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Insurance in the Light of Biblical Teaching

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Abstract

Insurance in the Light of Biblical Teaching

This article deals with the contemporary topic of non-compulsory insurance, which is still controversial among Christians. Some Christians believe that using non-compulsory insurance is good, while others think it expresses a lack of belief in God or that using insurance is a sin. This study will show the reader that Biblical texts encourage prudent provision for more difficult times. The person, who does so, fulfills the obligation to perform acts of good will toward his neighbor.

Keywords: non-compulsory insurance, Christian, good will

Abstrakt

Ubezpieczenie w świetle nauczania biblijnego

Artykuł ten dotyczy współczesnego tematu ubezpieczeń nieobowiązkowych, który wciąż budzi kontrowersje wśród Chrześcijan. Niektórzy Chrześcijanie uważają, że korzystanie z ubezpieczenia nieobowiązkowego jest dobre, podczas gdy inni uważają, że wyraża brak wiary w Boga lub że korzystanie z ubezpieczenia jest grzechem. Niniejsze studium pokaże czytelnikowi, że teksty biblijne zachęcają do rozważnego zabezpieczenia na trudniejsze czasy. Osoba, która tak czyni, wypełnia obowiązek czynienia dobrego uczynku wobec bliźniego.

Słowa kluczowe: ubezpieczenie dobrowolne, chrześcijanin, dobry uczynek

Years of work in the management of a large financial corporation gives the opportunity to learn about the different approaches of clients and potential clients towards financial services. It is interesting to note the behavior of a Christian facing a choice in matters that are viewed negatively in Scripture, such as money. The subject of non-compulsory insurance is controversial among Christians.

A study on national culture and life insurance says that both culture and religion influence the use of life insurance products. According to the study, it is a phenomenon that not only occurs among Catholics but among Protestants and Muslims as well. The study states that: “We do not separate our religion measure into Protestant, Catholic and Muslim, because we believe that a religious person will generally purchase less life insurance if he/she perceives that buying life insurance shows a distrust of God’s protection.”¹ Certain Islamic states prohibit Western-type insurance companies to operate on their soil. Life insurance continues to pose a problem for many Muslims who feel a deep revulsion at the thought of purchasing it.² There are many different approaches among Catholics. Some willingly purchase non-compulsory insurance while others reject it. Those who reject it either lack the money needed to purchase the insurance, have not had a good experience with it, or think they have sufficient funds to deal with any unforeseen situations. There are also those who think it would not a bad idea to have non-compulsory insurance, but sometime in the future, not now. However, it often happens that this “future” never happens and the need for insurance arises only as a result of a dramatic situation. Nevertheless, then it is no longer possible to obtain insurance because the damage has already occurred. The superstitious character of the responses of Christians and non-Christians are surprising. Many do not even want to hear about the chance of some unforeseen negative life situation. These people are convinced that thinking about an unforeseen catastrophe would actually make it happen. Other Christians believe that using non-compulsory insurance is a sin because man is supposed to trust God completely.

¹ A. C. W. Chui, C. C. Y. Kwok, *National Culture and Life Insurance Consumption*, “Journal of International Business Studies” 39 (2008) no. 1, p. 99.

² J. P. Daniel, *The Broader Cultural Context of Insurance: Insurance and Religions*, “The Geneva Papers on Risk and Insurance” 28 (2003) no. 1, p. 105.

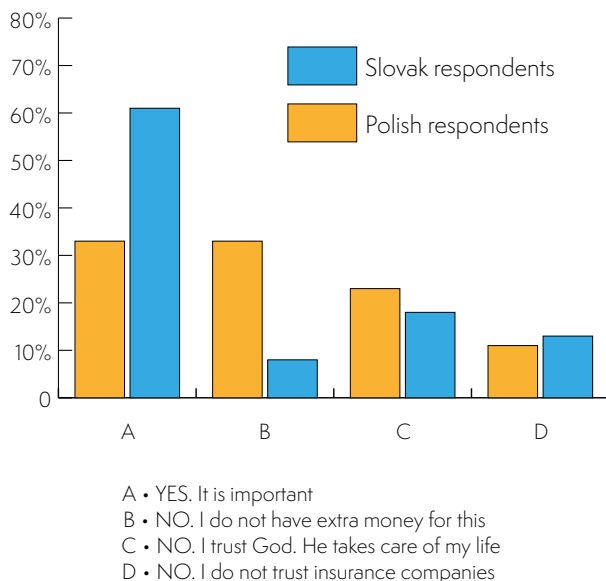
However, the misunderstandings of clients or potential clients should not only be presented, it is fair to honestly admit that, on the other hand, the insurance companies themselves—their agents, insurance claim adjusters or employees of insurance companies often contribute to the distrust of customers or potential customers. It is also worth considering a very real reason for not purchasing commercial insurance, which is that we do not want to waste money on insurance, instead we want to buy tangible things here and now. Let us ask a question. Are we interested in the future? Are we interested in more difficult times or are we only concerned with today? Is it the topic of insurance for more difficult times that still worries us? Or it is that we are not worried because nothing dangerous has happened so far so nothing dangerous will probably happen in the future? By honestly answering these questions we can discover not only our true attitude towards insurance, but something much more important—our relationship to God and to those closest to us.

