

God & Mammon

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 November 2023

Preacher: Niels van de Kastele

[0 : 00] Great. Yes, we're going to look at God's Word together. Now, I mentioned Christmas. I don't know if you feel like that already. We are selling Advent packs. Christmas, it's good news that Jesus came. And when we celebrate it, we always say, hey, Jesus, He came and He changed the world. Although, as you heard from the prayers, actually, how much has the world changed, right? Because it's still so full of conflict and suffering. What is the change that Jesus brought? And the answer is that Jesus came, first of all, to change His people. Jesus has changed us. Where do we see heaven on earth? We see it in the church with people who are transformed, with people who have encountered Jesus' grace and live now differently from the world. How can people see that Jesus is real? Hopefully, they can see that He is real in our lives as we live differently. That's Jesus' plan. And that is what this series is all about, living distinctively, living, yeah, as Jesus wants, different from the world. Now, today we're going to look at money. We don't look at that all the time.

If you're visiting and you wonder, I think it's been one and a half years since we last had a sermon on money. So, yeah, don't worry if that's your impression of some churches. But it is something that actually comes up quite a lot in the Bible. And actually, the passage we're going to read in a moment is from, well, the Sermon on the Mount. If you don't know, that's Jesus' most famous sermon, right? With love your enemies and those kind of things.

At the start of Matthew's gospel, yeah, His most famous teaching that everyone admires, not just Christians, but the whole world thinks, wow, this is the most amazing teaching in the world. And it includes teaching on money. But do you know that so much of that sermon is about being distinctive, being different from the world? I mean, you read it. And what does Jesus keep saying? Well, don't be like the Pharisees. Don't fast like the hypocrites.

Don't pray like the Gentiles. Don't just love your friends. Everyone does that. Love your enemies. You know, everyone says you should do this, but I say you should do that, right?

It's all about living distinctively, all about being different from the world. A whole sermon. And it's not just telling us how to live, but of course, Jesus tells us, yeah, the gospel. He tells us why we can do that, why we should do that. And so that's what we're going to listen to. So Risa's going to come up and read from Matthew 6. So let's open that and live together. Good morning, church. Our scripture reading for today is from the book of Matthew chapter 6. Starting in verse 19, we read, Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroys, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. So if your eye is healthy, your body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness?

[3 : 29] No one can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the food more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Are you not of more value than they? And which of you, by being anxious, can add a single art to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet, I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothed the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you? O you, little faith. Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, what shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or what shall we wear? For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But

seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

This is the word of God. Great. Thanks for reading, Risa. Yeah, this is a familiar passage. Yes, it's so powerful. One of my favorites.

But first, let's, yeah, before we go into the motivation and everything that Jesus talks about, let's think a little bit how distinctive Christian living actually is. I mean, how does the world see money? I think Marco mentioned it, right? We often talk about the world idolizes money. An idol, what is an idol? It's a, it's something that's the most important thing in your life, right? It has, it's what's on the throne in your heart, the thing you can't do without. It takes the place of God. And with many people, it seems like that. Now, why is that? And there's a writer, Tony Payne, he said, money is basically a kind of liquid kind of power. And last week, we talked about power. It's the ability to force or influence people. But that's what you do with money, right? So I go to a restaurant, and I can force people to cook a meal for me exactly as I want and bring it to my table. It's power, right? I go to an Apple store, and they have to give me an iPhone 15 Pro, right? Thanks to my money. It's basically a kind of power, right? You get things done. And so, and the thing is, it works everywhere. Maybe last week, yeah, yeah, you have some influence in your office, but not really in your family. Actually, money works everywhere, right? Which is why people love money. They want money. It does everything. Of course, money, it's not exactly the same as power. Last week, we talked about mainly how you use it. But money, you can earn it. You can give it away. You can save it. All that stuff, it's slightly different. It's much more of a means, a means to get something. And of course, that's actually what people do, right? I mean, to be honest, no one actually wants money. We want the thing that money can buy you, right? People want security. They see, okay, my bank account, it's in the six figures. I feel safe.

