

The following was written in 1935 in Dutch by an immigrant husband and wife who were distant relatives of Rev. Hanko, to be read by their children after the death of both of them. On the evening of Mother Trijntje's funeral, 23 March 1942, this was read in the presence of all their children. The following translation is by one of their sons.

## **LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT to our dearly beloved children:**

This last will is not written for the purpose of distribution of any earthly possessions among the children. There will be none, or very few, when we shall have departed. For the Lord in His divine sovereignty and freedom did not give us earthly treasures but, and this we express sincerely from our hearts and witness to the glory of His grace, God has cared for us all our life. He has supplied all our needs. We have never lacked any good thing.

The Lord has blessed us, above many others, with a great multitude of children, and oh, they are so precious to us. For it has been the Lord's will to place upon our shoulders the great and important task of their upbringing. As we look back, now that we are old, we confess with our whole heart that the upbringing of our children was defective. How we wished to have done much better! All our lives we have failed. Daily we have come short of God's goals. Still, we do not deny, nor wish to dishonor God by our unbelief, that we, both father and mother, have by the grace of God known and understood the scriptural instruction of a Christian upbringing. We have been aware of the weighty obligation of parents to confess their faith in the God of the covenant such as the Scriptures have instructed us, and as has been written in the beautiful form of Holy Baptism for our little ones. Although we have failed, and your upbringing has been very deficient, we have made use of all the means of grace which God has provided for us and taught in the Scriptures. In our daily walk with God, we have tried to model in word and deed our faith in, and our love for God. We have daily confessed that all our works were polluted with sin.

Beloved children, God in His great mercy and grace has crowned our imperfect, weak, faulty efforts with the blessed gift of a family of believing children, who confess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of the congregation of the believers. Furthermore, in marriage the Lord has given each of you believing and faithful spouses. Together you have built Christian homes and households that bring honor and glory to God. You have worked together to extend the Kingdom of God on earth according to the gifts each one of you has received. "Soli Deo Gloria." We cry out, "God has done all things well." Above and beyond all our expectations, we know that all things shall work out for good. God does not abandon the work that He has begun.

Dearly beloved children, you are in the midst of life, a rich and broad life, surrounded by so many temptations and dangers. The battle of sin rages around you. Our own hearts are often in rebellion; by nature we are not inclined to love and obey God. The world despises you and Satan seeks to destroy all that God, through His Holy Spirit, has done in you. Dearly beloved, be on guard. Watch and remain faithful when we shall have departed.

In our absence do not allow the family bond to weaken. Strengthen one another. Keep in touch and encourage each other. Do not let any root of bitterness spring up and bring offense. Care for each other. Be hands and feet for one another. Lift each other's burdens along your life's pathway. Especially be faithful and tender in keeping the Lord's Day holy. Remember how often the Lord reminded the Old Testament people of God about this. How beautifully we are told in Isaiah 58:13,14, "If, because of the Sabbath, you turn your foot from doing your own pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord, honorable, and shall honor it, desisting from your own ways, from seeking your own pleasure and speaking your own word, then you will take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." The Lord has given us His day to observe, and has attached rich blessings to its observance. Many people think it is only Old Testamentish. But, beloved children, the Lord does not change in His commands and blessings from the Old to the New. In the Old Testament the Lord tells His people, "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. (Lev. 20:7). Our Lord Jesus says in Matthew 5:48, "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

O beloved children, may the Lord give you, after we shall have gone to our reward, in the words of the Apostle Paul "to press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus; that you too may receive the crown of righteousness, obtained for you by Christ through His suffering and perfect obedience, you who have loved His appearance, and who persevere to the end." Unto that end, the Lord give you His Spirit of grace and prayer. May you walk your pilgrimage praying and looking to the God of the covenant, Who said, "I will establish my covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant; to be God to you and to your descendants after you." Our prayer for you is that you be faithful in all this. Jehovah establish His covenant in future generations and richly bless you.

Jehovah's truth will stand forever,  
His covenant bonds He will not sever;  
The word of grace which He commands  
To thousand generations stands;  
The covenant made in days of old  
With Abraham He doth uphold.

The Lord His covenant people planted  
In lands of nations which He granted,  
That they His statutes might observe,  
Nor from His laws might ever swerve.  
Let songs of praise to Him ascend  
And hallelujahs without end.  
Psalm 105:8,9,10