

Finances (Canterbury 2006)

Part 1

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[00:00:00] Herr Präsident, let us look at a short scripture in Hebrews, Hebrews 13, Hebrews 13 and verse 15.

By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually.

That is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name.

But to do good, and to communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

We have it on our hearts as a subject of the conference, the two subjects, the table of the Lord and the supper of the Lord.

And one thing which is connected with this is referred here too in verse 16, to do good and to communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

[00:01:10] I would like to take this subject up. We all know some assemblies have a bag which goes around after the breaking of bread and some others have a box at the door that makes no difference.

But there is certainly teaching also in that aspect and it talks even here in that aspect about sacrifices where God will be well pleased.

It is an important ministry.

And we have referred this morning to chapter 8 and 9 of 2 Corinthians, which also covers this topic. And I would not like to use them this evening because perhaps the brethren here in England would like to choose that topic for another conference maybe one of these days. [00:02:02] But I would like to say a few thoughts basically about handling of money, handling of finance as a Christian.

What strictures do we have to really deal with that which we all have?

We all have our purse and we all know what is in it or what is missing in it and there are many

questions with regard to this. And in the ministry of the Apostle Paul he writes something very important. And this is in Philippians chapter 4 where also he refers to a wonderful gift he has received from the Philippians. And there he says in chapter 4 and verse 10, But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at the last your care for me has flourished again, wherein you were also careful, but you lacked opportunity. [00:03:02] Not that I speak of respect of want, for I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer. I can do all things through Christ which strengthen me. Now the thing which is remarkable here in his passage is on one side the joy he had for the gift.

And he mentioned in verse 18 that this gift which he received by the hands of Epaphroditus is an order and a sweet smelling sacrifice acceptable well pleasing to God. He praised God for what God has worked in the hearts of the Philippians to give to the Lord first of all but also to the Apostle Paul.

[00:04:08] But when he speaks now about fear he says very clearly I don't talk about my own needs. And he says I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content.

Dear brethren, are we content with what we have?

You know the Apostle Paul says I have learned, I have been instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to be abound and to suffer need.

It doesn't come naturally.

I believe that there are certain points which we should consider from the word of God which might help us to really become a content person. [00:05:03] A person who is happy with that which the Lord has entrusted you. And when I look around here I see many faces and I'm sure if I would take an account of your bank accounts it would vary. One would have a lot and another would have hardly anything on it. And it has always been like that. There were always rich people and poor people. But the instruction which we have in the word of God is that we have to learn to be content. How many problems do we have in assemblies, in families, because we have not learned how to handle money.

Did you know that we have about 500 verses on prayer, a bit less than 500 on faith.

We have more than 2000 on money and possessions.

[00:06:05] Of the 38 parables of the Lord Jesus, 16 deal with money and possessions.

If you take the four Gospels, we have practically every tenth verse dealing with that subject. And how often do we hear about this being ministered to us?

I think it is a subject because money has always been important to people all along through the centuries. But the key here and the ministry of the Apostle Paul is that we should learn to be content. To be happy in the Lord with what he has entrusted. And you know there are two things.

There is the side of God and the side of man. [00:07:02] Which we have to recognize.

The side of man is that which we have to put into practice. But first of all I would like to say three

points about the side of God. And that we find in 1 Chronicles chapter 29.

There in verse 11 it says, David speaks here.

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty. For all that is in heaven and in earth is thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honors come of thee.

And thou reignest over all.

And in thine hand is power and might. And in thine hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name. [00:08:03] But who am I and what is my people?

And what we should be able to offer so willingly after this sword? For all things come of thee and of thine own have we given thee.

From this passage we can see three things.

First of all, the ownership of God. God has created the earth and everything within it has created the heaven.

And therefore, because he is the creator, he is also the owner of everything. We find, for instance, that he says, the cattle on a thousand hills is mine. He says everything in the earth is mine, Psalm 24. He also says, the silver and the gold is mine. Yes, all the silver and the gold is his, everything.

[00:09:06] And you know, brethren, if we recognize this basic truth. We all know it, but do we also really honestly and consciously think about it that everything which I have really belongs to God.

And also David says it here, for all the things come of thee and of thine have we given thee. So when they brought these things together to build the temple, they said all the material which we have now brought, all the gold, all the silver, all the material, it is really only, we have only taken from that which thou has given us. And this is a very important principle to realize.