I feel secure. Whatever happens, I'm secure. Or they want the comfort, the nice, satisfying life. And how do you get that? Well, money or status, right? Approval. You know, if I earn enough, then yeah, I, you know, people will think well of me. Or maybe even when you're young, my parents, right?

[7 : 33] They will think well of me if I, I'm a doctor or a lawyer and I earn good money and that kind of thing. I don't know what it is for you. You know, if, if you would suddenly lose your job or you log into your bank account and it's been hacked and there's nothing left, you know, what is the thing that you fear? Is it, do you fear what people will think of you? Is it, do you fear for your security or for your lifestyle? It kind of helps us see, right? Well, what's really going on? But yeah, everyone wants money. Everyone needs money and, and, and we need money, right? We can't, you know, live in a monastery and just grow our own vegetables and we can't live like that, right? We live here in Hong Kong.

We need money. We need to save it. We need to spend it. And that's okay because money in a way is, it's just neutral. It's just a means to an end. And so it's not a bad thing. No, I think the thing that's, it's really going on, right? Is it's about our hearts. Money is a means, but how do we use it? What do we use it for? And then if you look in the Bible, Christian living is, it's very different. So let me just give you a few verses that show how in the New Testament Christians used to live.

So first of all, of course, they don't idolize money. 1 Timothy 6, 17, as for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. Why would the rich be haughty? Well, because they get their status from their money, but don't do that. Don't be haughty. Don't set your security, your hopes on riches. So don't idolize it, certainly. But more than that, how about earlier in the chapter? Contentment. So Paul says, well, if we have food and clothing with these, we shall be content. And with just the basics and that's fine. We don't need anything else, just food and clothing. Now, I don't know how that's, if that's how you live, right? Certainly I don't. The basics, actually, are you okay with losing money? Hebrews 10, 34, some Christians, they're not doing well now. And the writer says, Hey, few years ago, you were really doing well. Why?

Well, you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property. People stole your stuff and that was fine. So which would include your money, right? People were okay with losing your money. You know, your stocks overnight, they go down 20%. Would you feel, yeah, that's fine. Who cares? I don't think we are really like that, right? Is that how we live? That money just isn't worth very much.

[10 : 17] And then, of course, going even further, how about giving? Because Christians in the Bible, they give generously. One Timothy again, the rich, well, they are to do good, to be rich in

good works, to be generous and ready to share. They give generously. They just have money and others need it.

Yeah, sure. Here, have it. You need it. Giving, and it just doesn't matter how much. Here, you generously giving, and not just generously, giving actively. So this crazy passage from 2 Corinthians 8, we want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia. For in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints. So here were poor Christians, and they just gave beyond their means. And they were begging, Paul, please, can we give more? Can we join in this giving?

Right? Giving actively, not just when there's a need, but begging to give away their money. Again, how actively are we looking? Yeah, we have a love offering, and people here are so generous, but that's kind of, hey, can you give to this? Are people actually looking? Right? Are we planning? How can I give more to mission? I've got a raise. Great. How can I give this money away? I don't think we live like that, right? Many of us, you know, we fall short. We're not like this.

We don't idolize money, maybe, hopefully, but we are not yet like this. Now, what is the secret? How come these Christians in the New Testament fought like this? Well, let's look now to that passage in the Sermon on the Mount, because Jesus really tells us, okay, this is how you should think about money. And if we get that, then yeah, that will hopefully help us. And what does Jesus say?

[12:28] Well, we want to use our money for God. As Christians, we want to use it for God. We want to give it, because that has eternal value. It has eternal value. Because let's look again at Matthew 6. You can open the passage if you've closed it in your Bibles or in the bulletin.

Matthew 6, verse 19 and 20. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in and steal. Right? There's two kinds of treasure. It's all about treasure, but there's on earth and in heaven. And the thing is, treasure on earth, it doesn't last.

