

# The Four W's 04 the Work of God

by Stan Ford

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*The sermon emphasizes the diverse ways individuals can engage in the work of God through personal relationships and service.*

**Duration:** 59:35

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Acts 20:24-35, Romans 12:1, 2 Timothy 4:7

**Topics:** "Faithful Service", "Christian Stewardship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being steadfast and faithful in serving God. He mentions that each person has a unique role to play in God's work based on their background and abilities. The speaker encourages the audience to seek a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and to rely on Him for guidance in their service. He also highlights the need for joy in serving God and the importance of not being swayed by external circumstances.

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## Transcript

Sing, only one tongue to praise thee, and all thy mercy sing, only one heart beholds your holy bliss, only one life to all. Thank you. I would like us to turn this evening to the 20th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

The Acts of the Apostles and chapter 20. Really there's no need for me to remind you of what we've been thinking of during the past evenings, but that we might keep it as a week of subjects. May I please just say, on the Monday we dealt with the Word of God and how to read it, on the Tuesday we dealt with the will of God and how to know it, and then we dealt with the worship of God and how to present it, and tonight I want to talk a little about the work of God and how to do it.

Now you will appreciate that I will not be able to deal with the subject fully because every one of us are individual. Every one of us have the opportunity of meeting different people and influencing different people. And the way I may do things may not be the way you do things, and yet God will bless your way as God will bless my way.

I mean, just you imagine a whole church of people just like me. It would be horrible, wouldn't it? Horrible, really. Isn't it wonderful we've got a God of variety? And I look around this chapel this evening, and all of us are different.

Our backgrounds are different, and yet God has a work for every one of us. He would not put his hand on me to use me to do some of the things he gets you to do, because of my background, because of your background. And so it will be only in a very limited way that I will tonight be able to deal with the word of God, or rather to deal with the work of God and how to do it.

And if afterwards you feel he hasn't really touched my knee, then the best thing to do is to go home, get on your knees, and say, Lord I serve you. And the master's job is to tell the servant what to do and how to do it. It all encircles the great fact of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, a personal relationship with him.

But nevertheless, I want to draw one or two lessons, and so we will turn to the 20th chapter of Acts, and with your permission I will commence reading in verse 19. Verse 19. You remember that the apostle has come to Ephesus.

He has called the elders of the church. He wishes to give them his greetings as he leaves them, maybe never to see them again. And this is what is said.

Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations, which befell me by the lying weight of the Jews, and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shown you, and have taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither can't I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with yours.

And the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that you all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore, I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

May the Lord just add his blessing to the reading of his word. We've just five minutes to sing a chorus or two, and we couldn't gather unless we did. So please, let's turn to our little chorus sheet.

If you haven't got one, please raise your hand, and our good friend at the door will hand you one out. Let's turn to our chorus sheet then, please, and we're going to sing number four. We haven't sung it this week, we sang it when we were over in the gospel center, but we're going to sing it here.

Maybe one of the oldest choruses on this little sheet. Number four, thank you. There's a way back to God from the dark part of the world.

Are we ready? Where do you go? So there we are, are we ready? There's a way back, there's a door about. What does that mean? Yeah, that's right. I was just wondering.

Right, are we ready? All together for the last time. And friends, I know now that maybe someone, say I'll say this to you, there is a way back. There is a door that is open, and all may go in.

There's a way back to God from the dark part of the world. There's a door that is open. Number 15, really the chorus of a hymn, isn't it? That we all love to sing, but nevertheless, a lovely chorus.

Oh, Jesus, Lord and Savior. Oh, Jesus, Lord, I give up. Just a word.

God and Father, we do bless thee together tonight that we can remind our hearts that the Lord Jesus gave himself for us. And we remember thy servant long ago could say, we love him because he first loved us. We thank thee again that all that we have been able to appreciate of the Lord Jesus is that which tells us that he cares.

That he cares today, as well as caring in a day that's lost. We ask that together we think of him, and we remember that he is the master, the Lord. We pray that thou would help us to realize there's a work for Jesus, ready at our hands.

Is a work for master just for thee, husband? Haste to do his bidding. Yield him service true. There's a work for Jesus, none but you can do.

Grant this may be so for his name's sake. Amen. Amen.

I must confess that as I was preparing today for what I was going to say this evening, I found it very difficult to know where to start and where to stop. The work of God and how to do it. There is so much, is there not, when it comes to talking about the work of God.