First goal of the article is to present how the need for insurance has presented itself throughout history and what that need looks like in today's world, this will present the various trials and difficulties. Another goal is to answer questions: Is it morally good to purchase non-compulsory insurance? Does a person need additional insurance beyond the obligatory insurance provided by the state? Is it up to each individual Christian to decide for himself what to do about insurance? How should a Christian behave in regard to this question? Have insurance companies ever paid compensation to anyone? Is purchasing insurance services a sin against my faith? Does Scripture tell us anything about insurance? Is it not enough that I believe in God and the words of the Lord Jesus? Because it is written: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life and what you will eat, or about your body and what you will wear" or "As for you, do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not worry anymore" (Lk 12:22.29).

To solve the problem, I used the paradigm of pastoral methodology, based on three stages of the research procedure: criteriological, cairological and praxeological stage which contain the historical method, the method of examining documents, the method of analyzing biblical texts, method of deduction of individual texts, example comparison method and method short instructions. To begin this article we look at the an-

swers among Christians regarding how they approach non-compulsory insurance. The method used for this is based on sociological survey that took place from February 24, 2021, to March 9, 2021.

Diagram 1. Do you have non-compulsory insurance (property insurance, life insurance)²³



Roman Catholic respondents aged twenty to fifty-five from Slovakia and Poland participated in an anonymous electronic survey. 40% of the respondents belonged to Christian communities; 30% of the respondents were students, PhD students and teachers of theology in Poland and Slovakia; 20% of the respondents were priests from Slovakia and Poland; and 10% of the respondents were Catholics who did not belong to any of the groups mentioned. The question for Polish respondents was: Do you use non-compulsory insurance? They could choose from one positive answer: YES, it is important; or three negative answers: NO, I do not have extra money for insurance; No, I trust God, he will take care of me; NO, I do

²³ M. Čilová, Own sociological survey, <https://my.surveio.com/24/02/2012> (09.03.2021).

not trust insurance companies. Respondents from Slovakia answered the same question. The results of the survey are presented on Diagram 1.

The results of the sociological survey show that the largest number of respondents actually use non-compulsory insurance. 33% of respondents from Poland and 61% of respondents from Slovakia use and consider insurance necessary. 33% of Polish respondents and 8% of Slovak respondents would probably use insurance if they had the money. 13% of Slovak and 11% of Polish respondents do not trust insurance companies. The survey shows that even today among Roman Catholics there is a large percentage of those who believe that God cares for them and their lives and therefore they have no need for non-compulsory insurance. This argument is supported by 18% of Slovak respondents and 23% of Polish respondents. Thus, a deeper evaluation of the subject is important.

In addition to the sociological survey discussed above, this article uses the analysis of biblical texts and the comparative method. The structure of the article is divided into three main parts. The first one shows the phenomenon of non-compulsory insurance. The second part leads the reader through an interesting history of insurance based on non-biblical, Biblical sources and Tradition. In the last part, the extremes regarding this topic will be presented. Graphs with the statistics of the European Union at the end of this article demonstrate that insurance companies in Poland and Slovakia actually compensate customers.

1. Non-compulsory insurance

The financial market in Slovakia includes insurance, banking, and investment products. Their activities are supervised by the Slovak National Bank. Insurance is a special branch of monetary services that insurance companies provide to natural and legal persons. Each insurance product represents insurance protection for the client. Insurance is a legal relationship between two parties. One party insures, receives premiums and is willing to compensate the other party in the event of an insured event. The second party must pay premiums. Not only is insurance important for the individual and for the company but it is also important for the whole economy because it helps to ensure the smooth running of the economy and reduces the number of entrepreneur bank-

ruptcies. Insurance is based on three principles: solidarity, contingent return, and inequivalence. The principle of solidarity means that all participants who purchase insurance contribute to the insurance reserves, however not everyone who purchases insurance receives an insurance benefit. Contingent return is characterized by the fact that the indemnity is paid to the client only if an insured event occurs. Inequivalence is the third principle. It states that indemnities do not depend on the amount of premiums paid. According to the method of financing, the insurer's activities are divided into compulsory and non-compulsory insurance.