Right? It's pretty, it's temporary. Moth and rust destroy it. I mean, we know that things break, right? I had to get my car fixed this week to get it road worthy, so keep it driving. All the time, all this, you know, things break down. And my kids, oh, dad, my earphones broke again. Can I have new ones? These things break, right? That's, they don't last. Your money can get suddenly taken away. It can be stolen, right? Thieves, they still exist in Hong Kong. But, you know, the stock market, the economy, it doesn't last. And of course, ultimately, there's death, right? Whatever you have, when you die, you can't take it with you. It gets left behind. And then what will happen?

And Jesus says, that's treasure on earth. But compare that with treasure in heaven. In heaven, well, no moth, no rust, no thieves. You won't die, right? The idea is this will last forever.

[14:10] This is something that has far more value because it will last. It doesn't get taken away. So clearly, that's the better deal, right? It lasts. So who cares about treasure on earth? Because, you know, you will lose it anyway. It's far better to have treasure in heaven.

And actually, all those verses I quoted, that is the motivation. So let's look at some of those verses again. You joyfully accepted the plundering of your property. Why? Since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one, right? You've got something much better, something that will last. So you didn't mind about the stuff that they took from you.

For we brought nothing into the world. We cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing with these, we'll be content. Why do we need no more than the basics? Well, we can't take it with us anyway, right? So yeah. Or the rich again, they are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future. So that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

And you can see Jesus teaching, you know, what really has value, what will last. That is, what drives all this Christian living. Now, I don't know if you like Monopoly. It takes a bit long, but at some point we discovered Monopoly Deal. Do you know that game? It's kind of fun, right? It's a card game. It's quick. But yeah, it's all about money, right? And then you get millions and millions and you know, three million and two million and five million and a property on the peak. And it's all very exciting, right? Except that 10 minutes later, the game is over and it goes into the box, right? And

then you go into the real world and you need real money. Well, if this passage is true, that real money you think is real is the same as this. Because in a few years, you're going to be dead or Jesus will return and your money is just as worth as much as this one, right? It is. It's, yeah, it's true, right? That's what Jesus says. And so, yeah, I don't mind losing at a game because I'm, you know, it's only 10 minutes and then it's worthless. So in a way, that's what should drive us, right? We know it's okay if we don't have as much money as we want. It's okay if we lose some, it's okay to give it away because it's not worth very much, right? I mean, Jesus says, yeah, you want treasure in heaven. It's not that Jesus, yeah, he wants us to be monks. Jesus is a hardcore investor and he gives us the ultimate investment tip. Here, here's the thing that will last, right? I know the future markets. This is what will be worthless. This will be what is worth everything. So invest in this. That is what Jesus is saying, right? Treasure in heaven. Now, it's something we don't talk much about, right? How often do we talk about treasure in heaven? I mean, how do you get it? What do you, what is it even? I mean, Jesus often talks about rewards and I think it's linked, right? Whoever gives a cup of water to a child, to one who believes in me, will by no means lose his reward. The parable of the talents, right? The servants, they get a reward. In the Sermon on the Mount, you know, if you love your enemies, you get a reward. If you get persecuted, you get a reward, right? Spreading the gospel, mission work, giving later, right? The rich young man, what does Jesus tell him to do? Well, sell your possessions, give to the poor, you will have treasure in heaven. All these things, basically everything about living for Jesus. So clearly, this is something real. Jesus thinks this is something that should motivate us, something that makes a difference. That is, he's not just joking. He's telling us something, look, yeah, this is real.

[18:13] It's something you benefit from. I mean, some people, they read verse 19 and they say, okay, it's about not being selfish, right? Because verse 19 says, do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth. But then look at verse 20. What does it say? Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven. So this is definitely something that you yourself benefit from. At the same time, you know, I don't know what you think because then you read this and maybe you think heaven will be like being Scrooge McDuck, right? And you're kind of, you're swimming in your money and this is basically what you're doing.