But secondly, God is also in control of everything.

You know, nothing happens in your life where he is no longer in control.

[00:10:04] When we look in this world, sometimes we think it is getting out of control. But he still is in charge.

Our Lord is in charge, even all the things happening in this world today. He will set up kings, and he has removed kings, he has removed whole governments, he has removed communism, he has changed many things.

And don't you think he is also in control, or in charge of your own life? You know, sometimes we doubt this, you know, and say, we want to try to solve our own problems, we want to take things in our own hands. And we forget to trust him who is in full control of everything which is passing my

way.

Today I might lose my job, and then I am shattered, and I am down on the earth, and I say, why could the Lord allow this? [00:11:03] Yes, he is still in control, and maybe he has got something better for you. He knows the future, and he will direct you. But it doesn't go without personal exercises. And the third point is his provision.

You know, we have a Heavenly Father. And a Heavenly Father is a loving Father, and has shown his love to us. We have sang it in a hymn, first of all in giving his Son. He has given him, he has given all he has, the greatest gift of all. And you know, when we read that the Father is concerned, that God is concerned about the flowers, about the birds, and he says, and you think that he is not concerned about what you should wear, what you should eat? Or in 1 Timothy, chapter 6, we read in verse 6, [00:12:07] But Godliness with contentment is great gift. Then again we find the word of contentment. And then it says, For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be there with content.

And I believe that is perhaps the problem also in our lives, that we are not content just with food and raiment, with the essential.

But God knows what we are in need of.

God supplies, but not what we want, but what we need.

This is a great difference. And God is able to support each and everyone, no matter what the circumstances are. [00:13:02] And the question to us is, are we ready to trust him, who has given all these wonderful promises? There are many scriptures that would underline this. That he will provide for you, for your needs. He knows your needs better than we do, and he will provide. He might use a fellow believer to provide for that need.

But he will provide for your need. And so the question is, when we look at God's side, we have to acknowledge that he owns everything, he is in control of everything, and he provides everything which you need. But on the other hand, we also have a responsibility.

You and I are entrusted money to handle.

And I would like to look at some very practical things. It's a long day for us, and sometimes it's good in the evening to get to some real practical things. [00:14:08] What does the Lord tell us? How we should behave in various circumstances? And I start with the debt.

In Romans 13 and verse 8, and it's remarkable, we don't have great long passages on that. We have a very simple verse, even half a verse, which says, Oh no man anything but to love one another.

I've read a statistic recently that in Switzerland, over 60% of young people between 15 and 25 are in debt.

And it's growing.

When you think about what is happening today amongst the young people, you know you have your

idea, you see something, you see that computer, [00:15:05] you see this wonderful car, you see this and that. And the trouble is, you don't say, well let's start saving, so that later on I can buy whatever I desire. No, the day is, I see this, I want it now, and then you consider later how this is paid for. And this is sort of an attitude toward today, which I can notice and which can influence the people amongst us. We are living right in the middle of this world and we see the tendencies all around, and all of a sudden you think, if he can do this and they can do it, why can't I do it? And you forget that God says, Oh no man anything.

In other words, don't have any debts. Don't have any debts.

The question is, what is a debt?

[00:16:04] You know if you pay something with your credit card, that's not a debt. But there comes a bill and it says pay within 30 days, and if you let this pass, if payment is due and you don't pay, that's a debt. Or if you buy something and the value of that which you bought with the credit is of a less value than what you have on the debt. Say for instance, if you have a mortgage of 100 and you take a house which costs 100 and you have a mortgage of 70, that's not a real debt because you have an asset against it. But if I buy clothes, furniture or whatever on credit, you know when you walk out that door, my suit is nothing worth it. I cannot sell it to anybody. Nobody will pay anything for it. With other words, these are the real issues. And why does God actually tell us not to be in debt?

[00:17:01] In Proverbs 22 and verse 7 we have the basics or the principle where it says, the rich rules over the poor and the borrower is a servant to the lender. God wants you to be a free Christian, not one who is in a dependency.