Social and health insurance in Slovakia belongs to the category of compulsory insurance. It differs from non-compulsory insurance in two main aspects. The first is that it is compulsory, and its aim is not to make a profit but to achieve social objectives. Health insurance, unemployment insurance, retirement pension and disability pension insurance are included in social insurance. Compulsory insurance represents the social protection of the state, which is carried out through the state-run institution Sociálna poisťovňa.

This is not the case with non-compulsory insurance companies. They belong to the private financial services sector. They are founded for the purpose of making a profit. The Slovak Insurance Association is an interest association of commercial insurance companies. Its aim is to represent, protect, and promote the common interests of its members in relation to central state administration bodies, other legal entities, and the general public at home and abroad. There are currently 16 non-compulsory insurance companies in Slovakia. They each have a different focus. Some only offer life insurance products others are provide non-life insurance. Universal insurance companies offer a wide range of life and non-life insurance products.

Non-compulsory life insurance offers protection for individuals and families in unforeseen situations. In the event of the death of the insured person, these products enable the survivors to be reimbursed for the costs incurred through the death of the insured person or to maintain the standard of living that would be threatened as a result of the loss of income from the insured persons death. Signing a life insurance contract is advantageous because the client is certain to receive a benefit.

The client either lives or dies. In both cases, the insurance company must pay the indemnity. If the client lives to the end of the insurance, the insurance company will pay him the premium with interest. In the event that the client dies, the indemnity will be paid to the person or persons designated by the client as the beneficiary when signing the contract. If no one has been specified in the contract, the insurance company shall proceed in accordance with the law. It pays the insurance benefits on the basis of the inheritance law.

Compulsory contractual insurance includes professional liability insurance on the basis of special regulations—insurance of a civil air carrier, dentists, commercial lawyers, as well as liability insurance for damage caused by the operation of a motor vehicle. The supervision of this type of insurance in Slovakia is administered by the Slovak Office of Insurers.

The Directive of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU⁴ classifies non-life risks as follows: accident (including industrial injury and occupational diseases), sickness, land vehicles (other than railway rolling stock), railway rolling stock, aircraft, ships (sea, lake, river and canal vessels), goods in transit (including merchandise, baggage, and all other goods), fire and natural forces, other damage to property, motor vehicle liability, aircraft liability, liability for ships (sea, lake, river and canal vessels), general liability, credit, suretyship, miscellaneous financial loss, legal expenses, assistance.

A more complicated matter in non-compulsory insurance is the phenomenon referred to as exclusion from insurance, or simply exclusions. It applies to both life and non-life insurance. If the client does not become acquainted with the exclusions before signing the contract, it may have a negative impact on the insured event. In the case of life insurance, the client's health is examined. It is therefore recommended to take out life insurance at a young age, when the health of the client is expected to be better than with an older client. An example of an exclusion for non-life policies is driving after drinking alcohol. In the event of an accident

4 Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council, in: *Smernica Európskeho parlamentu a Rady 2009/138/ES z 25. novembra 2009 o začatí a vykonávaní poistenia a zaistenia (Solventnosť II)*, Úradný vestník Európskej únie, L 335, Odstavec neživotného poistenia, 17.12.2009, Supplement, no. 1, p. 116–118.

which would otherwise be covered under the policy, if the driver had consumed alcohol before driving, the insurance benefit will not be paid. Non-compulsory insurance companies cover risks that are unforeseen and unexpected.

The term “*Vis maior*” otherwise known as an “act of God” is used in insurance terminology which leads one to believe that representatives of insurance companies believe in God. An act of God is an accident or event resulting from causes without human intervention, and one that could not have been prevented by reasonable foresight or care.⁵ This can be an uncontrolled regulation of the state or a natural event.⁶

It is serious matter for a Christian decide whether the product that insurance companies are proposing is good or bad. Of course, the best person to speak to the benefits of insurance are those who have received compensation from an insurance company. Unfortunately, it is more likely to hear people who are dissatisfied with the compensation than those who have been greatly helped by insurance companies. It occurs when the breadwinner, the faithful Christian, becomes seriously ill or dies, and the family is not prepared to overcome this difficult period. If a family did not have insurance such a situation would cause great difficulties for the family. On the other side, for the sake of interest, it should be said that it is not uncommon for a client to pay only the first quarterly fee of EUR 50 for family home insurance, shortly thereafter, an event or loss occurs. In this case the family would receive a considerable amount of compensation from the insurance company, e.g., EUR 8000, regardless of how long the client was paying that insurance. Saint Paul, in his letter to the Romans: “let each of us please our neighbor for the good, for building up” (Rom 15:2). Among the meanings of the Hebrew word טוב “good there is: what brings happiness or makes life easier.”⁷ Hence, it can be concluded that in unforeseen situations, good insurance undoubtedly brings good luck and makes life easier. The Greek word

5 Insurance Program from The Hartford, Act of God, <https://www.thehartford.com/aarp/homeowners-insurance/act-of-god> (31.06.2021).