That can't be the case, right? That you, okay, I'm going to serve God and give to the poor, but actually I don't care about the poor and I don't care about God. I just want treasure. That's not the thing here, right? I think if you read it, if you read it in context, it's much more other-centered, much more God-centered. It is about loving others. It's about loving God and yet you benefit from it. I mean, so often in the Bible, you know, joy is something you share, right? So, you know, I tell someone the gospel and they will be with me in heaven and that's, you know, it's not just that's good for them. It's also, you know, I've got joy from them being there and us being together and we both together glorify God for what he's been doing through me in getting that person saved and, right? Joy is something shared and so the good things we do, we, you know, it is for others and yet we also benefit because of the joy or maybe sometimes it talks about responsibility, right? The treasure can be like more responsibility and which is a loving thing, right? Serving others. It's a God-centered thing because what is the greatest treasure?

Like Jesus, right? So will you have more joy in Jesus? Will you experience more of Jesus? Will you work more closely with Jesus? Something like that. We don't really know. Jesus, at least Jesus just told us, but he doesn't. But yeah, it's, the idea is it's God-centered, it's other-centered and yet it is something that's really great, something we should want as Christians.

And so Jesus says he wants active investment. Jesus wants you to be active, right? The tense here, you can't see it well, but it's a continuous sense. So keep laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

It's not like a one-time deposit. Keep laying up or later in the passage, seek first the kingdom. No, no, it's keep seeking first the kingdom. Keep doing it. And maybe you're here, you're not a Christian and people call you a seeker because you're seeking. And then at some point, I guess you find Jesus and you stop being a seeker. Now Jesus wants us all to keep being seekers all of our life.

[21:13] Keep seeking the kingdom. Keep putting God first, which includes, you know, our living for Jesus, our time, our energy, our home, and our money. Yeah. So don't cut off money. No, use it for God. Use it for the gospel. And then there's more reasons than the value. I'm not going to go into those next few verses about, you know, where your treasure is there, your heart will be also, right? It's safe to invest in Jesus because that our heart will be drawn to him. You know, uh, if we invest in

this world, our hearts are drawn to this world and we will love this world. And it's like a bad eye that in fact changes everything in your life and you get conflict. Jesus says, you don't want that, but I don't have time to go into that. Basically you hear it, right? Be a good investor, maximize your treasure, live for the gospel with, with all your life because later it's worthless.

I mean, a few weeks ago, if you know, we had this trip in India and, uh, I don't know if we didn't know this, but apparently the Indian rupee is a protected currency. So if you're a foreigner, you can't take it out of India. You just need to leave it. Now, so, so, so what do you do?

Well, it's obvious, right? You exchange it. You want to exchange as much as possible. Basically you budget, right? Okay. The rest of my time in India, this is how much I need. So that's what I'll keep. And all the rest I exchange. That makes sense, right? If we were Hong Kongers, that makes sense to us. Well, that should be our attitude now, right? Look at your life here. Well, what do you need for the rest of your life? And well, the rest, exchange it, you know, turn it into treasure in heaven, be generous, be rich in good works, support the gospel, support missionaries, love the poor and the needy. That's, I think that's what Jesus is saying, right? So basically, yeah, save on your expenses here so you can give more to the gospel, give more to treasure. That's, that's what Jesus says. And now saving, I don't know, uh, some of us, of course, we don't have very much. So it is really depends on who you are and you know, there, there's no fixed rules and amounts and everything. [23 : 31] The Bible doesn't work like that, but you know, have you considered your living standards? You know, how much do we really need? Uh, do we need less than what we have now? Well, maybe downsize or when you have a raise rather than upgrades, you know, keep it the same and, you know, increase your giving. Now I don't hear me say you should live as, as poorly and miserly as possible. And you can't never spend anything and never enjoy anything. That's not true because partly, you know, it's good to enjoy yourself, right? It gives you a break. You can go on holiday because if you go on holiday, you get refreshed. And if you'd never go on holiday, you get burnt out.