If you are a borrower, you have to behave to the rules which a lender will set. If the bank says from tomorrow you have to pay 5% more interest, you can argue with them all day long, you cannot pay up this additional interest. So the lender is making the rules and you as a borrower, you have to follow his rules. And God doesn't want us to become dependent in such a way. And you know it's also that we don't trust God. You know, why should I have a debt? Why should I run into debt? Because I want things which maybe the Lord says it's not time for this yet. [00:18:03] Because He would like you to trust Him. And if He wants you to get it, He will finally, He will get it if you need it. But if I just go ahead and I have an idea and I buy it, then of course I get into debt. And therefore the next thing, there are so many issues related to money.

God also says that we should use counselling in these questions. Proverbs 18 and verse 15, it says, The heart of the prudent gathers knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge. And 15 verse 22, Without counsel, purposes are disappointed.

But in a multitude of counsellors, they are established. You know, if you have an issue, if you have a problem, even a financial problem, [00:19:01] why don't you get counsel?

It is scriptural.

And I would suggest that there are four things to consider. And I would say, first of all, counsel with the Lord. The Lord is called the counsellor. He knows what is best for you. Go and pray. Make it a matter of prayer. But then, there is also the Word of God.

Also there we find in Psalm 119 that the Word of God is the counsellor. There are many instructions, how we should live, what we should do. And thirdly, the righteous.

In Psalm 37, Psalm 37 and verse 30, The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and the tongue talketh of judgment. [00:20:01] And the law of the good is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide. You know, are you thankful that there are brothers and sisters, perhaps in your surroundings, in your meeting, or even your parents, which have more experience in these things? Why not counsel with them? Why not take counsel and ask, what would you do in that situation? Why just go ahead and make the same mistakes as probably they have done? Why not learn and take the counsel of those which have experience? But then it also says in Psalm 1, verse 1, where we should not get counsel. And I think that I would also like to underline, because we often do this, Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.

You know, if you seek advice in this world, we will get the advice of the ungodly. [00:21:03] And I think it's a dangerous thing, and therefore God warns us. They don't have that basis. They don't acknowledge that God is the owner of all things, that God will provide, that God is in control. They do it all with their own understanding, and it's a human understanding, a worldly understanding. And they might give you, it sounds very good advice, but the main thing is lack. And therefore God warns us not to seek counsel with them. The next point are the three S's.

Save, spend and share.

You know, there is a balance, and some people think, you don't have to save anything. Why should you save? Why should you save? For whom should you save? In Proverbs 21, verse 20, we find an advice in this regard. [00:22:11] 21, verse 20.

There is a treasure to be desired, an oil in the dwelling of the wise, but the foolish man spendeth it up.

And also Proverbs 30.

And verse 24.

There are four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise. The ants are the people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer.

There are certainly two reasons for saving. One thing is to have put something aside for the unexpected.

[00:23:02] We never know what happens, and how many have we met on our pathway which never bothered about saving, and as soon as something came up which was unexpected, they fell on the burden of their brethren.

Is that the right attitude? That's why you should not save, I think. There are certain circumstances where we should make provision for. And everyone should be exercised in how big and how much there should be. And the ants, they know after the summer comes the winter. So in the summer it's time to collect, and maybe there is a time when we're going to do this. And therefore, there is a principle which today also in this world gets totally turned around.

It says, why should I save for my old age, you know?

[00:24:04] The late generation, they have saved up, they had something, and they became old and very tired that they could live on. And today, it says, why should I?

When I get to the old people's home, somebody will then take care of me. You know, is that the right attitude for a believer? But on the other hand, there are some who have only one thought to save. They have nothing else in life. They know all the rules of saving. And for them, I would like to tell them, be careful about risk investments. Ecclesiastical 5, Ecclesiastical 5 and verse 13 and 15, the Lord also talks about those warns against risk investments.

[00:25:03] There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hearts. For those riches perish by evil turmoil, and it begetters the sun, and there is nothing in its hands. You know, we have talked about this morning about those who want to become rich. And you know, God warns us that there are many temptations.

And there is one rule.

The more return you get on an investment, the more risky it is.

You can bet on it. It is always that way. It has always been that way. And therefore, be careful.

If somebody tells you how, why you should not invest in this and this, because you will get rich overnight and they tell you everything, don't believe them, because it will be a risky business. [00:26:04] Spending I don't think I have to talk about. I think everybody knows how to do that. But sharing, sharing I think is something which is good if we think about it.

