a reaching of a man's love beyond his own death into the lives of those he leaves behind, and seeing it as such reveals its deepest meaning and provides the final motive for doing it. The spiritual will is not a morbid preoccupation with death but a loving provision for those who will outlive a man, a way for his love, faith, and blessing to continue reaching them after he is gone. Understanding the spiritual will as a final act of love, a love that outlives a man, completes the practical guide and reveals the heart of the whole endeavor.

Love never ends. — 1 Corinthians 13:8

Love Reaching Beyond Death

The deepest meaning of a spiritual will is that it allows a man's love to reach beyond his death, to continue blessing and guiding those he loves even after he is gone, so that his love does not end at his death but outlives him. A man's love for those he leaves behind does not have to end at his death, for through a spiritual will that love can continue reaching them, blessing them, guiding them, speaking to them after he is gone, so that his love outlives him and continues to touch their lives. This is the deepest meaning of the spiritual will, that it is a vehicle for a man's love to reach beyond his death, a way for the love that would otherwise be cut off by death to continue flowing to those he leaves behind, present to them through his words and his transmitted inheritance even when he is gone. The man who writes a spiritual will enables his love to reach beyond his death, continuing to bless and guide those he loves after he is gone, so that his love, like the love Scripture says never ends, outlives him. Love reaching beyond death is the deepest meaning of a spiritual will, which allows a man's love to continue blessing and guiding those he loves even after he is gone, so that his love does not end at his death but outlives him, continuing to reach and touch the lives of those he leaves behind through his words and his transmitted inheritance.

A Gift to Those Who Grieve

A spiritual will is also a precious gift to those who grieve a man's death, offering them comfort, presence, and his continuing love at the very time they most feel his loss. When a man dies, those who loved him grieve, feeling his absence and loss keenly, and a spiritual will can be a precious gift to them in their grief, offering them his words, his love, his blessing, his continuing presence at the very time they most feel his absence. The grieving family who can read a man's loving words, hear his recorded voice, receive his blessing and his faith, find in the spiritual will a comfort and a continuing presence that eases their grief and assures them of a love that did not end with his death. This gift to those who grieve is a precious fruit of the spiritual will, meeting the bereaved in their loss with the man's continuing love and presence, and it is a powerful motive for writing one, out of love for those who will mourn. A gift to those who grieve, offering comfort, presence, and continuing love at the very time they most feel a man's loss, is a precious fruit of the spiritual will, for the grieving family who can read a man's loving words and receive his blessing find a comfort and continuing presence that eases their grief, and this gift to the bereaved is a powerful motive for writing a spiritual will out of love for those who will mourn.

Do Not Leave It Unwritten

Finally, the great danger is to leave the spiritual will unwritten, to intend it but never do it, and so to let the deepest inheritance die unspoken, and the final exhortation is simply to do it, to write it, not to leave undone this final act of love. Many men intend to pass on their deepest inheritance, to say the words of love, to give the blessing, to capture the faith and wisdom, but never actually do it, putting it off until it is too late, and so dying with the spiritual will unwritten and the deepest inheritance unspoken, a loss both to themselves and to those they loved. The great danger is this leaving undone, this intending but never doing, and the final word of this book is simply to do it, to write the spiritual will, to pass on the inheritance, not to leave this final act of love undone until death makes it impossible. The man who does it, who actually writes his spiritual will and passes on his inheritance, completes his love, while the man who leaves it unwritten lets his deepest gift die with him. Do not leave it unwritten, intending the spiritual will but never doing it and so letting the deepest inheritance die unspoken, for the great danger is this leaving undone, and the final word is simply to do it, to write the spiritual will and pass on the inheritance rather than leaving this final act of love undone until death makes it impossible, so that your love and faith and blessing reach those you leave behind rather than dying with you.

CONCLUSION

Write It

Most men make a legal will but never a spiritual one, and this book has been about writing the will that passes on what truly matters, the faith, wisdom, love, and blessing that are a man's deepest inheritance. We have seen what a spiritual will is and why every man should write one; how to pass on the faith, the heart of the inheritance; how to share the wisdom of one's years; how to express the love and blessing so often left unsaid; the practical forms a spiritual will can take; how to make it a living legacy passed on while one lives; and how it is finally an act of love reaching beyond death.

The writing of a spiritual will is within the reach of every man, for every man has faith, wisdom, love, and blessing to pass on, and the forms it can take are simple and accessible. What it requires is not special ability but the willingness to do it, to overcome the inertia and discomfort that leave so many spiritual wills unwritten, and actually to capture and pass on the inheritance that matters most.

So write it. Set down your testimony of faith and commend the faith to those you love; share the wisdom of your years and the lessons most worth passing on; say the words of love so often left unsaid, give your blessing, and seek the reconciliation you do not want to leave undone; choose a form, whether written document, recorded words, or letters for particular moments; begin passing it on now, while you live, through living relationship, and capture it in a lasting form; and know that in doing so you perform a final act of love that will outlive you, reaching beyond your death to bless and guide those you leave behind. Do not leave this will unwritten. Write it, and let your deepest inheritance, your faith, your wisdom, your love, and your blessing, be passed on to those you love rather than buried with you. Write it, and let your love outlive you.

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