

## Buying the building (2)

*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: 27 October 2013

Preacher: Chris Fry

[ 0 : 00 ] Weren't here last week, in fact quite a few people. Put your hand up if you were not here last week. Okay. Right, fine. Well, it's absolutely right for me to do this then because I need to give you some introduction.

What does the Bible say to us about this subject? Does it have anything to say about this subject? Or do we just sort of rely upon our sort of native intuition and sort of go to a financial advisor? Right, the background here, very quickly, is that the Brighton Railway Mission was founded in 1876. And then because so many people started getting involved with that work, moved to this premises in 1894.

And then the mission started to sort of morph from being associated with going to railway workers to actually working more in the local community.

We became a church in 1982. And then in the 1990s, there was a lot of uncertainty about who owned the building. And as a result of that, it was a hard time.

[ 1 : 10 ] It only really got terminated in 2005 when we reached an understanding, a Christian understanding, whereby we said, well, the National Railway Mission would act as a landlord.

And we here would act as a tenant. And we pay a pretty nominal rent to £2,500 a year. It's probably worth £30,000 a year, this whole building.

And for their part, you know, they would act as a landlord, but we would do all the repairs, which is exactly what we've done. So we thank God that over the last eight years or so, we've actually spent a quarter of a million pounds on the building.

And really, that's money that God's provided for us. Great. So last year, the opportunity to buy the freehold, so there'll be no more uncertainty, was raised.

And I said, well, what does the Bible have to say about this subject? Because it looks extremely practical down to earth. Does the Bible have anything to say? Oh, that's the figure. Yeah, £162,500, of which we have £12,500, so a nice round figure needed at £150,000.

[ 2 : 13 ] If anybody has that today, that would be sort of short-circuit the conversation. Could be. So, actually, that's not such a weird idea.

You know, you might just have that. Stranger things have happened. So, I said, well, actually, strangely, there is a story from the Bible which has to do with this odd building on the right-hand side, which is the tabernacle in the wilderness.

And we know it looked like that because God gave extremely clear instructions about this particular tent structure, which you see in the middle. This sort of tent structure.

You don't see it very well in the middle. Can we turn the lights off? Or whatever one's relevant. It's a little bit vague, isn't it? Just about makes it out. Okay. That's sort of like big windbreak enclosure around here.

Three times the size of the building here. And then this tent affair in the middle. And this is the tabernacle. You can read all about that in the book of Exodus. And we looked at that last week.

[ 3 : 24 ] And we said, okay, before we go any further, we need to understand that this place is not like that place because, firstly, it's not a house of God.

God actually lived in that tent. There was a very special presence of God when the people of Israel were going through the desert. God was in that tent.

And his presence was seen by a pillar of cloud that rose from the tent itself. Nor is our building a visual illustration in the same way that that tent-like building was.

So there were lots of illustrations here so that when the people saw these things, they could learn something about God and about how to come near to God. How it was possible to come near to God.

So they were taught that they had to come into a place. They had to make a sacrifice. That they had to be cleaned. So there's an altar here. And there's a cleaning point here.

[ 4 : 26 ] And then they needed to be ready to go into that tent. And only one person was able to go into the presence of God. The holy place. Inside the tent there were two places.

A holy place and a holy of holies. That's where the presence of God was. And, well, that was all a visual illustration. And everything about the dimensions and about the colour and about the procedures of that building spoke visually.

This building does not give you any visual illustration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Please don't look for it because you won't find it. Nor is it an icon or a monument.

Nobody is rushing to our doors from English Heritage and saying, fantastic building. It is not this. Which we were told last week was?

Salisbury. Salisbury Cathedral. Fantastic building. I'm so glad I have not got the upkeep of Salisbury Cathedral. What a massive task. I mean, this is a tension, isn't it?

[ 5 : 31 ] These great buildings of the past. But hundreds of thousands need to be spent on them just to keep them going. And they are inspiring in their own way. But we're far more pragmatic in town of earth about this building.

It's not any of those things. But it is something. And these were the things that we talked about briefly. A nice picture of Liz with one of hers.

That was probably Ebon. Was it Ebon? Probably. Yeah. A few years ago now. This is a place where we meet. This is a place where we listen to God's word like we're doing this morning. This is a place where we pray together.

As again, we did this morning. This is a place where we experience what it is to be a Christian. As we receive God's word. As our lives are changed. The Holy Spirit speaks to us and as we serve together.

