

No man having out his hand to the plough

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Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev Murdo Alex Macleod

[0 : 00] Let us turn now to words you will find in the Gospel according to Luke chapter 9. Reading at verse 57.

Luke's Gospel, chapter 9, verse 57. And it came to pass that as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee for this whoever thou goest.

And Jesus said unto him, foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head. And he said unto another, follow me.

But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. And Jesus said unto him, let the dead bury their dead. But go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee. But let me first go and bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, no man having put his hand to the cloud and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

[1 : 25] And here we have an account of three prospective disciples who were prevented from following Jesus.

For various reasons. And as he speaks to them, our Lord makes no attempt whatsoever to conceal the difficulties and the dangers and the privations to which prospective followers are exposed.

He doesn't attempt to flatter or to deceive any one of them into a life of service.

As on every single occasion where he confronted people with the demands of discipleship.

So he warns those three men to count the cost of discipleship.

[2 : 56] And I would like very briefly tonight to consider with you these three men as they come in contact with the Lord. To consider the person who seems for some reason or another to have been attracted to a life of service.

I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And notice the challenge that the Lord addressed to this man. And then secondly this man who seems to have been called to a certain and definite relationship with the Lord.

And look at the way in which the Lord dealt with his excuse. And similarly with the third who was called to service. But who for some reason or another wanted to postpone the moment of service. And see how seriously and solemnly the Lord addressed himself to that one. First of all then, this prospective follower.

In Matthew's gospel we read that he was a scribe. We aren't told why he wanted to follow Jesus.

[4 : 12] It may have been for the benefit of companionship with Christ and those who were his followers. He seems to be a self-assertive kind of individual.

A fellow who was rather impetuous. And impulsive. Almost an enthusiast. Perhaps even somewhat bold.

If not, as we would call today, somewhat loud. He makes an unconditional offer of service. I will follow thee wherever you go.

It didn't matter where the Lord went. But this man was prepared to follow him everywhere. And as I said, Matthew tells us that he was a scribe.

That is, he belonged to the educated class of the Lord's day. The people who interpreted and who wrote down the Old Testament scriptures.

[5 : 22] And who compiled so much of the rabbinical teachings of the day. And who in transcribing the Old Testament scriptures tended to add things to what the scriptures said.

Now as you know, our Lord did not have many sympathizers amongst the scribes and the Pharisees. Indeed, they were one of the scribes who were a party to the death, ultimately, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But this man seems to have been an exception. And there was something about Jesus that appealed to him. And he came with this unconditional offer of service. Now looking at the sin and looking at its face value. This was indeed a very encouraging sign for the Lord. And for his cause.

Those who were associated with Jesus would have considered this man to be a real catch. For their small community.

[6 : 48] And they would have considered him a very important acquisition. In the cause. He may have been considered even a convert.

With this bold assertion of his. I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And if we could transport this into the modern set up.

Church circles. He would have been. His services would have been. Used. No doubt very quickly. To give his testimony.

Perhaps even at a congregational fellowship. But certainly at a youth fellowship. He was a man who had. Something to say. And something to offer.

To the cause. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. And I have no doubt. That. A lot of people. Would have made a great fuss. About.

[7 : 50] This kind. Of person. That. As we follow the. Incident through. We see that. Jesus. Recognized.

That there was. Something. Missing. In this man's. Assessment. Something missing. In his. Makeup. He was. As someone put it. An idealist. An enthusiast. He was. Superficial. And. A man. Who didn't. Count. The cost. Of. Discipleship. And this was a way. In which someone put it. Very graphically. Here's a type of man. He says. Who sees. The soldiers. On parade. The fine uniform. The glittering arms. And he's eager to join. But he forgets. The exhausting marches. That lie ahead. He.

[8 : 50] He forgets. The bloody battles. In which he's going to be involved. He forgets the graves. Many of them. Unmarked.

Unmarked. And therefore he said. It is less cruel. To dissolution. Such a man. Than to let him rush in. And go down.

In disappointment. And so our Lord. Recognizing. That this fellow. Hadn't assessed. The situation properly. Very clearly.

Brings before him. The cost of discipleship. In these graphic words. Jesus said unto him. Foxes have holes. And birds of the air have nests.

But the son of man. Hath not. Where. To lay. His head. So what is Jesus saying to this man? Well.