6 Heureka Brokerage & Consulting, s.r.o., organizačná zložka Slovensko, *Vis maior*, <https://www.poistenie.sk/lexikon/vyssia-moc> (21.02.2021).

7 X. Léon-Dufour, *Slovník biblickej teológie*, Dobrá kniha, Provincijálát SJ, Bratislava 1969, p. 212.

καλός is used to mean: “beautiful; as an outward sign of the inward good; noble; honorable character; good; worthy; honorable; noble; and seen to be so.” The Hebrew term גר means “bad; badly.” The Greek word πονηρός means: “full of callus; obstacles; difficulties; dangers; burdened and overwhelmed by hardships; physically evil: sick, blind, and ethically wicked.”⁸

2. History of insurance

2.1. Non-biblical sources regarding business and private insurance

The oldest mention on insurance was business insurance. It appeared on a Babylonian monument. The highly regarded set of laws, the Code of Hammurabi, was one of the first examples of written laws. It was written in the Akkadian language.⁹ Hammurabi was the ruler of Babylon from 1792 to 1750 BC. A stone sculpture with the Code was found between 1901 and 1902 by French archaeologists in Susa, the capital of the Edomites. The Code is of great importance to economists. It also applies to money and banking.¹⁰ It orders that caravan participants jointly and severally cover the damage suffered by one of the participants of the journey. Babylonian ship merchants took out cargo loans and paid their lenders “forgiveness of the loan” in the event of their loss or theft at sea. Hence it can be seen that transport insurance of a business company was considered to be the earliest form of insurance.

“Nauticum foenus” was labeled as marine insurance. Already in Greece and Rome, the usual means of sea credit existed.¹¹ The creditor would bear the risk from the beginning to the end of the expedition. If the ship was lost, its owner was released. If he successfully reached his

8 J. Strong, *Grecko-polski słownik Stronga z lokalizacją słów greckich i kodami Popowskiego*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Vocatio, red. W. Chrostowski, Warszawa 2015, p. 636 (Πονηρός).

9 E. Marsden, *Risk Engineering. Insurance and Risk: Some History*, Swiss Reinsurance Company, Zurich 2020.

10 K. V. Nagrajan, *The Code of Hammurabi: an economic interpretation*, “International Journal of Business and Social Science” 2 (2011) no. 8, p. 113.

11 *Enciclopedia jurídica* 2020, *Nauticum foenus*, <http://www.encyclopedia-juridica.com/d/nauticumfoenus/nauticum-foenus.htm> (20.02.2021).

destination, he had to pay back more than was borrowed. In the Middle Ages, interest on a loan was forbidden. For this reason, from that time all stakeholders are involved in the risk. Life insurance appeared during the Peloponnesian Wars. Some Athenian slaveowners volunteered their slaves to serve as rowers on warships. They paid a small annual bonus to the Athenian state for them. In the event of the slave's death in the war, the state paid the slave's price. Greeks and Romans around 600 BC. founded guilds called "charitable societies," which looked after the families of deceased members and also covered the costs of the funeral of members. They had similar practices in the Middle Ages. The Jewish Talmud deals with several aspects of goods insurance. Modern insurance was created at the end of the 17th century. In England, there were "friendly societies" where people donated total amounts that could be spent in an emergency.¹²

French scientists Blaise Pascal and Pierre de Fermat discovered a way to express probabilities and better understand risk levels. This breakthrough began to formalize the practice of insurance and made insurance cheaper.¹³ Today, the mathematics of insurance deals with the probability of risks, statistics, financial mathematics, and numerical methods in the field of insurance. It can be studied at the insurance departments of mathematical and economic universities.

2.2. Stockpiling in the Old Testament

Insurance is a form of stock. The word stock, stockpiling is mentioned thirty-five times in the Scriptures. In the first book of the Old Testament (Gen 41), God, with his intervention, encourages people to insure themselves and to have sufficient resources. He expects them to be responsible. The hero Joseph, son of the patriarch Jacob and Rachel, arrived in Egypt. Through a dream, the Egyptian Pharaoh is informed that seven

¹² A. J. Graham, *Thucydides 7.13.2 and the Crews of Athenian Triremes*, "Transactions of the American Philological Association" 122 (1992), p. 257–270, <https://doi.org/10.2307/284373>.