This is a place of testimony. Around the walls here you'll see the stories of those who have gone before. Like Mrs. Gates over there. Does that show? No. Mrs. George Gates. She founded the railway mission in Brighton.

[ 6 : 32 ] Great guy up there. Who was a Sunday school teacher for years and years and years and years. And a couple of people hidden away in the back there. They tell their story. You won't get a plaque probably at the end of your life.

Because we don't do that anymore. But it would be great to be telling the stories to one another, wouldn't it? To say, I remember Ray. Well done, good and faithful servant.

Well, it's great for us to have that history behind us. Very pleased that we have the history behind us. Because that encourages us. Encourages us to know that God keeps his work going in these days.

And it's for a legacy. That's why we have a picture of a baby. As we had this morning, it's for a legacy. Because we don't believe that the gospel began and finished with us.

We're very keen that it should come on to the next generation. And it's a thrilling thing to know that over the past five or six years, where we've just had one family, now we've got probably five or six coming along there.

[ 7 : 35 ] Delighted. Delighted that that's happening. Because this is the future. Church. That's what the Bible has to say. And I would say it's economic wisdom. You can all do the sums.

If you're paying £30,000 a year. I'm not doing that at the moment. If we were paying £30,000 a year rent, £162,500 for the building doesn't feel like a big hit.

Seems like a sensible thing to do. And we're trying to safeguard the future. If we are in control of the building, we can decide what goes on here. We're not at risk of the local authority or the government saying, we can't do that.

It's our building. And we're in control of that process. And that will become increasingly important in these days when the benign environment of the government towards Christianity will diminish.

At this point, Jack, please read us Psalm 127. Buying the building, part two.

[ 8 : 39 ] What does the Bible have to say? We're going to look at this particular Psalm. And it kind of chose itself really because I wanted to have something about the building and I wanted to have something about babies.

And the two sort of come together very nicely in this Psalm, don't they? They're kind of an obvious fit. And as you read it, you can't help but feel this has got to be encouraging.

And it's got to be full of practical help. There are three life examples here. The first is a house. Could be a family. Could be a sort of family dynasty. But I'm happy to call it just a house. Building a house. You might not have built your own house. But you've probably seen it built. Here are the harpers. They're having a house built for them at the moment, aren't you?

Ross and Nicky. After the open market. So they're seeing it being built. Second, the Lord watching over a city. What's all that about? That's about God's protection.

[ 9 : 48 ] A defense of a city. The third one is about making a living. Rise up early. Stay up late. Toiling for food to eat.

Making a living. So you read this and you think, these things have got to have some practical help for us. But, I want to say that really when you look at this more carefully, you can see that really this psalm is about a warning.

Unless, and in vain. Unless the Lord builds the house, it's built as labor in vain. That's a pretty depressing word, in vain.

It means it's going to be empty, worthless, useless, vaporized, nothing. Nothing to show for it. So, you have to say this psalm really is something about a warning, as much as an encouragement. And the next thing I have to say is that, although you think this should be straightforward, actually it's not. It's not so easy to understand what God is saying at this place.

[ 11 : 05 ] Well, let's make an attempt. And I want to suggest that those three life examples, verses one and two there, there are two extreme interpretations that you could make about those life examples.

The first is this. You could be fatalistic about life. Because you read this, unless the Lord builds a house, it's built as labor in vain.

So what does it matter what I do? It's not going to make any effect, any change. Because unless God wants it to happen, it won't happen. That's what it means to be a fatalist.

To say, well, God's in control of everything. What difference does it make? And the second interpretation would be this.

If God is on your side, everything will be all right. If God does build my house, it certainly won't be in vain.

[ 12 : 09 ] It's going to be a great house. If God watches over the city, it's got to be very safe. If God looks after me, well, I'm certainly going to have a good standard of living.

I'm certainly going to have food on the table. And that is an interpretation of what this psalm is saying. And it's interesting to see that that very phrase of God being on our side is also found in Psalm 124.

This is what Israel said. If the Lord had not been on our side, if the Lord had not been on our side, then various really bad things would have happened.

But God was on our side. Now, I want to say straight away that there is a measure of truth in that interpretation.

There is some truth in the interpretation that if God is with us, good things come our way. And the measure of truth is this, that if we live by the maker's instructions, generally speaking, it's better for us.

