

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

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[0:00] 1 Corinthians chapter 7. We'll pick up where we left off last week, which makes 1 Corinthians chapter 7 starting in verse 17. 1 Corinthians chapter 7 starting in verse 17.

Honest confession, this morning as I came to the office I had prepared to finish this chapter of the 7th, chapter of 1 Corinthians. I was going to finish it from the 17th verse all the way down to the end, which would get us down to the 40th verse.

But there earlier in the week there was a portion of Scripture that was within this that was really heavy on my heart and I thought, well Lord that's pretty strong and then in my humanity I tried to wrap it up into a bigger chunk of Scripture and then when I got back to the office this morning the Lord didn't let me do so so I rewrote my sermon and we had to go back to the smaller portion of Scripture. If you remember when we introduced this 7th chapter which causes us to look at things which we normally wouldn't look at I don't think on our own, in particular marriage and whether we should be married or we should not be married. We originally broke it up into kind of two subcategories that is the divine perspective on marriage, the divine position on marriage. So what does God think about marriage? We get that verses 1 through 16 and then we looked at how the latter part of the chapter deals with the position of the divine within marriage. So what does God think about marriage and what position does God have in marriage or singleness? which is what the latter half of the chapter deals with but sandwiched right there in the middle seems to be this third kind of subcategory that was connected with the first position of God's perspective on marriage.

And really it relates as we'll look to it there at that last portion where Paul is answering questions from the church at Corinth you know, what if I become a follower of Jesus Christ? I'm already married and my mate does not accept Christ. Should I stay married or should I get divorced?

[1:56] And Paul says, well you stay there as long as that individual will stay with you either the unbelieving husband or the unbelieving wife. Stay there. Be a light. Be a, you know, a gospel presence in the home. Stay as you are. And as is kind of customary of Paul, he takes that thought and goes a little deeper with it.

He kind of breaks it down that whole stay where you are in marriage and says, but that doesn't really just apply to marriage. So that's what we'll see this morning starting in the 17th verse and reading down to verse 24. So if you're physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you'll join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God found in 1 Corinthians 7 starting in verse 17 and we'll read down to verse 24 and we'll stop right there.

In the 17th verse the first word is only some translations have it as but, it's either way it's an introduction of a new thought. It says, only as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches.

Was any man called when he was already circumcised? He is not to become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? He is not to be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.

Each man must remain in that condition, or calling, in which he was called. Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it. But if you are able also to become free, rather do that.

[3:28] For he who was called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freed man. Likewise, he who was called while free is Christ's slave. You were bought with a price.

Do not become slaves of men. Verse 24. Brethren, each one is to remain with God in that condition in which he was called.

Let's pray. Lord, I thank you so much for this day. God, so thankful that we have an opportunity to come together, to worship together, to lift our voices up in song, to give in offerings.

Lord, what a privilege it is to read your word. We pray, oh God, as we have read your word and heard your word, Lord, now you would speak to our hearts and minds. We pray that the truth of

scripture would resonate within this place, that it would not be the thoughts or the opinion of man, but it would be the very word of God that would penetrate to the very depth of our being, that it would mold us and conform us and shape us to who you want us to be for your glory and yours alone.

And we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen. You may be seated. As Paul has addressed the issue of whether or not a person should remain married, Paul addresses it with this reality that just because you accepted Christ does not change the reality that you are married.

[4 : 48] As a matter of fact, it magnifies that reality and gives you a greater mission field. It gives you a mission field of the home. He ends that with how do you know whether or not you will save your husband or how do you know whether or not you will save your wife?

That as long as the unbelieving spouse is willing to remain married to you, Paul encourages the believers to stay married because it sanctifies the home.

It sets the home apart and gives God the opportunity to work within the home. We've seen even missionaries understand this principle and this reality that if you reach one member of the home then you have an opportunity for God to work within the home.

We've seen it in Acts chapter 16 where the Philippian jailer accepts Christ and then he and his whole household were baptized because God had an opportunity to affect the home based upon the faith of the individual who came to Christ.

