



Weekly Tip - September 14, 2026

They're Already Thinking About Their Will. Are You Part of That Conversation?

Dear Ministry Leader,

Somewhere on your partner list right now, someone is thinking about their will. Maybe they wrote one twenty years ago and have not looked at it since. Right now, your ministry has no part in that conversation.

That is about to change. The third week of October is National Estate Planning Awareness Week, NEPAW for short, created in 2008 to get people talking about wills and end of life planning. It falls October 19 through 25, and I want to spend the next three tips getting you ready.

Early in my Youth for Christ years, I sat across a banquet table from a couple I will call the Hendersons, faithful partners who showed up every year and never said much. Making small talk, I asked whether their will named any ministries. Long pause. "Nobody's ever asked us that," the husband finally said, not offended, just surprised. Two years later, YFC was named in that will. Not because I made a clever ask. Because I finally brought it up.

That is the whole lesson tucked inside NEPAW. Recent surveys put the share of Americans with a current, valid will at roughly one in four, which means most of your partners have not done this basic act of stewardship, the decision that determines who receives what they spent a lifetime building.

Be careful here, because NEPAW is not a fundraising trick wearing an awareness campaign as a costume. It works because it hands you permission to raise a subject most ministries tiptoe around. Proverbs 13:22 says a good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, and that was never only about money, it is about intention outliving us. A will is the paperwork version of that intention. Without one, the state decides. With one, your partner decides, and if you have loved them well, some of what they decide may include the ministry they came to believe in.

Philippians 4:17 sits right alongside that verse. Paul was never chasing the gift. He was chasing the fruit the gift produced in the giver's own life. A legacy gift is fruit that outlives

the giver entirely, still bearing Kingdom fruit long after the one who planted it has gone home.

Most ministries stay quiet here, worried the subject looks self serving. But silence does not protect your partners, it just hands the topic to a bank or an attorney instead. Call it "legacy silence." Bringing it up first is Colossians 3:23 work, the plain, unglamorous discipline of naming a small task before it becomes an emergency.

This is the first of three tips leading into NEPAW. Next week, real scripts for opening this subject without sounding like you are asking for money. The week after, what to bring and say face to face. By the time NEPAW arrives, you will have three weeks of runway most ministries never give themselves.

Why not try this this week? Pull ten names of partners who have walked with you fifteen years or more, and ask yourself: does this person know their legacy could keep doing Kingdom work long after they are gone? If you are not sure, that is your answer, and it is where we pick back up next week.

Passionately,
Rick

P.S. If you would like a sounding board while you think through how NEPAW fits your ministry's calendar this fall, that is exactly what the Virtual Consortium Group is for, a small monthly round table where leaders work through questions like this together. Reply and I will send details. Keep an eye out next week, the scripts I promised will be worth the wait.

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