[ 13 : 22 ] If you look after your bodies properly, you're probably less likely to get ill. If you fill yourself with drugs, your brain will get addled. That's just the truth, isn't it?

It's true in relationships. If you do do to others as you would have them do to you, which is what kind of principle that many people live by, then generally speaking, life will be more straightforward. If you're just aggressive and objectionable in your workplace, you'll find life very hard going. God does look after people.

And it's certainly true as you read the Bible, there's plenty of examples in the Bible of how God looked after his own people. When you think of all that happened when they went through the 40 years in the wilderness, well, God looked after them in a wonderful way.

And it says in one place, your shoes didn't wear out. Shoes didn't wear out. He gave them food every day from heaven. Fantastic. He looked after them.

[ 14 : 29 ] He gave them wonderful victories, even though they didn't deserve any of this. And it was certainly the case that when they obeyed what he said, generally speaking, he gave them what they needed.

And equally, when they disobeyed, they got into trouble. So that's another reason why there is some truth in this interpretation. And thirdly, I'd say there is some truth because God hears prayer. We pray to God and we pray because we believe that it's not just a psychological thing that we're doing, but prayer actually does affect the mind of God.

God, he loves to hear our prayers. He loves it when we call out to him and ask him for things. And many people in this room today and thousands throughout history can testify to that reality that they've called out to God and God has heard their prayer.

So there is some truth in that interpretation. Not many people function on the basis of being a fatalist.

[15:47] And I have to say there's absolutely no evidence in the Bible, no encouragement in the Bible for anybody to act as a fatalist. That is a really unhealthy and inappropriate way to live.

You can't live in that way, can you? We all have to do stuff. We all have responsibilities. We have to roll up our sleeves and get on with life. But there is that truth in the interpretation, this second interpretation.

And many people do want to live in that kind of way. But I want to draw your attention to something else which is said in another psalm, which is Psalm 73.

Psalm 73 suggests another story, another narrative of how you could regard life. It's called a Psalm of Asaph.

And we don't know too much about Asaph, but this seems to be a very personal story. And let's read this a few verses together on this.

[17:01] verse 1 says this, Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost slipped. I'd nearly lost my foothold.

For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. Oh, that's interesting, isn't it? Surely it's only the righteous who are prosperous and the wicked who suffer.

But this guy says, No. I actually looked around me and I saw plenty of evidence that the wicked prospered. The people who didn't acknowledge God, they were well satisfied in their lives.

They had plenty. They have no struggles, verse 4. Their bodies are healthy and strong. They don't get cancer.

They live. They are free from the burdens common to man. They are not plagued by human ills.

Well, it's not true of everybody, of course.

[18:14] But you can look around and you can see plenty of evidence here in this city that people who have got no interest in God at all, they're really doing pretty well in their lives. There's part of you that says, that can't be right.

But it happens. It's true. And this is the problem that this man, Asaph, faced. You can see it in those verses there. I want you to look a bit further on in that particular psalm.

He says in verse 14, all day long I have been plagued, I have been punished every morning. Didn't feel like his life was a very positive experience.

And he said in verse 16, when I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me. It was confusing, difficult to understand. Why if God is a holy God, why if he makes all these nice promises to his people, why does he seem to look after people who have no concern about him at all?

It was confusing. He felt really bowed down by this idea. Then it says, till I enter the sanctuary of God and then I understood their final destiny.

[19:50] Their final destiny. And what was helpful for Asaph in this is frankly, he thought they'll come to a bad end. Surely you place them on slippery ground, you cast them down to ruin, how suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors.

That was the limit of his understanding of what was going on in these people's lives. Everything is fine, fine, fine, fine, fine, and then they come to some sort of a bad end. And that gave him some resolution.

He talked about their final destiny. Well, what is this final destiny? And why does it help us to understand what is going on in life?

Now I want you to turn to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 12, and verses 16 to 21. It's on page 1045, if you have a church Bible.

Amen. Amen. This is one of the stories of Jesus. The story goes like this.

[21:04] The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. Verse 16. He thought to himself, what shall I do? No place to store my crops.

Then he said, this is what I'll do. I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I'll store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, you have plenty of good things laid up for many years.

Take life easy, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, you fool. This very night, your life will be demanded from you.

Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself? So he's living his successful life.

Everything's going fine, and he's thinking like most people in the world think that, well, I just need to make more space. I need to have a bigger place to store all the stuff that I have.