[9 : 49] He's bringing before him. Very clearly. That the Christian life. Is a life of. Self. Denial. A life in which.

The believer. The follower. The disciple. Must associate himself. Inseparably.

And inescapably. With the Lord. Jesus Christ. In his sufferings. And in his. Privations. He's telling this man.

In short. If you really want. Companionship. And fellowship. You remember. That Christian companionship.

And Christian fellowship. Is not always the easy. And the comfortable thing. That you seem to think. It is. And it is.

[10 : 45] The life of. Privation. It is the life of. Loneliness. It is the life of. Difficulty. It is the life of. Exposure.

And emptiness. That Jesus. Is here. Speaking about. When he uses these words. Foxes. Have holes. Birds. Have nests.

But. The son of man. Hath not. Where. To lay. His head. He is speaking about. The opposition. To which he.

Is exposed. In the world. He's speaking about himself. And he's drawing this comparison. Between himself. And the animal world. And he's saying this.

In the animal world. They have their comforts. I. Am deprived of them. As I live.

[11 : 40] In this world. And I think that he's also saying something very significant to this man. You he says want to serve me. And I think that this is really one of the great lessons that Jesus has in this verse here.

You're wanting to serve me. But before you serve me. You've got to answer one question first. Have you given me a welcome.

Into your home. Into your life. And into your heart. And this is the disastrous assessment that some people make of Christianity and of discipleship.

They seem to think. That it is just a case of doing things. For the Lord. And in his name and in his cause. And that's why you have so many people.

Hurrying and scurrying all over the place. Engrossed and involved in. A life which can be summed up in one word. Service. Doing things.

[12 : 43] Without asking first of all. The most important question of all. It is this. Before I take it upon myself to do anything for the Lord.

Have I given the Lord a welcome. Into my heart. And into my home. And I think that that is one of the teachings that Jesus has here.

When he says. What else does he mean? When he says. Foxes have homes. Birds of the air have nests. Birds of the air. These people. These. These. These. These.

Species. These representatives of the animal world. They have their own habitat. Their own comforts. But I.

I don't have them. And it's reminding the disciple of this. That once he bids welcome to the Lord into his life. By the grace of God.

[13 : 43] Once as we heard here last Sabbath evening. Once he by his grace opens the door of his heart to the Lord. And begins to have fellowship and communion with Christ.

He will discover very quickly. That he has entered a life. Which is full of difficulty. A life in which he is going to be opposed.

And ridiculed. Ridiculed. A life in which he is going to feel isolated. And. Alone.

Alone. And do you know that. This is one of the great elements of Jesus life. While he was in this world. Remember the way the Old Testament prophet put it. Speaking of Jesus and his sufferings.

He trod. The wine press. Alone. Alone. Alone. And the Christian life is one in which you are going to feel very often.

[14 : 45] Alone. For the simple reason. That you are on the side of Christ. For the simple reason. That you are one of his.

Of necessity. You will be exposed. And you will be isolated. And there's no getting away from it. We all want comfort.

We all want a life of ease. We all want a life. In which there will be no difficulties. And no hills to climb. And no crosses to bear. And no denials to make.

Or no self-denials to make. Yes. We all want a life. When it's going to be a bed of roses. All the way from time to eternity. From grace to glory.

That's what we want. And that's what this man no doubt had in his mind. In following Christ. And this is what the Lord was exposing. He was exposing the wrongness of his thinking.

[15 : 44] The wrongness of his assessment. And for the good of his own soul. He was drawing this to his attention. Look he says. It's not going to be the easy life.

That you think it's going to be. It's going to be a life. Of difficulty. And you've got to recognize. He says. The implications.

Of. Your choice. And so it is with me. And with you here tonight. Even when you are constrained to say.

Lord I will follow thee. Whithersoever thou goest. Let us remember this. That we won't go very far. To remake this discovery.

That the Christian life. Isn't uneasy. We won't go very far. Till we are exposed to the reproach. And the scorn. And the laugh. Of the ungodly.

[16 : 42] We won't go very far. Till we discover. That the disciple. Is not greater than his Lord. And if they have persecuted me.

He says. They will also. Persecute. You. We won't go very far. Till we discover this. That if there were few places.

And few hearts. In the world. That take welcome to him. It's the same in 1986. In other words. Our disciples.

Have to stand up. And be prepared. To stand up. And. To count. The cost. The second case here.