Paul says it does not mean that you change your marriage as a matter of fact it means that your marriage has the opportunity to be changed because of your presence with Christ. And he expands this view starting in verse 17.

[5 : 59] He moves from the home to the marketplace because evidently the question had been posed that if I accept Christ do I leave my unbelieving spouse and also if I accept Christ do I cast off all worldly cares and concerns?

Do I forget about my place in society? Do I forget about my occupation? Does everything change just because I accept Christ? And Paul is going to address that issue here.

He will address the final issue of well should I even be married in the first place? That will be the last one he comes to. So I want you to see living with a settled contentment.

Living with a settled contentment. Because the question that is before Paul that Paul is answering either it was asked or unasked but either way Paul is answering the question is when I accept Christ does that mean that I cast off everything else and I just go wholly totally into the Lord and forget about everything else or should I be content with where he has called me?

Should I be content with where he has put me? And there's some I'm just going to go ahead and acknowledge it here there are some we talk about big rock and little rock issues of the faith right?

[7 : 18] We talk about big rock and little rock. I can fellowship with people of little rock differences. There are big rock issues of the faith theological matters that are big rock issues that they have to go into the cup first.

They have to go there first because the big rock is kind of what settles what we believe. This is what we believe. And it is the big rock issues in which we kind of break fellowship with. Small rock issues the little pebbles and our interpretations of passages those we can still fellowship.

We may not be in complete agreement but we can fellowship with other believers. Big rock issues are those issues that we say well we don't even believe the same thing. There's some big rock matters in this passage whether or not we see it at surface level or not.

There's some big rock matters that I wanted us to take time I didn't want to put it with a larger passage and it kind of get lost in the mix. I wanted us to stop and consider exactly what Paul is declaring to us here.

And this should really allow us to live a life of contentment. Now that's a loaded word. Paul says I've learned to be content in all things whether well fed or hungry. I have a hard time with being content while hungry.

[8 : 27] I'm just admitting that. Whether rich or poor. Whether clothed or naked. I've learned to be content in all things. Well how did Paul live with such a settled contentment? It's because he understood this principle that is laid out for us in these verses.

The first thing that we understand the first thing that we see that is necessary to live with a settled contentment is a realization. It is a realization and this is the big rock issue.

We put the big rocks in first. Paul says in the 17th verse only or but depending on which translation you're reading of the English Bible.

Either way it's an introduction of another thought apart from this discussion on marriage or separate from because if you look at verse 25 it says now concerning virgins there he is introducing his third thought.

So here this word in verse 17 is kind of this separation of only. I have something else to add here. Only and here it is as the Lord has assigned to each one as God has called each.

[9 : 33] There it is. As the Lord has assigned King James, New King James say called. New American Standard says assigned. Some others say a different wording there but it carries the same meaning.

As the Lord has assigned to each one as God has called each in this manner let him walk. There is this realization.

The realization because Paul is not differentiating well he is differentiating your spiritual calling and your physical assignment. Your spiritual calling and your physical assignment.

So the question is this. If I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior does that mean I quit my job and everything changes? do I leave my current place in society?

Since this world is wicked and going on a downward spiral read the book of Judges you see the world is in a downward spiral. Things are not getting better they're getting worse and since the society is going down we're not going up since we're going further away from God does that mean the moment I accept Christ that I completely isolate myself and separate myself from society or do I stay in it.

[10 : 50] And now if there's a church in scripture that deserves to ask this question it's the church in Corinth. And the reason they deserve to ask the question is because it's the most wicked church in all of scripture and the reason they're the most wicked church in all of scripture is because they live in the most wicked city that we find in scripture.

I mean the word to Corinthianize means to act wickedly and to do kind of vulgar things. It was a slanderous saying oh we're going to go out tonight and Corinthianize.

We're going to act like people from Corinth. And it was derogatory. So they are asking a legitimate question. When we are followers of Christ should we completely leave society behind?