[ 22 : 08 ] That was the way he was thinking. And then God says to him, this very night, your life will be demanded from you. There's going to be a reckoning.

Our lives come to an end, and when our lives come to an end, well, what good is all the stuff that we've been doing? All the stuff that we've accumulated? Because we know we can't take this with us.

However much you've worked for it, however much effort you put into it, however precious it is to you, you can't take an ounce of it with you. And the sad thing is that all the effort of this man's life had been focused upon accumulating stuff.

And Jesus gives this warning. And the warning is this. It's found in verse 15. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

That's what you learn from this particular story. Your life does not actually consist in the abundance of your possessions. This really is a story that relates to all of us here.

[ 23 : 34 ] Very easy for us to kind of step back and say, well, I know the guy you're talking about. I know the investment banker. I know the multi-millionaire surely talking about this, but it's not actually that person.

It's actually talking about any one of us who's making our life consist in what we have.

this is not what life is about. This is not what life is about.

And it's a big warning for us. So people might say, well, I can see what this is about because this is very materialistic.

the guy had stuff. He was a farmer. To be a farmer was like being an investment banker today. So he puts his stuff in a barn.

[ 24 : 34 ] This is high-tech stuff for that age. Very materialistic. You might say, I'm not interested in those sorts of things.

I believe in the finer things of life. Culture, the arts. And I want to draw your attention now to something that the Apostle Paul says in the book of Philippians chapter 3 verses 4 to 8.

Philippians chapter 3 verses 4 to 8. Now you'll find this in the New Testament. page number 1180. Now Paul is a religious man. So he's not thinking of building a big barn to put all his corn and grain in. No, he's a religious guy.

He's very serious about having a relationship with God. Whatever is needed to be done, he does it and does a bit more.

[ 25 : 51 ] He knows about fasting, he knows about giving, he knows about going to the temple, he knows about all that stuff. Not only that, he's born into a very good family. That's a blessing, isn't it?

Not only that, his family is of the right tribe, the right ethnicity. As far as the Bible tells anything about God's favour, he's completely in the right place.

God's love. So he says, if anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, or in other words, to base his life on the realities of his life circumstances, who my parents were, where I went to school, how I was educated, the fact that I'm chartered, the fact that I'm now a professional, people look up to me in my business, these are all good things, this oils the way which life works greatly, to have all that background advantage, and Paul could put his hand up and say, that's exactly where I am, that's exactly the sort of person I am, I've got all those advantages.

Oh, I was circumcised. Ah, circumcision, that didn't happen to most people, it only happened to the people of Israel, that was God's command, he'd done that, he was at the people of Israel, he was at the tribe of Benjamin, not just a Hebrew but a Hebrew of Hebrews, really the sort of top 10%, in regard to the law, a Pharisee, ah, you couldn't get much better than being a Pharisee, as for zeal persecuting the church, as for legalistic righteousness, faultless, a very moral man, a very moral man, man.

Whatever was to my profit, I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things, I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.

[ 28 : 08 ] whatever you have is nothing compared with knowing Jesus Christ now and forever.

Whether you're a moral person or an immoral person, whether you have much or you have little, whether people admire you or people don't, actually none of that actually counts in the great scheme of things.

Because we have to face a final destiny when we can't take any of this stuff with us. When the opinions of other people won't count, when our friends and family won't stand up for us, a very lonely place we have to come to where God deals with us one by one.

It's final destiny. And the only safe place to be is to be knowing Jesus Christ now and forever.

That's why we do spend a lot of time singing about Jesus Christ. He's our hope. He's the one who brings us to God.

[ 29 : 20 ] He's the one who actually cleanses our lives. He forgives us for the things that are wrong. He's the one that fills us with power to please God. He's the one who's gone before us and is preparing a place for us to be with him forever.

And he's the one I want to recommend to you as the one for you to trust. So I now want to come back to Psalm 127.

I want to suggest that we might read this in a deeper way, a way which they couldn't have understood in the days in which it was written. Because in those days there wasn't much sense of final destiny. There wasn't much sense of what happened at death and beyond.

But now we have the whole Bible in front of us. And we have the man who has come from heaven, lived on earth, died a real death, but has been resurrected and is at God's right hand.

And he tells us about the world to come. So we can read Psalm 127 again. When it comes to the reckoning of our lives, when it comes to the reckoning of our lives, what is going to count?