And then how can you be rich in good works? And how can you be, you know, be discipling people if you're burnt out? You can't, right? So it's good to go on holiday. I guess you could save a lot of money by living in a village near the border or something. Yeah. But you have a two hour commute each way, each day, and you never can go to CG and you can never disciple people and you can never do anything good. And there's a trade off there between what, what is, what is sensible, what's reasonable. And, uh, of course, but if you can easily save something, why not? You know, you're going to go on holiday. Okay. I can go on a cheaper holiday or on an expensive holiday. Which one shall I do? Why not the cheaper one? And I don't know about you, but I mean, if I go on holiday one month after coming back, it's like, I've never been away, right? I've completely forgotten my holiday. If I'm going to forget it anyway, then why spend too much on it? Right? It's not going to last. I hope you get the point, right? Well, why not? Because yeah, if you say, if you can give, you can give, you know, to the gospel work here at Watermark, we have missional justice partners, maybe missionaries, you know, there's people serving the Lord full time and they don't get a salary. They get, they are supported by other individuals in the church. So, uh, if you don't know, if you know some, ask if you can support them, you know, uh, or if you don't know any, ask us, we can put you in touch. You know, Jesus, this is what Jesus is doing right now, right? What are we, why are we still waiting for that treasure later? Well, the gospel is going out. Uh, there's mission work. So yeah, that's what he wants us to do. If you don't know anyone, uh, but yeah, manage your money well, try to budget, try to save, and then try to give. That's the basic application, right? And maybe you've never learned to do that. Uh, can understand, especially when you're young. And so actually one thing we're going to do in December, we're going to do a, a practical finance course going to be taught by Oscar, who is an elder and a real hero in the term kind of with money and finance. But basically it's for kind of university students, for young graduates, just learning the basics of budgeting, you know, how to save money. Uh, you know, some basics about investing, how to plan to give and those kinds of things, just basic learning how to manage your money. Uh, that should be really great. Uh, two Wednesday evenings in December at the CC six and 13 December, uh, please join that. Well, we'll put it in the bulletin next week, but, uh, yeah, that should be a very helpful, right? If you don't exactly know how to do this kind of thing, but, but that is how Jesus wants us to live. You know, don't really care about your money and possessions here. It's, it's only temporary instead do as much good as possible.

That will last forever. Uh, I love this quote by Jim Elliott, who kind of gave up, uh, his life in the U S to go and be a missionary and got killed for it. He said this, he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose. Right? He's no fool. He's, he's, that's wise.

[27 : 31] That's how we should live. And yet when I hear that, I guess when we hear that, that, that feels so scary, right? When I say this, Hey, just, just give and you know, don't focus on money, focus on God's kingdom.

Don't worry about it. If I use my money for God, right? I mean, if you use your money for God, what won't I lose out? Right? What, uh, how about my needs? Uh, you know, will I, can I do this? It feels so insecure, right? It feels so unsafe. I know that's how I feel. I think that that's how you feel. And that's a real fear. It's understandable, you know, giving money away. It feels risky.

Well, that's why Jesus goes on in Matthew to that next passage. And he's saying, Hey, we can use our money for God. Yes, we can do this. And why? Because he will take care of us.

We can use our money for God because he will take care of us. Don't be anxious, right? That's in that second passage the whole time. Verse 25. Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on and all through that passage. You know, why are you anxious? Don't be anxious. Don't be anxious. God will take care of you.

[28 : 52] And that is not a kind of no worries, hakuna matata, live on the beach with your guitar. And it's also not kind of do crazy, expensive things and God will be your safety net or something.

You know, there's wisdom. No, what is the opposite of being anxious? Verse 33. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you.

Just focus on God's kingdom and you will get food and clothing and drink and God will take care of it. That is what he does, right? Can you store up treasure in heaven? Yes, you can.

Because God will take care of you. And why? Well, all through the passage. Well, he's your heavenly father. Father, your heavenly father, your heavenly father, right? Fathers, what do they do? They care for their children. They love their children. They provide for their children. That's what fathers do. And this is not any father. This is your heavenly father, right? He's the almighty creator who rules every single atom in the universe. He can take care of you. He wants to take care of you and he can do it. So, yeah, you're free, right? And there's so much evidence of that. Jesus says, come on, look at the birds, right?

Look at the birds. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly father feeds them. And look at the flowers that are here today, gone tomorrow, but they're more beautiful than Solomon.