We talked about Hebrews 3rd and verse 16, giving to God, giving to the Lord. Every Sunday.

And you know, God is well pleased if you do that. And you know, God says, or the Lord Jesus even says, and it is very remarkable in Acts 20, that we find something which the Lord Jesus said which we don't find in the Gospel. And then it says in verse 35, And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, [00:27:01] it is more blessed to give than to receive.

It is the Lord Jesus himself who encouraged us to learn how to give. You know, when you have these three things, when do you stop? And I'm glad I've seen some of the families here with little children. I would like to encourage you to start very early. We have several children, as you know, and we started when they were in kindergarten. We gave them 50 cents a week. What did happen? One put his 50 cents on the bank and at the end of the year says, Daddy, look what I have on the side. He didn't spend one cent. Every 50 cents ended on the bank. Another, he spent it every week.

Every week, had nothing. When the week was over, had nothing. [00:28:01] The third one, he had spent it already before he got it. So when he got his 50 cents, he had to first pay 40 cents back to the debt which he has made. You know, it's funny perhaps, but this is the way you start teaching children. They know how to handle. They know exactly what they can get for 50 cents. And they start, you know, thinking about it and so forth. And the one who has put everything on the bank account, you start talking with him about it. Is this right what you do?

There were so many birthdays throughout the year and you have never given anything to any of your brothers and sisters. I mean, these are practical things we are talking about here. And you know, when you don't learn it as a child, how do you expect it to know when you grow up and when you get the first salary? It's not coming automatically.

And I would suggest sharing has three advantages.

Sharing, first of all, develops your character in a very positive way. [00:29:05] When you learn to share, this gives really a positive aspect or an influence on your character. You're forming your character. Because to think about two people in which you know, the one always ready to give, another never gives anything. Now, which one do you like better? You know, it stings almost, the greed which the other person has and the loveliness which a person just expresses by giving. And it's not the amount which counts, but the thought which counts. And thinking here and there. So giving really develops your character.

And it is an important step against contentment.

You don't get content if you keep everything for yourself. When you learn to give, it's something you do against becoming greedy. [00:30:01] It's something to learn to share. And you know, the third thing which also we should not forget is by giving, we collect treasures in heaven. You see, God tells you, you make a choice.

You know, you have treasure on this earth. You have to worry about them all the time. Because there's robbers and there's the moths and the rust and everything else which destroys. And then there's this stock exchange which has a collapse and so forth. And you never really have a good sleep about all your possessions. You're constantly worried. The more you have, the more you worry. But on the other hand, if you collect treasures in heaven, you know, God is no man's saviour.

He can tell you. And on the other side, there is nothing which can corrupt that which you have entrusted to him. So you can choose which one you prefer.

[00:31:01] And in 1 Corinthians 16, we have an important verse about giving in connection with the Lord's work.

It's only a short verse again, but it's a very meaningful verse.

Chapter 16, verse 2.

Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come. I often say we have here four Ps.

When should we give?

It says here, on the first day of the week. We know when we come together on the first day of the week. So it's a periodical giving.

Not once a year. You know when I, at the end of the year, put a big bonus and then I say, well now I've got something for the Lord. [00:32:02] No, it's something ongoing every first day of the week. When

we come together, we can also think, how much do I give to the Lord?

How or who should give? It says here, let every one of you. Every one of you.

When I look around, some say, you know, one said to me once, no heat, no pain.

In other words, if you don't break bread, then of course you don't give anything to the Lord.

And I don't think I would go that far. I would say, indeed, that every believer, everyone who trusts in the Lord and has received so much from God himself, we should be exercised, or our love to him should have a response, that we are exercised to give to the Lord. [00:33:02] How should we give?

We should give in private.

Lay by him in store.

So in other words, it's not something I talk about. It's not something I let everybody know how much I give. It's something very private between you and the Lord. And you know, it should be constantly an exercise, because how much should we give? Yes, God gives differently.

God has prospered you differently. And sometimes I think we have lost the exercise.

We're sort of getting used to say, well, I put so much in every Sunday, and then it just comes customary. I know so much, so much, and I don't even think about it. I don't even pray about it. I don't even recognize that perhaps God has given me a good health. I've never had any expenditure for illness, for bills, and hospitals and so forth, or other things. [00:34:07] God has really blessed me. I don't even think about it. I've never had any expenditure for illness, for bills, and hospitals and so forth, or other things. God has really blessed me. But I have never given any thoughts whether I should give more, whether I should give here, whether I should give in a different way. I think we should be exercised. It should be a matter of prayer, as God has prospered you. In whatever way He does that.

