

Jesus Christ Is Lord - Lord of Our Money (1)

by J. Glyn Owen

Jesus Christ is Lord over our finances, and we must manage our wealth in a way that honors Him.

Duration: 47:05

Scripture: Matthew 6:19

Topics: "Money"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the lordship of Christ and the accumulation of wealth. He emphasizes that Jesus set a clear limit for His followers when it comes to accumulating wealth, as seen in Matthew 6:19-20. The preacher warns against the love of money and the pursuit of material possessions, as they do not bring true satisfaction. He urges listeners to submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ in their attitudes towards wealth and to avoid becoming rebels in this area. The preacher also highlights the importance of the family and the potential damage that can be caused by going beyond the boundaries set by God.

Transcript

Our subject this morning is the lordship of Jesus Christ, and in particular, his lordship of our mummy. I'm surprised to see so many in church this morning. I must pursue that line of thought anyway, but it's good to see you.

Shouldn't religion be kept out of our pockets? That's a question that was asked me some time ago. Practice your religion in your churches and even in your closets in your home, if you will, but keep it out of business. Keep it out of our pockets.

Leave us our pockets to ourselves. I ought to tell you that really, I am obeying orders this morning in more ways than one. Session asked me some months ago to address myself to this subject, and I didn't want to address myself to the subject in cold, as it were, in the cold.

I wanted to bring it into its proper context. At that time, I was envisaging, faintly envisaging, a series on the lordship of Christ, and I thought that this is the umbrella under which we ought to bring in such a subject as this. We need to see every subject in its context.

If we take a subject out of its context, we can easily err, though we say the right things. We don't see them in perspective. Now, I believe that this is the proper perspective for our subject today.

It's the total, the absolute lordship of Jesus Christ. We should begin with this question, what think ye of Christ? Now, if you reply to that question in terms which the New Testament would concede to be genuinely Christian, then I don't need to apologize for taking on this subject today. Should religion then be kept out of our pockets? Well, not if it is biblical religion.

I don't think it's ever really got home to us Christian people how dearly the Jews of the Old Testament paid for their religious adherence and practice. I've heard many good, biblically-orientated Christians talk about the Jews as giving their tithes, as if that were the sum total. You read your Bible carefully, and you will find that it cost the Old Testament Jew at least one-third of his annual earnings in the practice of his religion.

The tithe was just a stipulated and a significant part given, as it were, in total all at once, or as income came in. There were a multitude of other things, sacrifices, the firstfruits of this and the firstfruits of that, a whole host of things to be added on to the tithe, and so we speak of tithes and free will offering. The tithe was a requirement.

The free will offerings were over and above the tithe, not part of it, not instead of it, but beyond it. And it was only at that point that the ancient Jew thought that he was beginning really to give. Having given his tithe, he began to offer to God.

Is it conceivable, is it conceivable that the standard for those to whom Messiah has come, for whom Messiah, Son of the Living God, has died, who having ascended upon high, has sent the Holy Spirit to indwell our hearts, who gives us not only to possess eternal life, but to know that we have it in him? Is it conceivable that God requires less of us? Think it up. Now, biblical religion in both Old and New Testaments, therefore, is a very expensive matter. Somehow or other, this has become blurred.

Probably it's the fault of us preachers, but I believe also it is the fault of Christian people. You see, we only nibble at the Bible. We read little passages that we take our fancy to, and we have nice thoughts from here and from there, and so we go back and back to them again.

But we don't read the whole of the Bible, and so we don't know what we should know. Now, this subject is going to occupy us for at least three Sunday mornings when it is my turn to preach. I hope you won't stay away for that reason.

But I want to tell you three areas that we are going to look into. One this morning, another, and so forth until we conclude. First of all, I want to speak this morning about Christ's lordship and its relevance to the matter of accumulating wealth.

Secondly, next time, to its eventual possession by us. When we've got it, how do we relate to it? And then thirdly, to its ultimate distribution by us in the name of our Lord. Now those are the three areas, but this morning we're going to look at the lordship of Christ and the accumulation of wealth.

I have three main things to say, and I believe they're biblical. You must tell me if they're not. First of all, by example and by precept, Jesus set a limit to the accumulation of wealth by his followers.