And Paul answers that as God has assigned each one. Now wait a minute. This is where we get to the big rock. We begin to look at our physical position in the world as an assignment from God. when we begin to talk about creation. You'll have to bear with me for just a minute. I'm going to work this out for you. Okay. When we look at creation we open up the book of Genesis in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

[12 : 00] Right. We open up the book of Genesis and we take ourselves all the way back to the beginning. We go back to when there was nothing. Everything was null and void.

It was formless and void as scripture says man has attempted for years and years and years and years and years how to define what happened there. We know that some have speculated on the Big Bang theory.

Now I don't not necessarily against Big Bang because when God said something bang it happened right. And that's just how you define what Big Bang you're talking about. Some have said that it's an evolutionary process.

Some have said that everything came out of nothing which we know makes no sense because you can never get something out of nothing because when you have nothing in the end you'll still have nothing. And when you start with nothing you'll always get nothing because you have to have something to get something because you cannot get everything from nothing.

That just seems to make that just to me it just defies all reality and all common sense. But there is one grand danger that we have to be careful of and it is this theistic evolution.

[13 : 06] Theistic evolution is the scientist's explanation of the reality that we cannot get something out of nothing so there has to be a first cause. This great first cause. And since we don't know what to call this first cause we have to say that that first cause is a higher being or theistic being.

It is a God. Now this is the danger in theistic evolution is that God started everything in motion and then pulled back and let it play out its course. That since something had to create everything we see we have to give place to a higher being.

Stay with me we're going somewhere. And he sets it into motion and then pulls back from it and the world runs its course. The only problem I have with that is that doesn't coincide with what I read in scripture.

Because we serve a God who is so much more personal and intimate than one who just sets it in motion and pulls back from it. As a matter of fact the book of Job the oldest book in scripture the book of Job in the 12th chapter I believe it's the third verse verse in Job 12 verse 3 says that God has the power to rise up nations or to diminish nations.

That God has the power to displace nations or to increase nations. God has the power of nations in the book of Job. And then we go to the book of Daniel and when we get to the book of Daniel in the fourth chapter after Nebuchadnezzar's humiliation and he comes back and all of a sudden he realizes that God is powerful and Nebuchadnezzar makes this declaration in Daniel chapter 4 that not only does God have the power to raise up a nation and to decrease a nation God also has the power to do with man whatever he wants to do with man and no man can stop him.

[14:44] And then when we go to the book of Acts in Acts chapter 17 Paul is in a city called Athens and he's standing in a place called Mars Hill and when he's making this declaration to the Athenians on Mars Hill he says that God raised up from one man every tribe every tongue every peoples and then Paul makes this wonderful declaration that God had appointed and ordained the places and the times and the restraints of where everybody would live.

So now according to scripture God can control the nations and he does God is more powerful than any individual man to stop him and he is and God appoints where man will live within the bounds of his world and he does and then Paul makes a declaration here this is still a big rock issue that not only can God tell you where to live when you live God also has assigned your place in society. You see no he didn't I got an education I worked hard I got this job I put in an application I had to interview I interview real well I mean I'm the best interviewer I've ever met they liked me my persona got it for me friend you're diminishing the sovereignty of God.

You are where you are because God has ordained that that's where you would be and when you begin to see life through that lens where you're at begins to matter from a heavenly perspective no matter what it is in a worldly realm.

See I believe that scripture teaches us that God is so sovereign that down to the last individual he has an assignment in the kingdom and in the world that God has a place in the world for every individual because without that we believe that we are the captain of our own ship creating our own destinies and my friends you are not and neither am I.

[16:44] Paul makes this declaration as the Lord has assigned to each one physically where you're at in society as God has called each spiritually in this manner let him walk.

What is Paul saying? Wherever God put you in society when he called you to himself spiritually he called you to himself spiritually to use you where you're at physically.

That is your salvation is for the purpose of a light shining in your occupation. God had an assignment a work for you to do and then he called you to himself and said well I was a Christian long before I ever had this position.