But I was reminded of a story that once I heard, a real American story. So may I as an Englishman try and tell it. The story was told of a coloured boy who one day went into what you call a drug store, what we call a tennis.

And he asked the gentleman behind the counter if he could use his phone. He took a nickel from his pocket or whatever occasion you put in your phone and put it in. Dialed a number.

When he got through he said to the host that he heard over the phone, is that the residence of Dr. Jones? The boy said yes, this is the residence of Dr. Jones. Said the boy, doctor, do you want a boy? No, said the doctor, I don't want a boy. Are you sure you don't want a boy? Yes, I'm sure I don't want a boy.

Have you got a boy? Yes, I've got a boy. Are you satisfied with the boy you've got? The doctor was listening to his head. I've got a boy, I'm well satisfied with the boy I've got and I don't want another boy.

And bang went the thing. So I turned to walk out the drug store. When the man behind the counter said, son come over, we heard the conversation.

Uh, do you want a job? No, said the boy, I don't want a job. You don't want a job, but what were you doing on the phone? Oh, he said I was, I'm Dr. Jones's boy and I was just checking up on myself. Isn't it a good thing to check? Brethren, sisters, if that's all we do maybe we're taking the first step towards a real service.

But as I was thinking about the reading, I felt there were three ways that I would like, or maybe four ways that I would like to deal with this subject, the work of God and how to do it. And I could not think of doing anything better than open my Bible and consider some men who did work for God. And so with your permission, just for a few moments, I want to talk to you about Andrew, the introducing Christian.

And then I want to talk with you about Paul, the instructing Christian. And then I want to talk to you about Timothy, who I will call the inoffensive Christian. And then I want to talk to you about Manasseh, Manasseh of Cyprus, an old disciple with whom we should lodge.

I want to speak of him as Manasseh, the invaluable Christian. First of all, Andrew. It has well been said, and been said by thousands of preachers I'm sure over the course of years, that if ever there was a patron saint of workers, that patron saint would be Andrew.

Is it not remarkable that we find Andrew doing a work for God? It was a very individual work. We don't find Andrew standing, as Peter often did, preaching. We don't find Andrew writing, as Paul frequently did, for the churches that were scattered abroad.

But as we are introduced to Andrew, so we find that Andrew himself became an introducing Christian. And he was always introducing men, and I believe women as well, although I couldn't show you a verse in the Bible to prove that, but he was always introducing men and women to Jesus. I labour very frequently in my own country, in the West Country.

I'm a West Country man, I suppose, and that's why I labour there. But I go down into the county of Cornwall, which as far as assemblage testimony is concerned, has been somewhat dry over many, many years. Years ago, Wesley went down into Cornwall.

It was in Cornwall he wrote his great hymn, Oh for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise. For when Wesley went down into Cornwall those years ago, he knew not a person in the whole county that was a Christian. Well I'm not saying there wasn't Christians there, but he knew not a person in the whole county that was a Christian.

And when he passed over the border from Devonshire into the county of Cornwall, he stayed in the city of Launceston. And it was there in a little room that he took his pen and wrote Oh for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise. Oh thank God when he came out of Cornwall there were more than a thousand tongues that were singing the praise of the Lord.

But when first I went down into Cornwall, I went to a place called Helpden. We were having services actually in the police court. I was preaching from the dock night by night as we started off with about 10 people and then a few more gathered and then more and more.

Night by night I was saying oh I'm longing to get out of this dock. I'm looking forward to when I can get up on the bench where the magistrates sit and preach from there. But because I wanted to find out a little about Helpden and never having been there before and not knowing a soul in Helpden, I opened Wesley's journal and I read of his first visit to the town of Helpden.

And I was strangely moved. I said Lord may it truthfully be said when I leave Helpden what Wesley said when he left Helpden. For this is what he wrote.

I offered Christ to the people. I offered Christ to the people. I wonder right at the beginning could I say this.

If you and I are going to do any work for God it will be in as much as we offer Christ to the people. And that's what Andrew did. He introduced men and I believe women to Jesus Christ.

You will remember that the first person he introduced to Jesus Christ and surely this is tremendously significant. The first person he introduced to Jesus Christ was his own brother Peter. For Andrew and Peter had heard John the Baptist.

Andrew anyway had heard John the Baptist as he pointed his finger at the Christ and said behold the Lamb of God who beareth away the sin of the world. And Andrew was one of them that asked the question master where dwellest thou? And heard the answer of the Saviour come and see. And Andrew was one of those who had been no doubt a disciple of John the Baptist or at least listening to John the Baptist.