By example and by precept, Jesus set a clear limit for the accumulation of wealth by his followers. Matthew chapter 6 verses 19 and 20 read like this, and you and I have read them many, many times, but let's hear their message again today. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break through and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break through and steal.

Now however those words are to be understood, and I'm not going into the intricate details of their exposition this morning, however they are to be understood, they clearly prohibit the hoarding of wealth by Christians for themselves. Now you come to this text any way you like and bring any understanding and any valid exposition offered by any scholar, any New Testament scholar, and you simply cannot reduce it to mean less than that. These words clearly prohibit the hoarding of wealth by Christians for themselves, the unlimited hoarding of wealth for ourselves.

Now John R. W. Stott has a most illuminating comment on this subject just as he has indeed upon so many subjects, and I want to quote just a little from him because he has it so concise here. It is important, says Stott, to face squarely and honestly the question, what was Jesus prohibiting when he told us not to lay up treasures for ourselves on earth? It may help, he says, if we begin by listing what he was and is not forbidding. First, there is no ban on possessions in themselves.

Now I agree with Stott, or I wouldn't be quoting this. Scripture nowhere forbids private property. Secondly, saving for a rainy day is not forbidden to Christians, or for that matter a life-assurance policy which is only a kind of saving by self-imposed compulsion.

On the contrary, Scripture praises the ant for storing in the summer the food it will need in the winter, and declares that the believer who makes no provision for his family is worse than an unbeliever, 1 Timothy 5 8. Thirdly, in the negative, we are not to despise, but rather to enjoy the good that our Creator has given us richly to enjoy. 1 Timothy 4 verses 3 and 4 and 1 Timothy 6 verse 17. So he sums up, neither having possessions, nor making provision for the future, nor enjoying the gifts of a good Creator are included in the ban on earthly treasure storage.

Now the second part of what he says. What then? What is our Lord referring to? What Jesus forbids his followers is not the... is rather, sorry, what Jesus forbids his followers is the selfish accumulation of wealth. Notice the words.

Do not lay up for yourself, do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth. Extravagance and luxurious living, the hard-heartedness which does not feel the colossal need of the world's underprivileged people, the foolish fantasy that a person's life consists in the abundance of the things that he possesses, and the materialism which ties our hearts to this earth. For the Sermon on the Mount repeatedly refers to the heart, and here Jesus declares that our heart, notice, our heart always follows our treasure, whether down to earth or up to heaven.

If your treasure is on earth, says Jesus, your heart will be there. If your treasure is in heaven, your heart will be there. In a word, to lay up treasure on earth does not mean being provident, making sensible provision for the future, but being covetous like misers who hoard and materialists who always want more.

This is the real snare of which Jesus warns us here. Now I think that is so clear, and to my mind so compelling, so logical, so rational, so true to Scripture, I'm not going to add to it. I come back then to my basic statement, which I believe is biblically best.

There are limits to the propriety of a Christian accumulating wealth for himself. There are limits. Jesus' own example needs hardly to be referred to.

It's too familiar to have to talk about it. Paul's beautiful statement in 2 Corinthians 8 9 summarizes it. You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so

that you through his poverty might be made rich.

How poor? Well you ask the angels who saw him in the manger. Ask the folk whose boat he borrowed, whose room he borrowed in order to meet with his disciples, because the Son of Man had not anywhere to lay his head. Foxes of holes, and the birds of the air of nests, but the Son of Man was not a place whereon to lay his head.

He rode on a borrowed donkey. He was buried in a borrowed tomb, and so forth. He did not amass wealth.

He would multiply loaves and fishes to meet the positive needs of men, but he never anywhere multiplied stone, changed stones into gold or multiplied gold pieces. There are limits therefore to the propriety of Christians accumulating wealth. Secondly, in the acquisition of such wealth as permissible, there are clear biblical principles to guard and to guide the obedient.

Now you're following, I'm sure you are. As a Christian we cannot say the sky is the limit. The more I get, the better.

Not so. There are limits set in Scripture. Life was not meant to get as much material wealth together as I possibly can.

That's not what we're here for. That's not why the Lord has kept you to this day, or myself. There are limits, but now in the acquisition of such wealth as is permissible, there are clear biblical principles to guard and to guide the obedient.