Well thank God for the position you hold because he wants you to be the best Christian you can be in that position. You say well I'm retired. Well praise God for retirement. You get the opportunity to be the best retired Christian this world has ever seen as God has allotted to each one as God has assigned each one so let him walk just like we don't leave the marriage because we become a believer we do not leave the marketplace because we become a believer because God has called us in that marketplace.

You say well pastor you left your job you're right I did. You're right I did because as the Lord has called each one out if you have a special calling by the way I tried to balance the two.

[18:13] When God called me to himself first time I didn't have an option. God called me to call him to me himself. He redeemed me saved me and it was such a glorious wonderful day. I don't know how many of you remember my testimony I've tried to share it share a condensed version of it.

I was so excited because he called me and about a month later I got the job I really wanted. I got this dream job and everything went well because six months prior to that I didn't get the job because I failed the test and then all of a sudden I accept the Lord.

The Lord's doing some work on me. You know he kind of humbled me a little bit there and I get this job all he's wanted. Yes this is where God's got me and I began to cast my plans cast my visions

and you know I forgot about where the Bible says man plans his way but the Lord ordains his steps because then there were some planes that crashed into a couple towers and one crashed into a pentagon and the economy went down and people started laying off and I lost my job.

I lost it after a year. So then where are you at when you're a brand new believer and you've had the job that you thought you could have and you've been a believer for about a year and the job you thought was going to set you up now you no longer have it anymore. Well then I went and did the very things I said I would never do because God had ordained and appointed that I would work in a job that I never thought I would work and I did.

And I worked it and I went back and I had all these plans and ended up making my way back there. After four years I went back to that job. It was wonderful. By this time God had called me into the pastor so I said this is great I can preach and do this things will be well and God said yeah right.

[19 : 31] Last time I forced you to leave this time I'm calling you to leave. But as God has assigned each one so let him walk. But the reality is is that each one of those places he left me each one of those positions he put me in I was there to be the believer he called me to be.

Right. We need to understand this reality. When I got the call I understand this. God had put me in a truck for a year by myself.

I told you I had two stations right 710 and 650 so I could either listen to preaching or banjo picking. And after a few times banjo picking all the songs sound the same so you listen to preaching. So for a year I was by myself isolated listening to preaching Adrian Rogers all these guys Alistair Begg and you know just those are guys that were preaching when I was on my lunch hour and reading scripture.

So when I got the call that I'd been laid off like it was a Friday they told me not to worry about coming in on Monday. Everybody else had gotten a bunch of notice. I got none which was fine. And I don't say this this isn't pride this is just what God had prepared in my heart.

When I hung up my truck phone I said thank you God for that. I praised him because I knew he gave me the job to grow me and I knew he was taken away from me to grow me. You know how you get there? Because as the Lord has assigned each one so let him walk.

[20 : 54] If my job was my earning then I would have been upset because I lost what I thought was rightfully mine. When my job became an assignment when it was over he has a right to dictate it. When we look at scripture and we see a God what is man that he considers us?

He who created the heavens and the earth and spoke it all in existence. What are we just a little bit lower than the angels that he even considers us? He doesn't just consider us he assigns and appoints and ordains. Listen God is intimately aware of every aspect of your life.

You have children praise be to God he gave you children he entrusted you with that assignment. You don't have children praise be to God he's entrusted you and assign you. You're married your singleness this is what Paul is saying however it works as he has assigned you in your life it is no longer about what we have done but about what he has given us.

And when we live that way open-handedly we say God I'm going to live out my faith where you've put me today. And that's what leads to contentment. And then Paul says and so I direct in all the churches so you need to understand this this isn't a in case we know some people read scripture say well that was just in Corinth.

Well Paul says this is a universal application to all believers. Right. This realization I know I'm spending a lot of time on this first point because if we don't get this one right we don't get anything.

[22 : 14] And if you don't hear anything else I want you to hear this one. Friend listen where you're at today in society is where God has put you. And unless we live with that realization our faith becomes a segmented part of our life.

And we don't live it out fully completely for his glory. It's this realization. Number two a recognition. There's this recognition.