But Andrew was one of those who went and dwelt where the Lord dwelt. My friends I've a strong feeling the only way you and I will ever be able to introduce anyone to Jesus Christ is by first ourselves dwelling with Jesus Christ. And when we have dwelt with him, when Christ is a reality to us, then we can take upon our lips the words of John chapter 1 and verse 14.

We can take upon our lips the tremendous statement that Andrew first found his brother. Oh this is where introducing folks starts. It starts in our families.

And I think you will agree with me that sometimes, sometimes our families are the most difficult people to speak to. And they sometimes are the most difficult people to speak to because they know our faith. They know all about it.

And we can sometimes find it very difficult can't we to witness to them because they look at us and they say, but just a moment, just a moment. Those folk at the gospel chapel they know you for an hour Sunday morning and an hour Sunday night on Wednesday night. But we know you for 24 hours of almost everything.

Isn't it wonderful when you find who can say to his brother, we found the Messiah. We found the Christ. Later Peter is going to say, throw out the Christ.

But it all started by a man, who was his brother, saying we found the Christ, we found the Christ. 7 to 3, I suggest to you that our family life must be such that the those that we know and love we're able to speak of the Saviour and they'll come along and say, we'd like to see the person you're telling us about. Is it not interesting that not only did Andrew introduce his brother to the Lord, but Andrew was the person that introduced a boy to the Lord.

I'm very fond of boys stories in the Bible. Very fond of boys stories. But I think that nameless lad who had his loaves and fishes, I think that he's one of the most interesting characters.

But never you forget this, if Andrew had not been there, the boy would never have come. Then the Lord said to Philip about feeding the multitude. Paul, Philip was so concerned.

Why? We have not enough bread to feed this crowd. Let's send them away so they can go in the town and buy meat. But it was Andrew that brought it forth.

It was Andrew who said to Philip, Philip, there's a lad here who has five loaves and two fishes. And it was Philip and Andrew who introduced the boy to Jesus. You see, Philip had dwelt for Andrew, had dwelt with the Lord.

The Lord had become precious to Andrew and he had no doubt, he didn't know how it was going to happen, but he had no doubt that somehow that boy had something to teach. So he thought, okay, am I talking to a few Sunday school teachers here today? A few children's workers. Would you please remember this, that your task in a fellowship is one of the most important tasks of anyone in any fellowship.

I believe that the work of the Sunday school teacher can never, never, never be overestimated. I'm not going to ask, but if I was to ask tonight everyone in this service who came to know Jesus Christ before they were 20 years of age, I believe that almost every one of you, not every one of you, because some of us I know, but I believe it almost every one of you. How important the work is among young folks.

And this lad is one of the greatest examples. I often say, I may have said it here, but I often say when I think about this boy, what a boy he was. You know, he goes to his mum and says, Mum, I want to go for a picnic.

And because his mum was like most mums, he goes to the pantry and she takes out the loaves and fishes and he says, well here we are, we haven't got a McDonald's but you can have the loaves and fishes. And away he goes on his picnic. He was a bit different than me and I know he was different.

I know he was different. Because when I used to go for a picnic like my friend here, we hadn't got to the end of the road, you know, before we'd opened the bag and started. And when dinner time came, we were back home again.

Mum, I've eaten it all. Well, I was like that anyway. He was a boy who went for his picnic.

And dinner time came and he never ate. And supper time came and he still had it. Have you ever met a boy like that? Out in the open air in a field with a crowd of people.

And he doesn't even open his lunch. I've got a feeling if Jesus Christ can make a boy forget his dinner, he can do it. At the end of the day, there was a boy and Andrew said, Jim, listen to me.

He's made you forget your dinner. And he took the boy to Jesus. And the wonder is that the boy was willing.

And not only give it to him, but give it all to him. Every bit of it. You know, if it had been me, I got a feeling I might have said, well, I'll tell him what I knew.

Lord, I'm a bit hungry. I've been here all day, you know. Been here all day.

I'll tell him what I do. I'll split it up. You can have three loaves and a fish.

Boy, I got a feeling I just said, you have the bread. I never did like that. He was a boy that was willing to give it all.

Do you know why he was willing to give it all? Because a man had introduced him to Jesus. And he'd met a ten. He'd met someone.

No one else in the world. You big grown man, let me tell you. I've got a savior that can meet you on your knees as well.

I've got a savior who satisfies people. He not only saves them, but he satisfies them. There's many a man, many a woman who says, well, I couldn't live without that, until they find Jesus.