[ 30 : 37 ] In the projects of our lives, has God been welcomed and depended upon? Has he enjoyed the honoured place? Not just as an onlooker, but the one on whom we depend.

Have we looked for his guidance and leadership? Have we recognised his rebuke and discipline? Have we thought of thanking him first for blessing and progress?

Have we been careful to say story when we've left him out? So I ask the question, what does success look like when we're building a house?

And I think as believers in Jesus Christ, success for us in building the house is knowing the presence of God alongside us as we build. I think there's a great picture here.

We lay a stone and God has his hand upon the stone. We order the materials and God has his hand upon the ordering process. Tim was telling you about doing your roof.

[ 31 : 52 ] We do a roof. It's great to have God on the roof as well. I'm not being flippant. I'm talking about this everyday opportunity for us to live hand in hand with God.

When we're defending a city, that's about security. We're all concerned about security. security. It can be as simple as being concerned about the security of your house or the security of your job or the security of your health.

You're watching out. You're trying to make provisions. Isn't it great to know that we can have our lives in God's care? The God who knows the future is the one that we can trust for the security of our lives.

because actually if we belong to him, then there is absolute security. Whatever happens.

And when we're trying to make a living, in vain you rise early and stay up late toiling for food to eat, for he grants sleep to those he loves.

[ 33 : 06 ] I think there's a better translation. You'll find it in the very small print at the bottom of the page. where it says, for while they sleep, he provides. It's a lovely thought that as we go about our daily life, we get weary and we go to bed and we sleep, we're asleep but God is providing.

God's looking after us. It's not so much the end result. It is the journey. God as a friend.

God as a comforter. God as a provider. God as wisdom. God as a rebuker. God who draws us back and says, don't go down there.

God who encourages the timid forward and says, go for it. God as a and I said earlier, if you've got 150,000 in your pocket, great.

And I'd be the first to be delighted if at the end of April 2014, I was able to stand up here and say, we've got 80,000 pounds that's been given, 70,000 pound loan has been taken out, the building will be ours, we'll have the deeds, in two months' time, I'd be delighted to say that.

[ 34 : 35 ] I feel that would be a success. But actually, actually, I think the things that God notices, and not so much those outcomes, but the way we've journeyed, the way we've gone about it.

So what is success as we face this project? Perhaps it's perseverance in trying to find out God's will, because it's not straightforward to find out what God wants.

that no one suggests otherwise. It has not been straightforward for us as a church to find out God's will about this place.

There have been times, before my time, when people have been in little prayer groups, and they've wondered whether they're going to be in the building next week. They've really wondered, does God want us here?

And that has gone on week after week, and month after month. There have been some very low times, very discouraging times, when God's mind has not been clear at all.

[ 35 : 45 ] But those good people persevered, and I think God notices that. And that's important to him. He loves to see his people trusting him.

God notices the fact that we have resolved to behave in a Christian manner, even with people who we profoundly disagree with. And I have to say to you, that in the 1990s, there were some very dark times, when there was a lot of emails and letters flying around.

And it would have been pretty natural for people to have gone to court. But we said, you're Christian people, we are Christian people, we are going to resolve this in a Christian manner.

Praise God, that's exactly what's happened. It's a testimony. Because it isn't the way the world would have done it. God notices the fact of being generous in our dealings, rather than trying to squeeze the last penny out of the other party.

We've had valuers crawling all over the building, deciding how much it's worth. We've had one report. Railway Mission had another report. Came to different figures. Quite a big gap.

[ 37 : 07 ] Quite a big gap. And there have been times when we thought, well, this is unbridgeable. But as we have prayed and talked, and talked and prayed, we've come to a point where there is a figure which is more than we'd want to pay, but is less than they'd want.

And it's a figure where we have, I believe, been generous in our dealings. It's been important for us to work together as God's team.

God commands a blessing, doesn't he, when God's people dwell in unity. And we've worked together as a team. And it's been great for me to be able to report that throughout this whole process, which can sometimes wreck churches, that there has been an overwhelming positive response to every step that we've needed to take.

God notices that. That is success in God's kingdom. We have learned to pray and depend on God. And we're still in that place because we've only got 27 members here, only a quarter of whom are earning full time.

And it's 150,000 pounds to find. It's completely natural for us to have to be in the place where we're having to depend on God.

[ 38 : 33 ] And I'm grateful for that. I'm grateful for the challenge. Grateful that we've been put in this place where we're having to ask God in prayer to be providing.