It says was any man called when he was already circumcised he is not to become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision he is not to be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing but what matters is the keeping of the commandment of God.

He said well I thought circumcision was a commandment right according to the old order for the Jewish people. They turned it into proselytization and becoming a Judaizer or leaving the Jewish faith and becoming non-Jewish was the procedure for uncircumcision even though you can never fully undo it.

But there was a procedure at that time. So what Paul is saying is the society the people you identify with is not the main thing. Right. It's not becoming somebody else. We've talked about it this way. [23 : 22] When God called us he redeems our personalities. He redeems how he made us but never forget this. God formed and fashioned you in your mother's womb before the world ever knew you.

So the way he made you he made you intentionally. And he doesn't make you so that when he calls you to himself you would become somebody else. He makes you in such a manner that when he redeems you you can be who you fully were created to be.

But the heart of the issue is obeying his commandments. Right. It's not looking like everybody else or trying to blend in like everybody else. It's not this uniformity.

It's unity but not uniformity. That's not the main thing. The recognition is that he created us and so we ought to have this heart of obedience. He repeats the refrain in verse 20.

Each man must remain in the condition in which he was called. And then he goes down just in case we think that he doesn't mean it. He goes to the lowest part of society. Now when we read the word slave in scripture it's not this western mentality of slavery.

[24 : 30] Even though some slaves were that way. Some had sold themselves in slavery intentionally. Some slaves were very well off. It was said in those days in some parts of the Roman Empire that there would be upwards of 20 to 30,000 inhabitants of a city and 400 plus thousand slaves in a city.

So you're talking about a society that had many more slaves than it did citizens. Right? He says were you called while a slave? I mean the lowest form of society.

Do not worry about it. He doesn't say you ought to accept that all this is my life. He says if you can gain your freedom but if you are able also to become free rather do that which means don't do anything unholy or don't do anything unfitting of the Lord to gain it but if you're able because in that day they could pay back their freedom or they could be redeemed or there's kinsmen redeemer so there are ways and manners in which they could do it.

He says then become free. But if you're a slave and if God allows for you to stay a slave that's okay.

That's okay. It's this recognition that who we are in Christ is more than who we are in society.

There's an old book written by Brother Lawrence. And many of his books are just simply authored by Brother Lawrence. Brother Lawrence wrote an old book many years ago called Practicing the Presence of God.

[25 : 51] And the supposition of the book just starts out with the reality that God is just as present when washing the dishes because that was his job as he is when standing behind the pulpit.

And that you have just as much opportunity to glorify God in the way you wash the dishes as the way you preach the word.

He's speaking here about being content with where God has left us. This recognition that's who we are in Christ because it says in verse 22, for he who was called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freed man.

Likewise, he who was called while free is Christ's slave. Christ is the great equalizer of all men.

There are portions of this world in which their faith declares you be reincarnated.

This reincarnation, specifically Hindu faith, believes in this perpetual reincarnation where you eventually kind of reach this state of nirvana, this blessed place of nothingness.

[26 : 57] I don't know about you, but my idea of paradise is not nothingness. But anyway, they strive for this blessed place of nothingness. And so until you get life right, you're just completely just going through this cycle, going through this cycle of reincarnation.

But one of the great tragedies that this reincarnate theology has brought about is this great segmentation of society in that you are in your class and you cannot leave your class.

And so whatever you were born into, you can't try to move up and you dare not try to move down.

So if you're upper class, then you don't associate with lower class.

If you're lower class, you don't even look at or talk to higher class because these people got it right in their last life. That's why they're higher class than you are. And you haven't gotten it right yet. You hope to eventually make it up to that in the next life.

But there's this this great wall of separation in that you can't break class. In Christ, we may look segmented and separated in society, but in Christ, we stand on the level field.

[28 : 00] In Christ, we recognize that you may have a greater place than me in the workforce, but you don't have a greater place than me than my seat at the table around the wedding supper of the Lamb.