¹³ A. Beattlie, *The History of Insurance*, "Investopedia Corporate Finance & Accounting", New York 2021, <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/08/history-of-insurance.asp#citation-1> (20.02.2021).

years of harvest are coming, and after that seven years of famine. Pharaoh appointed the Jew Joseph as overseer, chief insurance agent over all Egypt. In the harvest years, Joseph provided food and provisions for all the people to prepare them for the years of famine. The use of the noun פְּקֻדָּוֹן in Judeo-Aramaic means: “amassing good; deposit; warehouse; reserve”; Nabatian pqdwn meaning uncertain: “responsibility” (Milik) or “order” (Cantineau); Akkadian “puquddu official deposit; good placed in trust.”¹⁴ The idea of securing yourself in good times is also suggested in the Book of Ecclesiastes, in which we read: “Cast your bread upon the waters; after a long time you may find it again. Make seven or eight portions; you know not what misfortune may come upon the earth” (11:1–2). The book of Proverbs encourages the same attitude: “Take good care of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; For wealth lasts not forever, nor even a crown from age to age” (27:23–24). Hedging is marked as a wise behavior on the examples of small animals such as ants. They look for food in summer to prepare for winter (Prv 30:25).

2.3. Advice related to insurance in the New Testament and Tradition

Any cursory exploration of the historical relationship between Christian theology and insurance is almost certain to be more confusing than edifying. Theologians and other scholars, often asserting positions diametrically opposed to each other, have been known to cite the exact same passages of scripture, either to justification or to condemn of the institution of insurance.¹⁵ The words of the Lord Jesus, which some Christians associate with the idea of not being insured, are: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life and what you will eat, or about your body and what you will wear.” “As for you, do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not worry anymore” (Lk 12:22.29). However, it should be remembered that Jesus did not end here. In the same chapter, he explains when not to worry. We should do everything in our

14 L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, J. J. Stamm, *Wielki słownik hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski Starego Testamentu*, t. 2, Warszawa 2013, p. 45 (פְּקֻדָּוֹן).

15 A. M. Tracy, *Insurance and Theology: The Background and the Issue*, “The Journal of Risk and Insurance” 33 (1966) no. 1, p. 85, <https://doi.org/10.2307/250965>.

power and then not worry. “If even the smallest things are beyond your control, why are you anxious about the rest?” (Lk 12:26). The Greek verb δύναμαι means: “to be able to; have strength, whether because of their own abilities and resources; be the state of mind; whether it was due to favorable circumstances; or with the consent of law or custom; to be able to do something; to be able.”¹⁶ In other words, the Lord Jesus encourages us to do whatever is in our strength. Then, when we are helpless and cannot even do something small, we must fully trust in God. God does protect and care for our lives, but He has not promised anyone that he will not be affected by any disease, harm, loss, destruction of property, or even premature death. Therefore, using insurance or storing up resources for more difficult times is a responsible attitude.

The main thought of the Evangelist Matthew in the Parable about the prudent and unwise virgins (Mt 25:1–13) is to prepare, to be ready. The Greek word ἕτοιμος means: “ready because prepared”; “standing by,” ready to meet the opportunity (challenge) at hand; ready because the necessary preparations are done. The sensible virgins had the necessary amount of oil in stock. On the other side, virgins who had no supplies were marked as unwise. Therefore, I do not agree with the claim that “catholic tradition, can readily be interpreted as hostile to insurance.”¹⁷ I am convinced that the Catholic Church is not hostile to insurance, but says little about it as a whole. It is not the role of the church to encourage insurance. However, that the leaders of church itself use insurance is an example for us.

Faith in God requires human activity. Expecting God to do for man what man himself should do, could qualify as over-trusting in God’s mercy. The letter to Galatians 5:6 says that faith is considered as a rule of life. It is practically denied by one who neglects these kindly duties and responsibilities, for “faith worketh by love.” Saint Paul criticizes a passive approach to important matters. Such a man, according to Paul, is not a believer, and what is more, he is worse than a heathen: “And whoever does not provide for relatives and especially family members

16 J. Strong, *Grecko-polski słownik Stronga z lokalizacją słów greckich i kodami Popowskiego*, p. 211 (δύναμαι).

17 J. P. Daniel, *The Broader Cultural Context of Insurance: Insurance and Religions*, “The Geneva Papers on Risk and Insurance” 28 (2003) no. 1, p. 105.

has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Tim 5:8). The term *προνοέω* as used here means to anticipate, to provide, to care.¹⁸ The dictionary also presents us with a synonym to this word as: “to have a hunch; suppose; sense something with your intuition; forecast prophesy; expect; to plan; sense; guess what might happen.”¹⁹ For a Christian, then, to deliberately neglect such plain duties would bring shame and disgrace on the religion of the loving Christ, and, notwithstanding the name he bore, and the company in which he was enrolled, such a denier of the faith would be really worse than a heathen.²⁰ Elsewhere, the declaration of the Christian: “for we are concerned for what is honorable not only in the sight of the Lord but also in the sight of others” (2 Cor 8:21). Paul encourages people not to seek their own benefit, but the good of others (1 Cor 10:24).