What are they? I just want to mention three parameters within which we must keep at all times. One, the well-being of our neighbors. Now Jesus insisted that love for our neighbors is something which is an integral part of our Christian life.

It must be. He summarized the law and the prophets in terms of the two main commandments, you remember. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.

And then he said there's a second, and the second is like to it. It's not just that the two commandments stand like two pillars unrelated the one to the other. That pillar has got no relation to this one.

But somehow or other, says Jesus, there's a link between them. The one is somehow related to the other. You cannot be right with God and love God if you don't love your neighbor as well.

They're interrelated. And you remember our Lord's interpretation of who our neighbor is when he spoke of the of the parable of the Good Samaritan. The neighbor is the person in need, not necessarily the person who lives next door.

It'll include the person next door, but fundamentally the neighbor is the person in need, whoever he is. You may be white, you may be black. The man in need may be quite different, maybe the opposite, or anything in between.

But the man or the woman in need is a neighbor to us who are fellow creatures with him, or with her, or with them here on this terrestrial ball. Now we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. We love ourselves wrongly, of course.

Of course the Bible speaks of self-esteem. We are to esteem ourselves because we are creatures of God. He made us, and we should never fail to show esteem for God's creature.

Be it an embryo in the womb, or be it an old person whose capacity to think has come to an end, we should never cease to show respect for a creature of God. And we should respect ourselves because God made us, God made our bodies, God made our minds, God made us in total. But self-love is a different thing from self-esteem.

The New Testament never tells us to love ourselves, and Jesus does not commend us because we love ourselves. Rather, Jesus tells us that we are to take up our cross daily, and to go out, what for? Bearing it, dying on it. Self-esteem is one thing.

Self-love is another thing. And we've got to get this straight. You and I are to crucify ourselves.

You and I are to reckon the old self to be dead. You and I are to mortify ourselves, not please ourselves, deny ourselves. That's what the New Testament says.

And you can't love the self that wants to sin. You can respect the self because God made the self, but you can't love it. Now, we may love ourselves wrongly, and you know how you love yourself.

I know how I love myself, and my own whims and my own ways. As you wrongly love yourself, you should properly love your neighbor as yourself. Now you say, what has this got to do with a subject in view? Well, it means this.

I've got to be very careful that I don't make my wealth at the expense of my neighbor. Whether I'm in business of any kind, or whether I'm in one of the professions I can charge extortionately for my services, and I can demand what is outrageously improper, or in common conversation with people, and in common dealings with people, I must be very careful that I do not go beyond the limits of Scripture in relation to my neighbor. Now, if you really read the Old Testament carefully, the book of Exodus, and the book of Deuteronomy, and Leviticus too, but Deuteronomy especially, you will find that God is very concerned about the neighbor, even the stranger within our gates.

The Jewish farmer had to leave the corners of the fields ungathered when the harvest came. Why? For the neighbor, the poor neighbor. God was concerned for the poor.

Now, we couldn't do that today. If you left your corn grow in the corner, well it would be, it would, it would be incapable of eating. You couldn't eat it anyway.

But there are other ways and means whereby the New Testament requires us to be very, very careful of how we treat our neighbors, neighbor in the New Testament sense. Now, this goes back as far as the Mosaic law at any rate. It's reflected in the Ten Commandments, but it's very especially underlined by the prophets.

You must be careful of your neighbor. You can't treat God right if you don't treat your neighbor right. If you're mistreating and misusing your neighbor, you're not right with God.

You may think it, but you're not. That's what the prophet said. Listen to some of them.

Jeremiah 22, 13 goes, Woe to him who builds his palace on unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice, making his countrymen work for nothing, not paying them for their labor. That kind of thing went

on. Listen to Amos, who's the champion in this respect.

This is what the Lord says, Amos 2 verses 6 to 8, For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. They sell the righteous for silver. They sell the righteous for silver.

This is in the court of law you see. Here is a righteous man and a charge is being brought against him, but somebody offers the judge silver. The righteous is sold and his case is lost.

They sell the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample on the heads of the poor and upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed. Oh there are many other things there.

Let me give you another passage, Amos 8 verses 4 and 6. Amos is full of them. Hear this, he says, you who trample the needy. Have you got the picture? You who walk over the heads of the needy.