Because the last time I checked, it says that those who are faithful will reign with him on his throne. See, in Christ, we recognize that we may look different in the world, but in Christ, we are completely equal.

And there's this recognition that I don't have to prove myself in society. I don't have to prove myself in this is great release because I promise you outside the wall, the world tells you you are defined by the position you hold.

But when you open up scripture, God tells you you are defined by the person who holds you. And that's a big difference. And you can be content that the Savior holds you in his hand even when the world mocks you for who you are in their eyes.

We live contentment because we know that the thing that we do is a divine assignment. We live in contentment because we recognize that who we are is not defined by what we do. Who we are is defined by whose we are and who holds us in his hand.

[29 : 21] And our definition doesn't come by our occupation, but our definition comes by our occupation of our position in heaven. And when we recognize that, we get a contentment.

Number three, there is a realization, a recognition, and a realignment. And this is where the rubber hits the road, this realignment. It says in verse 23, you were bought with a price.

That's a repetition, right? We've already seen that. When Paul is speaking to the believers at Corinth earlier in the book, he's speaking to them about their immoralities and how they feel like they can do whatever they want to.

And since the stomach is made for food, I can eat however I want to. And since the body is made for desires, I can fulfill those desires however I want to. And Paul says that's a twist of theology because you were bought with a price. You are not your own.

And he repeats that refrain here. It seems like an odd place to repeat it, but listen to it. You were bought with a price. Do not become slaves of men. He said, wait a minute. He just told the slave that if he's a slave and Christ calls him while a slave, that's okay just to be content because he's a slave and if he can get out, it's fine.

[30 : 30] If not, no, wrong concept. That's the occupation. That's not what holds you, right? He says, when you come to Christ, you have been redeemed. Redemption is such a beautiful picture. It is to be purchased off the auction block of sin.

All right? Satan puts us up for auction. The highest bidder gets us. Whatever greatest temptation wants to come our way, whatever fallacy comes our way, we're put up for sale. We're on the auction block and we're standing bare and naked for all to see.

We get this wording, right, in some of those Old Testament minor prophets as they're just exposed, right? And they're there for everybody to see. Remember Hosea had to go buy his wife who ran away from him off the auction block and he overpaid for her.

All right? Well, guess what? Christ overpaid for us. The word redemption, when you read it in the book of Isaiah, the payment that's been paid is 120% of the value.

He paid above and beyond what we were worth. He redeemed us. So we are not our own. You have been bought with a price. Now, he bought us.

[31 : 40] Now, this is a word that we don't like to think about much and this sometimes gets me in trouble but not in a bad way. But you have to say, when redemption means you are not your own, somebody else owns you. You say, well, no, nobody owns me.

Well, I've got good news for you or bad news for you. Nobody is a free person because either Satan owns you or Christ owns you. Jesus himself said, you're either a slave of Satan or you're a slave of God.

You say, well, I don't serve anybody. Well, when you serve your own selfish desires and you go your own way, quote, unquote, last time I checked, that was the brainchild of Satan. I saw it all the way back in the book of Genesis where he convinced man that they could go their own way.

There is no own way. You're either going to go the way of Satan or you're going to go the way of the Savior. That's just who we are. And when we are redeemed off the auction block of sin, we are not our own.

We have been bought with a price. Do not become slaves of men. What does that mean? Now, all of a sudden, your loyalty has shifted. This is your realignment. This is why God doesn't call you out of the marketplace.

[32 : 46] This is why, and I realize this, very, very few people are called to the pastoral or called to vocational ministry. I understand that. But this is why. This is why the majority of believers are called to the marketplace and they live out their faith in their assignment because society is better when we're aligned with the Savior than when we're aligned with our boss.

Your alignment with the Savior never will bring conflict with your occupation of your job. And you say, well, now, what if my job asks me to do something that's immoral? What if my job is wrong? Well, then leave it for conscious sake, right?

And we're not talking about doing something that's immorally wrong. We're not talking about doing something that theologically you shouldn't be doing. We're talking about filling a place in society. Society is better when believers are a part of it.