Paul’s primary purpose is to announce the saving work of Christ. However, we can see that he does not hesitate to give concrete, practical and, for that time, progressive advice on finance or stock-making. To organize the responsibilities of individual family roles in the matter of saving goods or money. The words directed towards parents are specific and are still relevant to this day. “Children ought not to save for their parents, but parents for their children” (2 Cor 12:14b). The Greek verb *θησαυρίζω* means: “collect and put away; collect; lay in; to store up; to treasure up; to save; to lay up.” The same root noun *θησαυρός* can also mean “a place where good and valuable things are brought and gathered.”²¹ The term *θησαυρίζω* can be found elsewhere in 2 Cor 12:14. The Hebrew term *שָׂרַף* means: “care for someone study; ask for; demand; look for; decide.”²²

Holy Father John Paul II approaches the topic of insurance in his encyclical letter *Centesimus Annus*, published on the 100th anniversary of the *Rerum Novarum*. In part II, points 15 and 19 deal with social and state liability towards a person who has lost his job and the existence

18 Strong’s Concordance, <https://biblehub.com/greek/4306.htm> (24.02.2021) (*προνοέω*).

19 <https://synonim.net/synonim/przewidywa%C4%87> (25.02.2021).

20 Ellicott’s Commentary for English Readers, https://biblehub.com/commentaries/1_timothy/5-8.htm (26.02.2021).

21 J. Strong, *Grecko-polski słownik Stronga z lokalizacją słów greckich i kodami Popowskiego*, p. 358–359 (*θησαυρός*).

22 L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, J. J. Stamm, *Wielki słownik hebrajsko-polski i aramejsko-polski Starego Testamentu*, t. 1, Warszawa 2013, p. 221–222 (*שָׂרַף*).

of a solid system of joint insurance. In IV part, point 34 he recalls the need to comply with the recommendations of the *Rerum Novarum* encyclical concerning, inter alia, working conditions and joint insurance for the elderly and the unemployed as well as their living conditions in the Third World.²³

3. Avoiding extremes

The prudence of the wise virgins from the Jesus's parable was not only that they had stocked up, but also that the supplies they had did not to burden them down. Financial illiteracy is not an uncommon source of misunderstanding concerning non-compulsory insurance.

One extreme is the complete distrust of insurance services, the other extreme is the excessive use of these services. Increasingly, there is a misunderstanding of the meaning of insurance in the form of abuse of insurance services. This abuse is when people use insurance for their own interests. People who do this are convinced, and do not even try to hide it, that non-compulsory insurance is not only to cover costs in unforeseen life situations, but it is an opportunity to make money. Many different forms of this deception are allowed to happen. There are known cases of staged car accidents and extreme examples of clients who cut off their own finger in order to obtain as much as money possible from health insurance. As a point of curiosity, insurance companies in Slovakia pay more for the finger of the dominant hand. The phenomenon of cutting off the finger of the right hand is not an exceptional event. Such customer behavior causes significant financial losses for insurance companies.

Committing various forms of deception through the excessive use of non-compulsory insurance services is not only a problem of financial illiteracy but has its roots in human greed.

Greed undoubtedly leads to crime. The Greek word φιλαργυρία means: "love of money, greed." "For the root of all evil is greed" (1 Tim 6:10). "Greed blunts the sensitivity to another person, self-awareness, the soul until it achieves what it desires. Greed is usually associated with money

²³ John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Centesimus Annus*, 01.05.1991, ed. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1991.

but it is the same Satan who drains the soul and can claim land, power, drugs, alcohol, influence, and fame.”²⁴

The Evangelist Luke warns against greed in the parable of a rich man gathering without measure (Lk 12:13–21). The Greek verb *θησαυρίζω* means: “to collect and put away; accumulate; lay in; accumulate wealth; keep in stock; to have stock, to keep.”²⁵ A field had grown well for him. He considered what he would do with the resources he had accumulated that would last him for years. Instead of sharing it with those in need, he decided to build larger granaries for himself. God marks him as a fool who will have to leave all his resources for others anyway when his soul is demanded.