And then they find they don't want it. Don't want it. Let's see those individuals.

We may be introducing Christians. Andrew introduced his brother to Jesus. Andrew introduced the boy with the loaves and fishes to Jesus.

And you won't forget, will you, that it was Andrew who introduced the Greeks to Jesus. Do you remember the lovely story of the twelfth chapter of John? When those Greeks came and said, sir, we want to see Jesus. Do you know, I rather like this.

And it's a strange thing. Now I can't explain it to you, but it is a southern expression. I hear the title, sir, among you southern folk, more than I hear it anywhere else.

And it's a strange thing that it's so in my country. I come from the southwest, and in our area we use the expression, sir, sir. And sometimes when I get up into the sort of big commercial areas of Britain, and I refer to a person as sir.

Might be someone is not just an ordinary follower, and you say, well, sir, don't you forget this, it's a Bible expression. Fancy calling old Peter the fisherman. Fancy calling Andrew the fisherman, sir, sir.

But that's what these learned Greeks do. I think it's a lovely thing. And I think, too, I think that that's one of the keys of personal witness as well.

You know, some of us cut people's ears off before we got there. Is it nice to witness, sir? Sir, we would see Jesus, as Andrew said. And he took them to Jesus.

And the Lord Jesus spoke to them about being lifted up and drawing all men to him, sir. Oh, that you and I may be introduced in Christianity. I believe it's important that we shall introduce men and women to our church.

I believe it's important that we shall introduce men and women to others Christians. But I believe it is of the utmost importance that we shall see the salvation of the Lord. And you may come to this church and never be saved.

You may meet other Christians and never be saved. But if you yield your life to Jesus Christ, you can never be lost. Never be lost.

I'm introducing Christians. Then I wonder if I may speak of Paul for a moment, not as an introducing Christian, but as an instructing Christian. Now I'm going to go through the 20th chapter of Acts as though I was a sprinter.

You'll give me the gold medal from the Olympics. You will. Because I'm going to take you through that 20th Acts as you've never heard anyone take you through the past before.

But I've got you. Our time's already gone. I just want to send it that when I think of the Apostle Paul and his work for God, we started off, he dared to say to the elders at Ephesus, he had been serving the Lord.

So here is someone who's a worker. Would you notice, first of all, please, the prevalent privilege of the servant of the Lord. He says he's serving the Lord.

Isn't that a privilege? To know whom we are serving. You may serve many people who are not worthy of your service. Oh, the privilege of serving the Lord, that we are servants of the God of heaven.

Let's never forget, a Christian ought to walk with dignity, for we're servants of the Lord. Would you notice not only the privilege of the servant, but would you notice the tenderness of that? Serving the Lord, says verse 19, with many teeth. With many teeth.

The tenderness of the worker for Christ. Brethren and sisters, there come times in our ministry when we need to be hard, and it seems almost we need to be hard. But that should not be the general mark of our ministry.

The general mark of our working for the Lord should be the mark of heaven. I say, would you notice not only the privilege serving the Lord, would you notice not only the tenderness, but would you notice the humility? Verse 19 again, with all humility. All that you and I may know some think of that humility.

And I speak to my own heart, I remember my dear old friend who I first came to Durham with those years ago, dear old Bill Patterson used to say, every time you point your finger at anyone, you point three fingers at yourself. But I'm pointing three fingers at myself. Serving the Lord, the privileged life.

Serving the Lord with tenderness, with tears. Serving the Lord in all humility. What an honor.

Would you notice please, that not only with humility, but would you notice in affliction? For verse 23 says, bongs and afflictions wait for me. Now, if you're going to serve the Lord, never forget this. That there will come times of trials, there will come times of difficulties.

If you think that to serve the Lord means that everything in the world will be lovely, that everyone will accept you because you're a servant of the Lord and you're seeking to live for Jesus Christ, then you have a very rude awakening. A very rude awakening. The Apostle Paul said, I know that bongs and afflictions await me, but I'll still serve the Lord.

And sometimes the harsh things that are said, they're said by people we don't expect them to be said by. Well that wasn't that so with the Apostle? Who was it that stood in his trial? Was that the high priest there? I rush on. Would you notice please the steadfastness of the servant? Verse 24, but none of these things move me.

Oh how steadfast we need to be. None of these things move me. Would you notice please the joy of the servant? Verse 24 he says, that I may finish my course with joy.

The faithfulness of the servant. He says, I am free of the blood of all men. Oh if we like the Apostle Paul are going to be instructing Christians, teaching others of the Lord and the things of the Lord, then let's remember, let's remember the 20th chapter of Acts.