You trample on them. You put your heel on them. You don't care for them.

You're heartless, he says. Hear this, you who trample the needy and do away with the poor of the land. Do away with them, of course, by killing them or starving them.

Saying, and this is your concern, and now Amos explains why they do that, you see, and this is the concern. When will the new moon be over that we may sell grain? There was the festival of the new moon and the Jews didn't allow you to trade on that festival. So you see, the people that Amos is addressing were saying, when is the new moon over? When's the festival over so that we can sell again and make gain, gain, gain.

They come to the house of God, but when they're in the house of God, they're itching to get out because they want to be on the business of making more money at anybody's expense. Now that's the picture. Skimp, he goes on, the same about the Sabbath, and the Sabbath be ended, that we may market wheat.

Skimping the measure, boosting the price, cheating with dishonest scales, buying the poor with silver and the needy for a pair of sandals, selling even the sweepings with the wheat. Oh my, I could say something about all of these things, but you see, it's unjust, it's unjust, it's social injustice, it's maltreating the neighbor. Malachi says something similar.

I will come near to you for judgment, says the prophet through Malachi. I will be quick to testify against the sorcerers, yes, we understand that. The adulterers, yes, we agree with that.

The perjurers, yes, we agree with that. Against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me, says the Lord God Almighty. Jesus unquestionably walked in the footmarks of the prophets, whose sentiments laid such emphasis upon the necessity for a due concern for our neighbor's well-being.

And if I am making fat and making rich by robbing my neighbor, God will ask me to answer for it. He'll require it. You cannot make rich by trampling on a fellow human creature without having to answer God.

Secondly, another parameter, and we've got to keep within it, we cannot make rich at the expense of the spiritual well-being of our families. Now I know there are many single people in our congregation this morning. Will you bear with me? I can't mark you out.

You're all looking so happy. But anyway, you must bear with me for a moment. I'm thinking now particularly of men and women that have contracted together in marriage.

Do you believe that this was a divine ordinance, and you came together as man and wife, and you covenanted before God that you'd be true to one another, and together you'd be true to Him, and that any offspring from the marriage you would receive from the Lord, as the Bible says? Are you remaining loyal to that? You know it is possible, because of the deceitfulness of riches, it is possible for us men and women to think that the main thing in life is to accumulate wealth, and therefore we forget the moral and the spiritual well-being of our families, and we just press forward, give me more, give me more. And poor mother's got to cope with three, four, five kids at home, and sometimes it's like a jungle in a lovely house, and we breed pagans who know neither the Word of God, nor the facts of Scripture, nor the truths of the Gospel, simply because Dad has sold his soul for wealth. Now my friends, if I'm speaking very hard this morning, you'll forgive me, but I feel after studying this subject afresh, I feel that we simply have to do it.

We simply have to do it. I really didn't know how to illustrate this, and I'm just going to give you one illustration of the importance of the family, and you can bring despise and damage eternal to your family if you go beyond the parameters that God has set. Now there's nothing wrong in riches as such.

The Bible doesn't say that. In the love of riches, yes. In the love of riches that goes beyond the propriety mark.

The illustration that I would give, of course, the first classical one in the Old Testament is that of the character Lot. He brought his family into the most disastrous disgrace of any man in the Old Testament, all because he was obsessed with becoming rich. He did a number of things.

First of all, he separated himself and his family and his servants from the only one person that could help him spiritually. Lot owed everything spiritually to Abraham. Everything he knew about God, he owed to Abraham.

But then it came that they began to quarrel, and the servants of Lot quarreled with the servants of Abram, so they had to divide. And Abram, the dear old man that he was, said, Well now, Lot, you must choose. Which way will you go? If you go this way, I go that way.

We must be going the opposite directions. And Lot, we're told, saw the green valleys of the valley of the Jordan. And he said something like this to him.

He said, My, that's the place to multiply cattle. That's the place for me. And he made for it, and we read in the quaint King James way, which is beautiful, he pitched his tent.

Not beautiful in one sense, but in terms of language, he pitched his tent towards Sodom. Ever after that, he separated from Abram, and his eyes were on Sodom, because you see, that was the headquarters. That's where all the money was made, and that's where all the money peopled were.