Another face of the extremes of non-compulsory insurance is rejection. An indifferent attitude towards non-compulsory insurance can be seen in the majority of lower-class Gypsies. They are indifferent towards insurance. They do not care about the future. Another example of a group of clearly set against insurance are The Amish, the part of Protestant Mennonites. The attitude of this group of Mennonites, and incidentally other Christian groups that are opposed to life insurance, is that insurance reflects trust in man rather than in God; it means becoming ‘unequally yoked together with unbelievers’; it is the equivalent of merchandising in human life; it is putting a monetary price on human life, which is considered not in accord with scripture since man is “the temple of the Holy Ghost.”²⁶ Amish people form one of the most conservative branches of the Mennonite tree. They reject not only non-compulsory insurance, but even compulsory state insurance. However, it should be noted, The Amish declare mutual assistance in the event of an emergency within the Amish Community.

As Ferrara writes, participating in Social Security would contradict “the biblical commands that members of the church provide for their own families and assist those in the community in need. Participation

²⁴ L. Drobniak, *W smoczym wyziewie chciwości*, http://www.akademiamedycyny.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Wst%C4%99p-2012_2.pdf, p. 7 (08.03.2021).

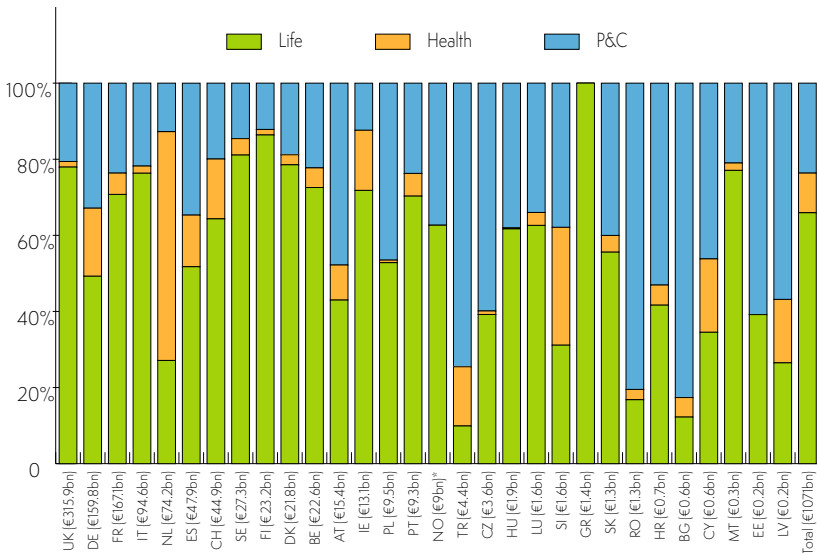
²⁵ J. Strong, *Grecko-polski słownik Stronga z lokalizacją słów greckich i kodami Popowskiego*, p. 358 (*θησαυρίζω*).

²⁶ *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*, eds. M. Gingerich, H. S. Bender, Mennonite Publishing House, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania 1957, p. 42–43.

in Social Security is also seen as lacking in trust in God to provide the necessities of life for his people, promised by several biblical passages.”²⁷

A Christian, however, should avoid all extremes and use opportunities to do good. In the pages of the Scriptures, the theme of resource production is known from the first book of Genesis. The period of Joseph’s arrival in Egypt is dated by the theologian Alfred Tschirschnitz at around 1660 BC. The New Testament also expresses a positive attitude towards activity, saving and caring for others. “Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up” (Gal 6:9).

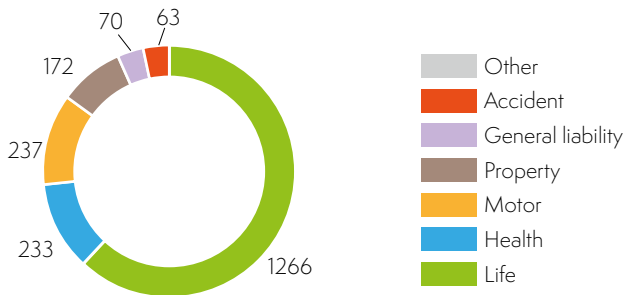
Diagram 2. Total claims and benefits paid to clients by country – 2018 (in EUR)²⁸



²⁷ Amish America, Another look at the Amish and health insurance, “Amish Controversies, Amish Culture”, <https://amishamerica.com/amish-health-care/> (08.03.2021).

²⁸ Insurancedata Europe, <https://www.insuranceeurope.eu/insurancedata> (06.03.2021).

Diagram 3. Average premiums per capita — 2018 (in EUR)



These two diagrams show that insurance companies do really provide compensation for damages. They present the total claims and benefits paid by each country in European Union in 2018.