[30 : 25] And God does all that. God is in the business of providing. Look at that. And that's just birds and flowers. Aren't you much more valued than birds? Aren't you much more worthy than those flowers? Oh, you of little faith, right? God will take care of you. Or end of verse 25, is not life more than food and a body more than clothing? I mean, God gave you life. You are not just a bunch of molecules. You're not just some dust. You are alive. God made you alive. And he also made you to need food. Do you think he kind of makes you alive and then not give you the food that you need to keep living? Of course. God won't back out now, right? He's giving you life. He will give you what you need. And so, don't run after money. Verse 31, therefore, do not be anxious saying, what shall we eat?

Or what shall we drink? Or what shall we wear? For the Gentiles seek after all these things. And your heavenly father knows that you need them all. And the Gentiles, the people who don't know God, that's how they live. Because they don't have a heavenly father. They're orphans. They need to look after themselves. And they run after money because they hope that will care for them. And they hope money will give them security. They need money. But you don't because you have a heavenly father. You are not an orphan. And the God of the universe is your father. And so, you don't have to be like them. You can live differently. You are free to do so because you have your heavenly father.

Isn't that wonderful, right? Back then, of course, food, clothing, they were the basics, right? It was a much more basic society. Of course, we have other needs. But doesn't God provide us with everything you need. Maybe you're worried about your status, your approval. And, you know, if I, less money, less status. Think about the status you have as a Christian through the gospel. You are a child of God. You're going to spend forever reigning with Christ. You're going to be judging angels, right? Who cares about being a HSBC premier customer, right? Who cares?

Right? James 1, we saw it a few weeks ago. Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation. You know, think of who you are in Christ. Or control. Maybe, you know, control is something we often feel we need. Again, you're in Christ. God promises that all things work together for your good. Everything that happens in life is under control for your good, managed on your behalf by the king of the universe, Jesus, who died for you, right? It's okay. And so, yeah, the bottom line, keep seeking the kingdom. Keep living for Jesus. Keep doing the right thing. Keep loving others. Keep using your money for the gospel. You can't keep it anyway. Use it. Use it for God, and he'll look after you.

[33 : 28] Doesn't mean being completely careless, right? Birds, they still come out of their nest, and they look for worms, and those kind of things. You know, you should have a job, and you should plan and be wise, but we can live distinctively. We can be radical with our whole life and all our money, because he will take care of us, as long as we have our eyes on Jesus, right? As long as we have our eyes on Jesus. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

There's this connection between our treasure and our heart. Yeah, if we focus on this world, that's where our heart will go. If we focus on heaven, on Jesus, yeah, that is what we need.

And so, focus on your father and your loving savior, right? See his, their love, their grace, dwell on it. So, you're absolutely sure of grace and love, and that you know that, you know, God will take care of you. You know, and you know that being with him forever is the best, as we sang earlier, right? That it can't, nothing in this world can compare. Well, so that money just loses its appeal. Wouldn't that be such a wonderful, freeing way to live? Just liberating.

And Jesus doesn't want to burden us, he wants to liberate us. Don't worry about those things. Live for me. You can do it. Such a witness to the world, all because of Jesus.

Well, why don't we take some time to reflect on that? And we're going to reflect on it more in a moment as we have the Lord's Supper, but just now, take a minute. Here's two questions. You know, how do you value treasure on earth and in heaven? You know, think about it. How do you compare the two?

[35 : 07] What do you value more? And are you sure of your heavenly father's love? And let's think about that for a moment as the band comes up and the stewards come up, and then I'll pray, and then we'll go to the Lord's Supper.

Thank you.

Let's pray together. Our Father, we love you and we thank you. We had no hope and we had to seek everything in the things of this world, and yet you loved us. You made us your own, and we are yours.

Please free us. Free us from shackles. Free us from doubts. Free us from anxiety. That we can just live for you. That we would live with our whole lives, and including our finances for you, for what you are doing in the world through the gospel, and that we would be a great witness. Lord, we want everyone to know you. Your family, there's plenty of space in your house, at your table for others. Would you do that? Would you use us for that, and help us to be willing to be used by you, to be free to do so. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.