Is very different. It seems to be one. In which. This man is called. To a particular service. The Lord said to another. Follow me. But he said. Lord.

[17:39] Suffer me first. To go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him. Let the dead. Bury the dead. But go thou and preach. The kingdom. Of God. Now the difficulty here.

For this man. Centred. Not so much. On following Jesus. As on following him. At that very time. He says.

Let me first go. And bury. My father. Here was a man. Who wasn't. Exactly. Opposed. To the idea. Of following Christ. The problem with him was. When. He would do it. It was a case of getting his priorities. Right. And all he wanted.

Was time. To make the decision. He wasn't against. As I said earlier. He wasn't against the idea. In the same way.

[18:39] I believe. As the majority. If not everyone. In this church tonight. Everyone. Everyone. Everyone. Isn't against the idea. Of becoming. A Christian.

I think that. He or she. Is a person. Who is steeped. In the grossest. Ignorance. Who would deny. The benefit.

That accrues. To them. Through following. Jesus Christ. And I know. For a certainty. As I said earlier. And I'm sure. I'm speaking for everybody. In this church tonight. From the youngest. Unfortunately.

And I use the word. Advisory to the oldest. Everyone here tonight. Would agree. That it would be. A very good thing. For you.

To become. A follower of Christ. You'd agree with me. Wouldn't you? I'm sure you would. But your problem. Is this.

[19:37] It's the problem of. Getting things. Into the right order. It's a case of. When. Let me. First.

First. Now this man. Put it very interestingly. Let me. Says. First. Bury. My. Father. Now there are some people.

Who seem to think. That here was a kind of situation. Where this man. Came across Jesus. And he just had news. Of his father's death. And it is a very unfortunate time.

For him to think. Of following Jesus. And so. He asks permission. To go back. To his father's funeral. Let me attend. To my father's funeral. Then I'll come. But that's a nonsense.

It has no reference. Whatsoever. To a man having received news. Of his father's death. This was a saying. Which was very common. In those days.

[20:33] And is common. In the east. To this day. Let me first. Bury. My father. There's an interesting story. Told by. One of. A traveler. To the.

To the east. To the middle east. They were passing through the desert. And. They came to a tent. And. The guide there. Said to this fellow. Who was sitting outside the tent.

How about. Accompanying us. And. He. In other words. He was offering him. A job. As a guide. And the man said to him.

Let me first. Bury my father. And the. Comment was that. The man's father. Was sitting beside him. At the door of the tent. Hail and hearty. There was no evidence.

That the man was approaching death. And then this man understood. The man who was a member of the party. And understood that. This was. The way in which the saying was used. The elder son.

[21:29] Felt it. Felt obliged. To stay at home. Looking after the affairs of the home. Until his father passed on.

And then. When the affairs. When his father's affairs were settled. He would feel himself free then. To accept. An offer. Of employment. And this is what the man is saying.

To the Lord here. I have commitments. I feel obligated. To my father. And to my family. And in accordance. With the customs.

Of our day. I would rather. See myself. Meet these obligations. Before. I follow you. I am not opposed to the idea.

Of following you. But I have this. Prior duty. I have this obligation. My life. That I must. Attend to. When I have attended to it.

[22:25] Then. I will. Follow you. Follow you. And you see now. The significance of this. The man's problem. Was getting his.

Priorities right. Sorting. Them out. It wasn't a case of. He wasn't prepared. To follow the Lord. There and then. I will do it.

Eventually. And so he was saying. Well. Perhaps even I would love to go. But I can't. I can't. Not just now. And the Lord answers him. And says.

Let the dead. Bury their dead. But go thou and preach. The kingdom of God. Now anyone who knows. Anything at all. About the teaching of Jesus. Will immediately. Recognize.

That Jesus is here. In Norway. Giving credence. To the belief. That he was indifferent. To the relations that existed. At family level.

[23 : 22] There was never. A more dutiful son. Than the Lord. Jesus Christ. And there never came a word. From his lips. That would encourage.

Any son. To adopt. An indifferent. Attitude. To his parents. Or. To any other members. Of his family. You will never find.

Encouragement. For that idea. In any word. That ever came. From the lips. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. No man. In the history. Of this world. Ever honored.

The family unit. And the family tie. More. Than the Lord. Jesus. Christ. Christ. And therefore. He is not saying.

