

April 2025 Newsletter Article

As we continue to think about the tensions involved in Christian estate planning, this month, we focus on how differences in opinion among families can create enough roadblocks to keep a plan from moving forward.

Imagine a husband and wife who have children who have wandered into difficulties in their lives. Dad is the softy, just wanting to make their children's lives easier. Mom is stricter, demanding the children take responsibility for their behaviors. At times, this difference has created a strain on their marital relationship.

Now, imagine this same couple trying to jointly decide on a solid Christian estate plan. Dad wants to evenly divide the estate as a lump sum inheritance between their three children. Mom wants to spread inheritance over time. She also believes that her children will waste resources given to them, so she is motivated to support gifts for ministry. You can imagine that the typical response to this tension is avoidance. As a result, their last will and testament documents are forty years old, having been created before their children were born.

For this couple, the key will be to have an open, prayerful discussion about their goals, seeking to create a consensus about what the Lord's will is for the use of His things.

Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can assist you in situations like this. While they aren't a marriage counselor, they can ask some questions that the couple has been avoiding safely. They can remind us about the safe place we have in the grace of God. To get started in this faith journey, contact Tony Hunt 260-222-1291 or tony.hunt@lfnd.org