And he made for Sodom. He didn't ask, Is there a church in Sodom where I can send my children to Sunday school? Of course, I'm speaking in 20th century language now, and I'm applying it. He didn't ask what about the spiritual life of his wife in Sodom.

Indeed, he may have married a wife from Sodom, I'm not so sure. He didn't ask any question about spiritual life. He just saw the green grass, and the multiplication of cattle, and down he went, like a blind

man, as blind as a bat.

How did it turn out? You know, I'm ashamed to tell you about it. You read in Genesis 13. I won't go into all the gruesome details, but I see this man who had his faith from Abraham, at long last throwing his two daughters out to a mob of men, and telling them, Look, you do what you please with them.

Oh, men and women, fathers here this morning, listen. Wealth can intoxicate you morally to the extent there comes a point where you'll do anything. That's the sad thing about it.

What about his wife? She came under the judgment of God. What about himself? The Bible says he was saved by the skin of his teeth. I wonder whether there is someone here this morning who looks upon his family, and you know that this is the way that you've taken, and some of your boys, and some of your girls have suffered because you've given your time, and you've given your nights, and you've given your weekends to the seeking of illicit wealth.

Not wealth that is permissible, but illicit. You've gone beyond the bounds of propriety. Those who pursue riches should never do it at the expense of a neighbor, nor at the expense of their own families.

Your family, my friend, if you're a mother or a father, is God given, and you and I have a duty to our wives, or our husbands, or our children before anybody or anything else. Making a name in your profession, climbing the high ladder, comes second to that, and if you don't want to accept that responsibility, for God's sake don't get married, you young people. Keep away from it.

Wealth is not the God that we must worship. It must simply be the servant that we can use for the glory of God. Thirdly, the misuse of our own mental and physical powers.

It cannot be too often or too strongly stated that, though the Bible does not condemn riches per se, nor its limited pursuit as we have been trying to say, this is not the main purpose of our life in this world. Now we all find it difficult to say that to ourselves, but you know we have to. If Jesus Christ is your Lord in very reality, in very truth, you've got to look at yourself in the mirror and say, look chump, you're not in this world to become rich in the first place.

You're here for some other purpose. Beyond that, and you must put the acquisition of wealth that is right, you must put that in its proper perspective. Our God-given goal is not the acquisition of material wealth.

It is something beyond that. Now that being so, you see, it is a veritable prostitution of the divine gifts of life, health, and of the various abilities involved in such a pursuit. It is nothing short of robbing God of the proper use of time, talents, and physical energies.

I'll put it very bluntly to you. You and I have been given life right up to this moment. Why? Why? We have funerals here every week almost, sometimes two or three.

Why am I alive today rather than somebody else? Why are you here? I want to put it first negatively. It was not that you should get richer and richer and richer materially. You'll never come back to Knox again.

You haven't got your breath and your life and your energy from God to pursue wealth ad lib without limitation. You haven't, my friend. The gift of life and the gift of health and the gift of energy is given for another purpose beyond that, and whatever wealth we have is to be used in the pursuit of that larger goal beyond the acquisition of wealth.

All too often I encounter people, and other members of staff do, and other Christian workers do, who are drained of energy, mental and physical. They're too tired to worship. Some have told me that they go to sleep in the service.

They're too tired on a Sunday morning. Sometimes it's my sermons that are too long, of course, but anyway they're too tired. They can't keep up with it.

Now if you're over the 80 or 90, well all right, have a snooze, but in many cases it isn't that, and it isn't sickness, and it isn't old age. You know what it is? We've spent our energy on other things, and we have no energy for God. We're the same in the closet in the morning.

We can't wake up to pray. We're not alert when we pray, and so we really hardly ever pray, but in the pursuit of wealth we're in top gear. All our energies are moving together, and we're really like a beautiful jet moving.

We know where we're going, and we're ticking beautifully, but in the worship and service of God we haven't an hour, and we'll only serve him if we paid for it, if we get some gain from it, if somebody pats us on the back for it. Oh brothers and sisters in Christ, this cancer is reaching into our souls in this Western world, and sooner or later we've got to come to our senses. Thomas Hornblower Gill, that great man of God, reacts in his great hymn to this very thing.