To this man. He isn't saying to him. That he should adopt. That couldn't care less attitude. To his parents. Or to his home.

[24 : 22] What the Lord. Is telling this man. Is this. And he's using language. In which he clothes. This idea. You. He says. Get your priorities right.

The most important thing. In life. For you. It's not. A human relationship. No matter how important. It may be.

But. Your relationship. To me. Now my friend. You cannot. If you. If you accept. The teaching. The Bible. At all.

You cannot. In any way. Deny. That this is what the Lord. Is saying. Not only here. But on other occasions. In other words. He's saying this to the husband. To a husband.

Who's got the most. Loving. And faithful. Relationship with his wife. He says this to every husband. Never let your wife. Come between you and me.

[25 : 21] He's saying it to the wife. Who is the most dutiful. Of all wives. In a loving relationship. With her husband. No matter how closely.

You are attached. To your husband. Never. Give him. The place. In your affections. That you ought. To give to me. He says it to the mother.

In connection with her. With her family. That she's got to be careful. That she doesn't allow her family. To push him out. He says the same. To the family. To the son.

And to the daughter. He says the same to you. In all your human relationships. Never. Form a relationship. That is going to come between you.

And the place that you ought to give. To the Lord Jesus Christ. Never let any priority. Never let any duty. No matter how. legitimate it may be.

[26 : 19] No matter how laudable it may be. Never let any concern. That you have in life. Come between you. And the call.

To follow. And to serve. The Lord. Jesus Christ. That's the simple teaching. That Jesus. I believe. Addresses. In these words.

To this man. You've got to get your priorities right. And this is another area. That makes. Living the Christian life.

Difficult. Oh yes. And Jesus is all along here. Illustrating. The difficulty of it. Be sure. That you don't become entangled.

With anything. Or with anyone. That is going to be a hindrance to you. In the exercise. Of following. The Lord. Jesus.

[27 : 18] Christ. Let nothing. Prevent you. From accepting. The claims of Christ. Upon. Your life. Christ.

Call us. Someone put it. The superior. To the most. To the highest. And the most beautiful. Of earth's. Obligations. Whatever.

Conflict. Whatever conflicts. With the call of God. That call. Must be. Obeyed. And this is again. Where you and I learn. The meaning of. Taking up the cross. Denying ourselves. And. Following Christ. Christ. You see.

You may have a legitimate. First. In your life. Tonight. First. This. But I'm going to tell you something. About the danger. Of putting things. Before Christ.

[28 : 15] And the danger is this. In the providence of God. You may be enabled. To look after that thing. First. And once you have met.

Your obligation. Have you noticed this? Something else. Will always replace that. First. It's second tonight. But it'll become first then. And all your lifetime.

You'll have something to do. First. There are people in this church tonight. Who if they would care to do it. Could go back. I'm sure over many years.

And remember us young people. In this church. Or in some other area. Remember the claims of Christ. Upon them in the gospel. And they can well remember then.

The things that had priority in their life. First this. And here they are tonight. And they've never followed Christ. Why? Because that thing that was first then.

[29 : 12] Was always replaced. By something else. And something else. And something else. And here you are. As I said earlier. All of you.

I'm sure. Hoping against hope. That before you leave this world. You will be a follower of Jesus. What holds you back from following him tonight.

There's something else. There's a first thing. In your life. What's the Lord saying to you? You have to relegate. All things.

In my interest. You've got to put them to one side. In my interest. All you say. The difficult. I know. Don't you run away with the idea. That it's going to be easy. For you know one in this life. Has ever found it easy. To relegate things. In the interests.

[30 : 11] Of Christ. If you remember this. That he is more. Than anyone else. He is more. Than. Anything else.

And there has never been anyone. In the history of the world. Who would dare. Say this. But himself. Seek first me. Put me first. And then.

You will find. That all. These things. Will sort themselves out. We all know. The difficulty. Of putting things.

To one side. And giving Christ. The priority. We all know. The difficulty. Of putting duties. And put legitimate duties.

To one side. In the interests. Of Christ. We all know. The opposition. And the demands. And the pressure. That come.

[31 : 09] Oh yes. The pressures. That come. Even from loved ones. And I'm sure. You're here tonight. As a Christian. And you know. What that is. The pressure.

The sheer pressure. That comes to you. From loved ones. And perhaps. I wouldn't be surprised. If there are people. In this church. Now. Who know.