Because it is not visible how this will happen. There is no great business plan that says how this will occur.

It is successful in God's eyes when people give freely and willingly, even sacrificially. I think there's only one place in the New Testament where Jesus Christ noticed how somebody gave.

There's a person out there with 150,000 pounds in their pocket. But actually, God is going to notice the person who's really on a pension and has got very little to spare at the end of the week.

Ah, there was a widow in the temple. Do you remember her? She came to the temple court and she gave more than she could afford. It was tiny.

[ 39 : 42 ] It really was tiny. It made absolutely minimal difference to the prosperity and the living standards of the priests in the temple and the day-to-day running of the temple.

She didn't get a big plaque put on the wall to celebrate her giving. It didn't mean that she was able to provide more benches inside the temple as a result of her gift. It was tiny. But Jesus Christ, the Son of God, noticed it.

And it's written down and recorded for us. And I say, wasn't that fantastic? Because it means all of us today are in that place where we have the opportunity of giving freely and willingly, even sacrificially, to the notice of Jesus Christ.

Who didn't use his words lightly, but he pointed that lady out. Everybody else was ignoring her, but he said to the disciples, just want you to notice what's going on there.

that's really important. I won't know, you won't know, what happens in the giving of this process, but God will know and he will be so pleased when he sees that kind of response.

[ 40 : 57 ] And perhaps success is desiring to leave a good inheritance for the next generation. It's going to be tough for the next generation of Christians to be here in Calvary Church in 2025 if the Lord hasn't returned.

It's going to be very tough to stand up for the things of Jesus Christ because you only have to see the trends, the laws that are being made in the country, the attitudes that are taking place, the general godlessness within the school systems and so forth.

You only have to see that to recognize that it's going to be very hard for the next generation. Unless God revives his work in the most miraculous and marvelous way for which we pray, it's going to be tough.

And I would be delighted to be able to hand over this brilliant facility to them free of charge so they're not having to be struggling in the way in which the last 20 years have been struggle.

It's good for us to want to leave a legacy. As Paul was coming to the end of his life, he thought about legacy a great deal and he thought about his son in the Lord, Timothy, and you can read all about that in the books of Timothy.

[ 42 : 12 ] And he was thinking about the next generation. I'm thinking about Bethany, lovely Bethany, the potential of Bethany's life. Samuel, Solomon.

Well, there's actually a dozen children out there. There's a dozen children out there. They won't all stay around here. But wonderful would it be if some of those were to put their trust in Jesus Christ. Wonderful would it be if some of those would be standing on the stage in 20 years' time and delivering faithfully sermons from God's word. That's my ambition.

Is that your ambition? Desiring to leave a good inheritance.

So that, just like the gentleman up there, you can read it in the authorised version, but here it is on the screen in the New International. Well done, good and faithful servant. Come and share your master's happiness. There's no higher commendation that can be given to any one of us than Jesus Christ to say those words to us.

[ 43 : 23 ] That is fantastic. He says, right, you've done your job. You've done all the sort of things that I wanted you to do. You persevered in finding out God's will.

You've behaved in a Christian manner. You've been generous in your dealing. You've worked together as a team. You've learned to pray and depend upon me. You've given freely and willingly and sacrificially. You want to leave a good inheritance for the next generation.

Is it 162,000? Is it 1 million pounds? Is it 16,200? That's not the real issue. The real issue is how we've gone about this process and has it been to the glory of God.

I don't know how things will be in six months' time whether I'll be able to say to you these are the figures. We may well be facing another challenge. But the most important thing in God's eyes is that we face this challenge in the way that pleases Him.

And what I say about this in respect to the building project is true for building a family. Being thankful to God for the blessings of children because whisper it when they're around.

[ 44 : 39 ] There are one or two still here. They're a blessing. Children are a blessing. So we're thankful for them. Recognizing that children are not primarily raised to look after you when you're older although that helps but so that you can pass on the good things of God to them.

That's your responsibility. You can't do any more than that. There is no guarantee. It may look from this psalm as a kind of guarantee about raising children.

I want to say to you there isn't a guarantee. There isn't a guarantee. We do our part and we pray to God as I do for my children that they might come to follow Him.

Knowing God's wisdom and strength in the everyday circumstances of busy lives because it's jolly exhausting raising children. very tiring but He provides in our sleep.

He looks after. He watches over them and great it is for any parent here if they can say I keep on committing my children to the Lord.