The great moral servant of the Lord. And as we read it through, maybe when we get home or later in the week, let's say Lord make us like that. But not only Paul and not only Andrew, but Timothy and I have called Timothy the inoffensive Christian.

You know I'm always amazed at what the epistle of Timothy says. How the Apostle, when he writes the letter of the Spirit of God to young Timothy, gives him such instructions that he may pass them on to the church of God, that the church may know how to behave itself. I'm always amazed that such a man as Timothy had a ministry that sometimes people imagine, when you look at it, it's going to be harsh.

Yet to the tenderest of Christians, this ministry was given. You see Timothy you remember was the son of a Jewish mother. He was the son of a Greek father.

But from his mother and from his grandmother, he had learned something of what Timothy dares to say, the epistle of Timothy dares to say, 2 Timothy 1 and 5, was the untamed love that was found both in his

mother and in his grandmother. He was a young man who was influenced by a family, and so influenced by a family, that later when he served the Lord, the Apostle writes to him about the church. Now I haven't time to take you through it, but just you think about it, will you? I think it might be a very interesting thing, just to remember who Timothy was.

He was led to the Lord, no doubt, by the Apostle Paul, but he learned from a child the Holy Scriptures and the untamed love that he had to express to others, and he learned it from his grandmother, and he learned it from his mother. And later on, he's going to begin instructions, and those instructions are going to cover the whole realm of Christian life, the whole realm of church life. He's going to have to tell some sinners to be quiet.

He's going to have to tell some brethren, you must care for the widows in keep having your space of fun, brethren, concerning their wives. Isn't it wonderful that the man who had to say these things, and had to deal with some of these problems of those days, was a man who from his home had learned love and gentleness, had been given an example of how an older sister, his grandmother, how a younger sister, his own mother, would react when it came to the things of God. Brethren, sisters here with children, and I speak as a father and a grandfather, please.

You brethren, sisters here, would you please, that it is not just in the church of God, it is in your household, and your children and your grandchildren will be useful in the church in as much as they learn in your home, in your home life, that love, that word of God, that way you suffer. Oh please, I can't honestly say I never heard my children say that I would die a happy man, if my children or grandchildren would look at me and say, Dad, Grandpa, always die a happy man, because that's where the influence is found in our home. All that you older sisters may teach your grandchildren, all that you younger sisters may teach your children, that like Timothy, you will go forth, they will go forth as inoffensive Christians, as those who are able to meet the greatest problems of the church, without causing offense to anyone.

The work of the Lord, as we see it in Andrew as an introducing Christian, as we see it in Paul as an instructing Christian, as we see it in Timothy as an inoffensive Christian. Then may I just come to a close by reminding you of a man that I have dared to say is an indomitable Christian. And I've used that word, and I had a little trouble in finding a word that wanted to express what my heart says.

Because I want just to say a word, if I may, about a person who's only mentioned once in the Bible. You will find Andrew many times, Paul many times, Timothy many times, but there's only one verse in the whole Bible that tells us about Manasseh. I rather like that, don't you? I rather like the thought that the most inconspicuous person is the most valuable person.

And I think of this man, Manasseh, at the 16th verse of the 21st chapter of Acts. May I just quote what the verse says? It dares to tell us that there came certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Manassehan of Cyprus, an old disciple with whom we were to Isn't that Halloween? Oh no, please, please, I don't want to die, not me, not me. I'd love for the Lord to come back, we'd all go together then.

But I've said this many a time, so Mary knows it. If I do that, how I would laugh on any tombstone they were to erect, these words will be chiseled. Oh I wouldn't want them to chisel them unless they were true, but oh how I'd thirst that they'd chisel on the tombstone, an old disciple.

Oh please, I want to remind you of this, it doesn't say an old man. I have met many old men that are young disciples. I've met many young men who are old disciples.

It says an old disciple. In the Greek I'm given to understand by scholars, in the Greek the expression here that the old is associated with the discipleship and not with the man. Are you an old disciple? How long have you been saved? Have you been a disciple since you've been saved? The moment you were saved you became a Christian, but have you been a disciple since you've been saved? An old disciple.

Let me just say three little things about ministry. The first thing about him is this, he was a plotter. Oh good, an American word is worse than English, right? He was a plotter, an old disciple.