Do you ever sing this? I don't know that we've sung it here, and I don't know why not. A second stanza goes, I would not give the world my heart, and then profess thy love. I would not feel my strength depart, and then thy service prove.

I would not with swift-winged zeal on the world's errands go, and labor up the heavenly hill with weary feet and slow. Doesn't that describe somebody here this morning? And then he rebels against the thought of it again. He says, oh not for thee, he says to God, not for thee my weak desires, my poorer, baser part.

Oh not for thee my fading fires, the ashes of my heart. Oh choose me, he says, in my golden days, in my dear joys have part. For thee the glory of my prime, the fullness of my heart.

Do you know anything of that holy rebellion against the crass materialism that is eating into our lives today? As always, the time has gone. There have been many psychological researches into this subject recently. I was particularly interested to hear, or rather to read, of researchers in the Northwestern University, USA, who have found that those state lottery winners spoke of their, in glowing terms of their success.

There never had been a day like it when they won the lottery. But on further questioning, to a man, to a woman, they acknowledged, they were less happy on a day-to-day basis than they were before. Why? Well psychologists try to explain it in this way.

They say that this was such a high, everything else was mediocre. Even the best in life had lost its glow because they had reached this high, and this was so central in the ambitions of people. Everything else was low in comparison.

And I came across this statement. Despite such woes as inflation and increased taxes, real disposable income for the average North American has risen more than 50% in the last 20 years. Now, we're not very happy with things today, any of us.

But listen to this. Let me repeat it. Despite such woes as inflation and increased taxes, real disposable income for an average North American has risen more than 50% in the last 25 years.

Why then, these psychologists ask, and I don't know whether they're Christian. They must be, I suppose. Why then do we not feel 50% richer? I tell you, it's because of the deceitfulness of riches which always gets us to the point where, having had so much, we always want more.

One of the old saints said, or was it a Greek philosopher, I'm not sure, who said that the acquisition of wealth is like drinking seawater. It doesn't quench your thirst at all. It only makes you ask for more, and more, and more.

And the more you drink, the more you want. And the more you get, the less satisfied you are. Brothers and sisters in Christ, I bring these sobering thoughts to you because, you see, we are discussing the lordship of Jesus Christ.

And if there is anything which is practical in your life and mine, surely this matter is. However much you've got, however little you've got, your attitude towards it is all important. You may have very little, but you may be living your days and dreaming your nights about having more, and more, and more.

So that money is as much a problem to you as to the man that owns the vast multitudes of millions. My plea this morning is this, that you and I, in our own individual situations, should be prepared by the grace of God to submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ in this area too. God save us from becoming rebels in this sphere, and do what is right in our own eyes, irrespective of consequences to ourselves, our families, our neighbors, or anyone else.

Because if we pursue that path, let's be sure of it, our very profit will be lost. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

Use your money to see that there's treasure in heaven, but there will be those there waiting your coming, and will come after you arrived. And in eternity you will find your influence around the throne of God, because you live for something beyond the material which you only have after coming into this world, and which you have to leave behind before you enter into a shroud. There are no pockets in a shroud.

What think ye of Christ? Has he a controversy with you or with me over this issue? Are we blinding ourselves? Are we living according to an illusion? Have we been deluded by riches? God help us. God help me. You know, I found it a terrible thing here in North America, even worse than in England, the challenge to become mercenary in one's thinking.

Let us pray for one another. Let us bear one another up in this struggle with principalities and powers. A world is crying for the gospel, and hundreds upon thousands upon thousands of men and women and boys and girls are starving physically as well as spiritually.

Let us pray. O Lord our God and Father, we bow humbly before you because this kind of truth enshrined in your word is not one that is very palatable to us. Sometimes all unknown to us, we are caught in the rat race, sometimes deliberately of course.

We make this our goal and our aim and our way of life. If these matters have influenced us beyond the bounds of propriety, O God, first forgive us, and then give us a sensitivity to your mind and to your heart

and to your will in the matter, and the ability to reorientate our thinking first, and then our way of behaving. Please, God, hear us today.

However many years there may lie before us in this world, we would use them for the glory of our Lord and our possessions likewise. Help us, help us. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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