That maybe the greatest. Pressure in their life. Comes from loved ones. As a result. Of following the Lord Jesus Christ. And that that can be.

The most trying. And the most. Gawry. Experience of life. The people whom you love. Most in the world. And yet.

You've discovered this. Love them. Though you do. There's a higher love. And a higher bond. And a higher demand. That's the demands.

[32 : 06] Of the Lord. In your life. And you'll also follow this. You'll also discover this. For those people. Who seem to think. That the Lord is here. Teaching people. That to be indifferent. With human relationships.

Far from it. The Lord himself. By his grace. Has made this discovery. In the lives. Of all his people. They never loved. Their loved ones. More than they loved them. In the Lord.

And they've never loved them. More. Than they've. When they've had to put them. To one side. In the interests. Of the Lord. Jesus. Christ.

I remember telling the story. Here already. And I don't know. If I have it correctly. I remember it was. Principal McIntosh. I heard telling the story.

Once in a. Friday night. Communion service. At Crossapost. Many years ago. And I didn't quite grasp it. But I think it went like this. A young man. Who was called. To the service of Christ.

[33 : 01] In the foreign field. And he had a very. Very godly mother. A widow. And she wasn't. Very happy. About the prospect.

Of the thought. Of her son. Going to the foreign field. But anyway. He went. And on a furlough. He was talking to his mother. She said this to him. You know. He said.

I wasn't keen. That you should follow the Lord. I didn't believe. That that was God's will for you. But I acquiesced in his will. And I've made this discovery. He said. Since you went away. In his service. And in his name. My heart was closed. To that self. Before you went. Now as a result of you. Having gone in his name. I feel that my heart.

Has been opened. To the whole world. For the Lord. And that's what comes through. Submitting and submerging.

[33 : 55] Your will. Submitting it to him. And submerging it in his. Giving yourself to him. In his interest. When the call. And the demands come. In spite of all.

The difficulties that you have. In spite of all. The opposition. In spite of all. That reason. And sense. May say to you. In spite of the fight. That you may put up yourself. When you yield.

To him. You make this discovery. It isn't a case of losing. What you are to give up. It's a case of gaining more.

Than you ever gave up. No man said the Lord. Who is prepared to follow me. And who is prepared to endure all these hardships in this world.

No man can do that without making this discovery. He will receive far more. In this world. Than he ever gave up. And in the world to come.

[34 : 52] Everlasting. Life. And the third and final. Pick you up here is this. The man who had great difficulty. In being.

Wholeheartedly involved. In the service of God. Another said to him. Here seems to be one who came. With the offer again. A prospective disciple. Lord. I will follow thee. But. Let me first go and. Bid farewell to them. Who are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him. No man having put his hand to the plough. And looking back is fit. For the kingdom. Of God.

Now what the man here lacked. As Jesus says. Was. Wholeheartedness. He lacked. Earnestness of spirit.

Or as we would call it today probably. He lacked. Commitment. Commitment. You see. There is a very important word here.

[35 : 53] In what this man says to Jesus. There was a. But. In his life. Yes he says. Let me. Follow thee. But. But.

Let me go back first. And bid farewell to them. Who are at home. In my house. Now. Those of you who are students of the Bible. Will remember that there is an incident in the Old Testament.

Where a man was allowed to do this very thing. That this man asked permission of Jesus to do. When Elisha was called. To follow Elijah into the prophetic office. You remember the first request he made.

Let me go home. He went home. To bid farewell. To them. Who were at home. But. The great difference between the two of them is this.

Elisha you see. Was. Going home. He was. Going home as a man who was called.

[36 : 52] And a man who was prepared to follow. And to accept. And to endure. Hardship. The hardship of office. There was no doubt at all. About Elisha's commitment.

And about his whole heartedness. He was called to service. And he was in it. He was in it. But when Jesus speaks to this man. It is obvious. That the man's heart wasn't in it.

He says to him. If any man puts his hand to the plough. And looks back. He's not fit. For the kingdom of God. And Jesus here exposed. And again.

A lack in this man's commitment. There was something. Missing. He was going back. And.

This is a very dangerous practice. To engage in. By any. Disciple. You see. What he's here saying is this.

[37 : 48] He said to this man. If you really are an earnest. About. The offer that you're making. You will go in one direction only.