Would you notice please where he came from? From Stratford. Oh, I say you take a key now and unlock something, don't you? You know, he came from the very area that the man who quarreled with the Apostle Paul over John Mark came from. Is it remarkable that here the man commended from the church at Stratford to go with the Apostle Paul, took his nephew with him, and John Mark didn't finish the course, and Barnabas and Paul quarreled? Hadn't he, the leader of the church quarrelling? I mean you would have thought the Apostle Paul would never have quarrelled, would you? And Barnabas, he did not even quarrel.

Isn't it remarkable sometimes in the church of God the very people we think ought to give us a better example don't? Now I don't want to enter into the argument. I believe Barnabas was wrong, and I believe Paul was wrong, because you see Paul wanted John Mark to be an itinerating preacher, and God never intended him to be an itinerating preacher. God intended him to be a writer of a gospel, and Barnabas was a people, but that came from Stratford, and he and the elders, that the leaders of the church, you know I've heard it said many times, you're not going to go there.

He was in the elders' world, yet he still went on with God, and all this time, when everything seemed against him, he still went on with God. Are you a worker, or are you one of those shirkers? You know Jesus Christ died for you, you know he shed his blood for you, you know that he says to every one of us here that we should serve him. The moment something goes a bit wrong, we're not going there anymore, some of the silly things people tell us, oh don't go there, never shook hands with me enough.

Well I don't know if you go to the movies, I hope you don't, but if you do, does the manager stand at the door and shake hands with you? And when it's over, do you come out and say I'm not going back there anymore, the manager never shook hands with me. How ridiculous. But here was a man, and what should never have happened, did happen, the elders of the church, at least the leaders of the church, quarreled, but he still went on with God.

He was a plotter. He was not only a plotter, oh come on, you choose it for me, will you? You give me the word. It says an old disciple, he was a plotter, with whom we were to lodge.

So he was not only a plotter, he was, with whom we were to lodge. But hey sir, that's very good. I don't know if it's a word, my dear, but it's very good, very good.

He was, with whom we were to lodge. Well, very good, that's a very good one, I hadn't thought that one, I could use that. Thank you, I will do one day.

I'll tell them where I got it from. But I wasn't thinking of that. His Christianity was, with whom we were to lodge.

Make him a bed, cook him a breakfast, sweeping the floor. You know you'll have to join my preachers class, you will really. I say, he was practical.

Can you think of anything more practical than opening your home to someone? Each day, all you folk have been so kind, each day you've invited Mary in the South House, you know. And each day, oh say, sir, your grocery bill's going to be a bit higher this week, you know. We've had meals with extra work in there, washing up to be done.

You haven't all got washing machines, have you? I got one, you know, I married her 40 years ago. Very good one. I only know this, that here was a man whose Christianity did not just consist of attending a service in the church.

He opened it, the service of God went by. And one other, certain of the disciples of Caesarea, who brought with them Manassan of Cyprus, an old disciple with whom we were to lodge. Now maybe you won't see this.

Maybe you'll think I'm putting it in there. Well if I do, I'm going to take it out too. But I think Manassan was not only a plodder, he was not only practical, but I think he was there brought with them one Manassan.

He was, how about it? No? Can I ask you something? What sort of person do you like to keep company with? Ah, I think he was pleasant, pleasant. The other disciples sought his company. You show me a Christian and other Christians don't want to walk with him, I'll show you a fellow who's a groucher.

Oh, one of the marks of those of us who love the Lord should ever be, that others will seek our company as we'll seek their company because we're misled. I remember years ago in the city of Liverpool, on top of an old tram, you know, a suit car, you call them that way. You used to have the old trams there, yes.

They're mentioned in the Bible, all manner of sweet and deep, you know. But there was, ooh, you're on the top of the old tram. And I sat there, and behind me sat two women.

And they were, you won't understand this, but they were what we call in Liverpool, real tighters. Ooh, they were real tighters. And you know these two ladies, they sat behind me, and suddenly in a voice that everyone could hear in the bus, you know, one of these women said, don't they look miserable.

Oh, I hope they, I didn't look like anything, really. Oh, I hope they weren't talking about me. But those words could be used sometimes by, of those who love the Lord.

And yet we say we're working for the Lord. You remember the story of the man who was giving the tractate outside the gospel hall, and someone came by after the tract, said I'll have one look at him until I've got enough trouble to kneel. And I knew what to do.

Now it shouldn't be that way. There should be a pleasantness about it, but I don't know how to explain that, do you? I don't know how to explain pleasantness. I only know that there are some people that I like to be in their company.

There are some folks that I'm just happy with. And there are other folks that I find it...

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