Conclusion

The insurance industry not only facilitates the daily life of individuals, companies in business, various communities, and churches, but also helps facilitate in the area of innovation and development. Nevertheless, the value of the importance of non-compulsory insurance is still not sufficiently understood by clients. The significance of insurance is often questioned, and many clients do not know the benefits it can bring them.

Currently, the subject of non-compulsory insurance is controversial not only among various religious denominations, but also among Christians themselves. Some people use non-compulsory insurance, but there are negative points of views, as well. The reasons for not using non-compulsory insurance are different. Sometimes the insurance companies themselves and their agents often contribute to distrust on the part of people.

A group of Christians declare that they do not have non-compulsory insurance because they trust in God. They believe God cares for their life. God certainly cares about the life of each of us, however, He did not promise anyone that there would never be a difficult situation in his life. My sociological survey has shown that about 20% of Roman Catholic re-

spondents do not use non-compulsory insurance because they believe in God — 23% of Polish respondents and 18% of Slovak respondents support this view.

But deeper analysis of the biblical texts sees protection for worse times as wise and even considers it to be a good act towards ones neighbor. Every Christian is obliged to do good deeds. In Genesis the hero Joseph the Egyptian accumulated a reserve in preparation for worse times. Likewise, the New Testament in various texts invites us to do a good act. Non-compulsory insurance is more oriented to other people than to ourselves. Jesus invites us to do everything in our power that we are capable to do. Relying on God's help is necessary at a time when we can no longer do anything on our own. The apostle Paul says that a person who does not care for his those closest to him has no faith. Scripture even directly encourages parents to save for their children. In the light of biblical texts, we see clear recommendations that the use of insurance is good.

Insurance companies often must face misunderstandings from clients. An important topic when taking out insurance is to know the “exclusions of insurance.” If a client is being treated for stomach cancer before he purchases the insurance he can not expect the insurance company to pay him for the risk of a “serious illness.” It is therefore necessary that clients do not hide any disease for which they are being treated from the insurance company.

There are two extremes when it comes to non-compulsory insurance. The first is not accepting any kind of insurance, even insurance which is obligatory. Another extreme is the abuse of insurance companies by clients. News on March 12, 2021, published by CNN,²⁹ reported a shocking story. An American man bought more than \$3 million worth of life and accidental death insurance policies on himself and his family. One day he went down with his car off a pier into the water with his wife and sons inside the car with him. His sons drowned. A California judge sentenced the man to 212 years for killing his two sons in an insurance scheme worth more than \$260 000, according to a news release from the Justice Department. US District Judge John F. Walter called Elmezayen's insurance plan “evil and diabolical.” It is therefore not surprising

²⁹ A. Vera, C. Carrega, <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/03/11/us/california-father-sentenced-insurance-scheme/index.html> (13.03.2021).

that insurance companies tighten conditions and control the payment of benefits for insurance policies. They also have antifraud departments that study individual cases in detail.

Non-compulsory insurance is especially necessary for the middle class, people who own something, want to insure it and have the financial means to do so. Therefore, we can say that non-compulsory insurance is a phenomenon of rich countries. Life insurance offers the client two basic policies that cover the risk of death, of course if the client lives to term the Company will compensate him for survival. In addition to this, it is possible to insure other risks—disability, death as a result of an accident, hospitalization, surgery, incapacity for work, serious illness, permanent consequences of an accident, treatment and the like. The subject of non-life insurance is property, liability for damage and business risks. Insurance of buildings, houses, flats, households, machines, machinery and also motor vehicle accident insurance can be insured in case of natural events—fire, flood, hail, earthquake, flood, snow disaster, avalanche, large landslide, but also theft, vandalism, etc.

Insurance has a long tradition. Ancient people in various parts of the world realized that unforeseen risks could cause enormous damage for which they would not be able to compensate. Therefore, risk sharing has existed for almost 4,000 years. From this time to the present there have been differing views on non-compulsory insurance. Financial illiteracy is not uncommon as the source of misunderstandings in non-compulsory insurance. It happens that parents make the wrong decisions about investing finances. They often make money in difficult conditions. But in the end they are willing to pay more money for computer games, designer clothes or monthly mobile phone bills of their children, instead of saving for their children's future. It is therefore necessary to speak about this topic. Deepening the topic can help us to manage our finances wisely, think soberly about the future and use these financial services in wise measure.

An increase in new insurance companies indicates that there are more and more clients interested in non-compulsory insurance. However, it is worth recalling that it is necessary to carefully select insurance companies, insurance agents and remember that intention of every entrepreneur is to generate a profit.

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