

Leading with a Legacy

By Greta Luimes, CFP

He slowed down as he saw the light turn red. Taking a deep breath, he realized how tired he had become after a full morning of work at The Mission. Sorting clothing seemed somewhat easy compared to the decisions they had needed to make at the board meeting last evening, but still, it meant lifting and squatting again and again. There were days when he felt he was getting too old to be doing this.

Startled at the honk of a horn behind him, he pressed the accelerator and moved his car forward. He allowed his thoughts to go back to the room where the board had met to decide on the future of this place that had come to be so much a part of his life since Ella had passed away. The vote had determined that the building down the street could not be bought - too little money in the bank and the flow of donations had not been strong over the summertime. But it was the perfect place to set up the work of The Mission, so much better than the dilapidated building they were in now, and so much more accessible to the people who needed them to be close by. He recognized the hollow feeling in his heart again, the same one he had felt last evening when he left the group.

If only there were people on the board who would use their business expertise and success to assist this ministry. Certainly they would be able to raise more money, lobby for more support from the government and raise the profile of The Mission in the city. If only his son, the bright young executive who had done so well for himself, had stayed in town. Or his daughter, the high tech wizard now living in California, would do a good job of getting people to open up their wallets.

He turned the corner to his home and eased his car into the driveway. Glancing at the house before him and the gardens Ella had so carefully planted, he wondered what would happen to it all when he was gone. The children had done well for themselves and he knew they didn't have any need for the house. One day the money in his RRSP's and savings accounts would just be added to their already healthy investment accounts. In fact, they were already making comments about the hefty taxes they would need to pay.

But wait a minute - hadn't he heard something about some tax advantages to leaving his money to charity? If the kids didn't need the money, why wouldn't he just give it to people who did? How much is enough for his kids anyway? What about The Mission? Wouldn't they be able to buy the building now if someone had left money to them in their Will? Think of what could be possible if he left a large portion of his simple estate to them.

He allowed his thoughts to reach far into the future, imaging the brightly lit sign, "The Mission" displayed on the stone building with the welcoming entranceway and many comfortable rooms. He saw many people coming in off the street for treatment in the Care Center and others sitting at computer tables doing their homework in the Learning Center.

That's what he would do! He would leave his money to charity in the end! He'd visit with his lawyer tomorrow and then plan to visit the kids to let them in on his new plan. He stepped out of the car with new vigor in his step and a smile on his face. The twinkle in his eye was almost as bright as it had been when Ella used to welcome him at the door. He just knew she would be pleased with his decision. The money they had worked so hard for could forever be used to bless the lives of others. It was just the way it was meant to be.

Endnote: There are a variety of ways that you and I can leave what God has blessed us with to support the work of His Kingdom. Life insurance, bequests, charitable gifts and special trusts can be established in your estate plan to allow your Christ-like character and passions to live on long after you do. In the next issue, read more about how this man can help The Mission NOW to serve the needs of its people today.

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