



A Faith Preamble to Your Will

Preparing your last will and testament is not easy. First comes the sometimes daunting task of deciding who will receive portions of your estate after you die. At a deeper level, there may even be some anxiety about the legacy you will leave with your family, friends and institutions with whom you have lived your life. The question, “What will you leave behind once you die?” reflects what is most important to you. What do you value in your life? Your last will and testament reveals the answer to this question.

Along with the material blessings and memories that you leave with your loved ones when you die, you are invited to reflect on the importance of your faith in preparing your will. As you determine the destination of your material legacy, what about your faith? Will your faith in God live on in your family and friends as well?

A faith preamble to your will can function as a means to express your faith in a profound way, as well as set the tone for the rest of the document. The word *testament* comes from the Latin word meaning *witness*, which is also the root of our words *testimony* and *testify*. When you write or choose a faith preamble to your will, it may serve to:

- bear witness to the values and beliefs that have guided and inspired you throughout your life; it gives a meaningful description of who you are and what you hold to be true;
- comfort your family and friends as they grieve your death and execute the instructions set forth in your will; and,
- encourage your family and friends to trust in God’s love and faithfulness during their time of grief, as you have during your lifetime.

Generally, a faith preamble serves to remind your loved ones that you are not so preoccupied with distributing your material wealth that you have failed to share your true wealth: the faith you have in a loving God who promised you life beyond the grave. This way, writing your last will and testament does not have to be an arduous and anxious process; instead, it can be a joyous and gratifying experience.

Please consider adding one of these sample faith preambles to your will, or use them as a guide in writing your own preamble. Then provide the preamble to your lawyer for inclusion in your new or updated will.

Preamble 1

I, _____, of the City/Town/Village of _____, and Province of _____, being of sound and disposing mind and memory and being under no restraint, do make, declare and publish my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking all Wills and codicils heretofore made by me.

First, realizing the uncertainty of this life, I commit myself to God's care, secure in God's love for me and trusting in my ongoing life with God promised in my baptism into Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Second, I commend my loved ones to the protecting arm of God, knowing that God will continue to provide for them despite my absence; and I encourage them to place their faith and trust in God alone.

Preamble 2

I, _____, of the City/Town/Village of _____, and Province of _____, being of sound and disposing mind and memory and being under no restraint, do make, declare and publish my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking all Wills and codicils heretofore made by me.

*When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death.
We were buried therefore with him by Baptism into death,
So that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father,
We too might live a new life.
For if we have been united with him in a death like his,
We shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.
(Romans 6)*

I, a baptized Christian, affirm the words of Saint Paul in the Word of God. I place my life in Christ Jesus, who suffered during his life and died a cruel death, but was raised to new life. Being in Christ, therefore, although I too have died, I am given new life for eternity with my Lord and Saviour.

I have lived my life, imperfect and sinful, yet redeemed and forgiven by the unconditional love and grace of my compassionate God who in Jesus Christ experienced all that there is in human life.

My faith in God, who has understood me and listened to me in my life, has given me boundless hope and joy. I encourage you to place your full trust in God who will never abandon you, and who will provide for your every need. Believe the words of the Psalmist who writes, *"Take delight in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him, and He will act"* (Psalm 37).