You know, we are not so much in a relationship often like where you depend like a farmer which is dependent on the weather, on the crop, and whatever. It goes smoothly. Many of us have a salary income, and that's why we sort of get into the routine. But nevertheless, I would think there are many ways in which God prospers us in different ways, [00:35:01] and I think we should be exercised what we give back to Him.

The Lord takes note of it. We know the story of the widow. The Lord was next to that collection, and He saw and He recommended it. I would like to read Mark 12, verses 1-44.

And we should never forget that God, the Lord, sees everything what we do or what we hold back.

And Jesus said over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury. And many that were rich cast in much.

And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two smiths, which made a father. And He called unto Him His disciples, and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, [00:36:05] that this poor widow

hath cast more in than all that they have, which cast in into the treasury.

For all they did cast in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all she had, even all her wealth.

And you can see this is an exercise of faith. We live in a land of plenty, whether in Switzerland, in England, or in Germany, or wherever. I think we all live in so-called rich countries. We have plenty.

We hear information about the Lord's work abroad, in missionary fields, where there are great needs. Does it touch our hearts? Are we prepared to sacrifice?

Like the Lord said, He's well pleased with our sacrifice. And here it says, you know, they put in much. [00:37:03] He didn't say that it was nothing. They put in much.

It says, look at that widow. It came from the heart. She gave all she had.

So I would like to encourage you to make it also a matter of prayer and a thing to consider. The next point is the budget.

What is a budget?

Proverbs 24, verse 3.

Through wisdom is a house built, and by understanding it is established, and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong.

Ye, a man of knowledge, increase in strength. For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war, and in multitude of counselling thy safety. [00:38:07] Through wisdom is a house built.

What is a budget for?

It is a plan how I'm going to spend my money.

I wonder if I would ask, put your hands up, who is making a budget for yourself. I wonder how many hands would come up. You know, a budget makes your money go further. And you may love the facts, but I think it's a very practical thing. How many people say in the middle of the month, Now the money's gone, I don't even know where it's gone. It's just gone.

But the Lord doesn't want us to live like this. He would like that we are in control of what we do with our money. Not by accident we just spend it, and we don't even know where it's all gone. [00:39:05] But that we really are in charge. And there are two ways of doing a budget.

You know, in one side you can start on the top and say, So much for my living, so much for eating, so much clothing, so much for my vacation. And you go down the list, and at the end whatever is left is for the Lord. I know many people who live like this. And then they say on a Sunday morning, But perhaps we can also turn this around. And we make it a matter of prayer. You know, a budget is a matter of prayer. It's something that you prayfully go over your things, and says, How am I going to spend my money? And you start with the first item that says, How much can we give to the Lord?

How much do we want to give to the Lord? How much we can?

How much can we give to the Lord? [00:40:01] How much do we want to give to the Lord? How much we can? And we set this amount first, and then we take all the others in account, what we need for housing, and for clothes, and for food. And you will find that it will work. That in a marvelous way, your money goes further, because now you're in control, and not the other way around. The next point is the ethic.

The ethical aspects of our life.

In John 17, verse 6, it says, There was no king, everyone did that which was right in his own eyes. And I think today, we live very much in such an environment. Everyone does what is right in his own eyes. Do you have any ethical standards still? Let me ask you a few questions.

When it comes to bidding the tax return, [00:41:02] do you declare everything you have? No, today they're making a sport that says, How much can we not declare before they notice it? And they are proud of how far they can get today.

This is the type of spirit in this world today. But not for a Christian.

Or do you look after other things, if you borrow a car? Do you look after it as good as you would look after your own thing? Are you honest in your work?

Is the time spent at work really spent for your employer, or more for personal things?

Writing emails, doing all sorts of other things. Nobody knows.

These are ethical questions. And you know, the Lord says in Luke chapter 16, [00:42:06] verse 10, He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also to the Lord.

And it says here, this is the rule.

If you start doing that, the day will come you will be unjust in the great things. But if you're faithful in these little things, and also nobody notices, and this is perhaps the bad thing about it, people take it for granted, but they trust you.