You don't believe me, open up the book of Revelations, and you find out when the rapture comes, somewhere around Revelations chapter 3 or 4, Revelation 4, Revelation 5, you see the church in heaven. And then when you turn the page, all of a sudden you see what's going on on earth, and the hailstones are falling down, the mountains are crying, and everybody's crying out, and society's crumbling and falling apart.

Why? Because the light has been removed. Go back to the book of Job. The book of Job says that if God was to call His Spirit back to Himself, all men would perish, everybody would die. And the reason that would happen, guess what? How is the Spirit of God manifested among the men of this world?

[34 : 01] Through you and I. Because He inhabits us. We are indwelt with the Spirit. Society is better when we occupy our place in it, as a divine assignment, as being there not to serve our boss, but to serve our Savior.

Whatever it is He's called you to do, Paul would write it this way, do all that you do, not for men, but as unto the Lord. Why? Because you're not a slave of men.

You do what your boss asked you to do because your Savior has put you there to do what your boss has asked you to do. So you're serving the Savior who owns you, not the boss who pays you. That's the realignment. And when this realization came, I'm just from personal confession. These are things that I found out. When I went to work going, man, I got to go in here and do whatever this person tells me to do, and I got to go do this job.

And it was a drudgery, right? And I did a lot of jobs. Listen, I opened up septic tanks that were plugged for a living for a while, right? Septic tanks don't get plugged because roses get in them, okay? We understand that.

[35 : 09] My job was the baffle breaker. That is, when the septic tank was opened up, I'm the guy who unplugged it. That was my job. And so when I went to work thinking, man, I got to do this one. He sits on that backhoe.

That's terrible. But when I went to work thinking, God's given me something to put food on my table, this is what God has assigned for me to do. You know, close your eyes, close your lips, turn your head. That's what you do, right? It's okay. When I went to work doing jobs that I absolutely hated, when I walked in there going, I'm just going to do whatever they tell me to do, then it was a drudgery.

But when I realized, this is where he has put me. Christ is sovereign over every aspect of my life. And if this is what he's called me to do today, then so be it. Because look at what he's done for me. He shed his blood for me. Surely I can do whatever it is he assigns me to do today. You see the realignment? Same job. Totally different focus. It all depends on how we see it.

It all depends on how we're aligned. You show up to work tomorrow or you show up in your retirement tomorrow or you show up in your community tomorrow or you show up somewhere tomorrow and when you are present and you are just there to please men, then it's not going to be fun.

[36 : 22] But when you show up because you know the Savior has put you wherever you're at tomorrow, all of a sudden things get different. I'm not saying that I always get this right. Sometimes my wife has to come beside me and remind me, right?

Sometimes other people have to come beside me and nudge me and remind me. But this is the realignment. I'm doing this because this is what the Savior has called me to do today. I'm not a slave of man.

No man owns me. But the Savior does. And he has a right for my uttermost obedience and devotion.

So if this is what he's assigned for me to do today, then I'm going to do it. I'm going to do it. And we understand. Friend, listen to me.

You know what this does? It gives us contentment. And when we are content, the world's just a better place. Because you're not called the moment you come to Christ to leave society.

[37 : 29] You're called. What does Jesus say? You are the salt of the earth. You are the light set on the hill. It doesn't say you can be.

He says you are. He called you to himself and put you where you're at to make things better. To make things better. How is it better when the whole time we're there all we think is we're working for somebody else?

But when we realize we're working because that's where the Lord put us, things are better. We live with settled contentment. Let's pray. Lord, I thank you for this day.

God, I thank you for your faithfulness and your goodness to us. I thank you for your sovereignty over every aspect of our lives. And Lord, we pray as we come to the realization of this that you would mold and shape our hearts and change our minds.

Lord, help us to live as lights in the community that you've called us to be in. Help us to live as salt in this earth that you've called us to inhabit. And Lord, may our lives be adjusted according to your glory and your honor.

[38 : 39] And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Thank you.