And you're responsible to your Lord for what you do. Faithful in little things, the day will come the Lord will entrust you with greater things. Because He has seen, in these little things of your life, you have been faithful. Whether nobody notices it or not, you have been faithful, [00:43:01] and therefore, the Lord will give you more responsibility for what you do.

You have been faithful, and therefore, the Lord will give you more responsibility because you have been faithful.

Then finally, the aspect of work, in Colossians 3 and verse 23.

It says here, And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.

I would like to suggest four things in regard to work. First, the work of the Lord.

I would like to suggest four things in regard to work. First of all, work is essential.

[00:44:03] I have seen, even in our circles, that there are more and more people that don't do the work. They are kind of mentally sick, and therefore, they will be stamped as being sick, and they will get a pension to live on. Now, this is all fine, but I've noticed it, and I've always encouraged these people, do some work.

What are they doing? They're sitting around all day long, thinking about themselves, and it's getting worse almost by the minute.

It's not a question of do they do work to support themselves, but just any occupation. Why is that? Because work is good for man.

Work is given before sin came into this world. You know, some people think it's a curse that we have to go to work, [00:45:02] but sometimes it is, but it is really a blessing.

Adam was asked to look after the garden, long before the sin came in. He was asked to name all the animals. Well, he had to work with his head. He worked with his hands. It was healthy for man. It was something God has given for man. And therefore, I would like to encourage each and every one to do, even if you're not employed, or if you're in a stage of sickness, that you try to find some sort of occupation, because it will do you good. On the other hand, I also know, and the Lord says to me, work, but do not overwork.

I found that we live in a world today, and I've experienced it myself, that there are companies who say, I'm going to give you a good job, [00:46:01] but I want everything of you. Forget about your free time.

Forget about your family.

Forget about your hobbies. Forget about everything. I want everything of you. I want that you are there 24 hours a day, if need is, six, seven days a week. I want everything.

You are well paid.

On the other hand, I give you everything. Your bank account will be full in no time, but I want everything of you.

Unfortunately, many have fallen for that temptation, have not been able to resist it, have seen it, tragically.

And what happens?

The family was ruined. The assembly's life was ruined. You didn't see them at the meetings anymore. Everything was ruined. Is that the price you are prepared to pay for the good income they offer you, on the other hand? [00:47:03] So, in other words, we have to be careful that if you see this coming, or if you are in the middle of it and you have to say, stop, let me rethink my situation. And I have done it.

About 12 years ago, I have quit my job.

I have taken another one, and I have, maybe at that time, about a third less of my salary.

First, you think you cannot survive. You know, you continue the life you had before, and you think, later on you will see, it will work. And God is no man's tether, as I said before.

And when you look, what would have happened with your family, with your whole assembly life?

Make the right choice at the right time. I would like to encourage you.

Then there is also, every honest work is honorable.

[00:48:03] You know, we must sometimes make big differences. But if you look at the Bible, we see all sorts of jobs in the Bible. There were farmers, and shepherds, and tent makers, carpenters, every trade you could see. There were also medical doctors.

But today, sometimes I am afraid that we look down on those who just have a cleaning job, or those who do a very simple job somewhere. There are of course jobs which are not honest, are not honorable, but there are few of them. But most of these jobs are honored and honorable jobs. And that's why God wants us to be faithful. We should not make these differences. We should not look down. And therefore, God has given each one different capabilities. We should use them as God directs us.

And lastly, the relationship between Masters and servants [00:49:02] is also covered in the Word of God. Perhaps you are in charge of other people. Don't forget that you have a Master over you, that you are accountable to Him for how you treat your people.

And so, work, as we have seen, is a blessing on one side, can be a danger on the other side. And so, I have put before you different very practical things to consider. Why? The Apostle Paul has said, I have gone through all this.

I have experienced all these various things. And I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, there is to be content. My prayer is it for you and for me that we are learning to be content. What a blessing for our surroundings, [00:50:02] for our self, of course, but also for our testimony and for those with whom we gather.

If we know and put these different, very practical things into practice. And the Apostle Paul says in verse 13, I can do all things through Christ, which thanks be to Him. Let us look to the Lord, that He can direct, that He can help each one in our situation. That we might live really a life which is honoring to Him, but that we also exercise to our distance.