You will go forward. And you will follow me. You see. There's no point. A disciple can never be indecisive. He must never be indecisive.

He must never be half hearted. He can't have food in both camps. He can't be a Christian on the one hand. And up to a snake in the world.

In commitment. On the other. Of course he has to. Earn his. He has to. He has to. Seek his employment in the world. And he is to be the best.

Employee in the world. You've got to be there. But you've got to be in it. As a whole hearted Christian. At the same time. There's no point being a Christian. On a Sunday.

[38 : 52] And being anything but a Christian. Outside on the street. Or at work. Or in school. Or in the office. On Monday. This is what Jesus said. If you're going to be a Christian.

He says. You must mean it. And you must be whole hearted. About the claim. That you made. And there must be nothing in your life. That is going to detract you.

From that whole hearted service. There must be no looking back. That's what he means here. You see. The idea in the Old Testament times. Of the plough. Was a very small instrument.

Wasn't a big thing. That you and I know today. It was just a very small instrument. And if you had to plough. A straight furrow. There was only one way you could do it. That was to keep your eye on the plough.

Keep looking where you were going. In that direction. Otherwise. The field would end up in a mess. And the problem with many a Christian life tonight. Is this.

[39 : 48] So called. Is that people are not. Dedicated enough. To the life. To which they are called. They are not whole hearted enough.

They are not committed enough. And my friend. If there is a message here for you tonight. I pray that you may sit up and listen to it. You remember that the Christian life demands.

Whole hearted service. Of you. And you have got to get rid of these. Butts. In your life. You have got to get rid of the thing that is a but.

Whatever it is that is. Keeping you. From being whole hearted and committed in the service of Christ. Perhaps you are here tonight.

And you are saying. Well. I have no objections at all. To following the Lord Jesus. But. I've got a problem at home. And I know what it's going to mean to me.

[40 : 54] Well my friend. You've got to put the but. To one side. In the interest of Christ. And you've got to grapple with the difficulty at home. Whatever it is. There's a problem maybe with your fellows.

The people at work. There's this. Terrible but. Standing up in your life. Yes. I will follow the but. Let me first. Well. You've got to deal with it. You're not going to change them.

If the Lord has changed you. You. You remember that you may be the means in his hand. of changing them. If there is sin in your life.

That you find difficult to give up. There's no other way. But. To give it up. Whatever the but may be. The fear of going back may be. Well. You've got to commit yourself to him. Because you remember this at the end of the day. This man's but.

[41 : 52] Became a no. Became a no. This man. Refused to follow him. On his terrace. He wanted to.

He wanted to do things his way. There was this but. That he had to deal with. And he wasn't prepared to deal with. And that may be the case. With some of you.

Here. Tonight. There's a story told of. You remember the. You've heard of Dobini. The. The. Great reformation historian.

When he was in a theological college. He used to go with his. Theological doubts. And his religious problems. To a very. Good.

Godly. Experienced man. And after many visits. To that man. To that day. Old Christian. Dobini was. Told.

[42 : 49] By him. Young man. He says. There is a great question. That you have to deal with yourself. And the question is this. Do you mean.

To belong. All. Together. To the Lord. Jesus. Christ. This is what Jesus is saying to him. Any man. Who's. Going to follow me. Must. Belong. To me. All. Together. Otherwise. There's no point. He says. In putting his hand.

To the plow. You're only playing it. That's what he's saying. The fellow. The. The. The. The farmer. Who's. Plowing his field. If he puts his hand. To the plow. And he's looking all over the place.

And he's involved in this. That. The next thing. He gets entangled. With this and with that. There's this obstacle. And this difficulty. In his life. He's not prepared to grapple with it. If he's looking at all these things. At the same time. As trying to be a follower of mine.

[43 : 43] He's going to make a mess of it all. That's not the way to do it. Commitment. Wholehearted involvement. Giving your all. And your all together.

To the Lord. Jesus. Christ. Well known. How many of us. Are prepared to meet. These demands. That were being placed upon us. How many of us are prepared. To pay. The cost. How many of us are determined. To follow him. Recognizing.

That it's going to be difficult. Recognizing we're going to be exposed. Recognizing we're going to suffer. For his sake. Recognizing we're going to be alone often. Because of him. How many. How many are prepared to serve him. Relegating. Every other interest. In his. [44 : 45] How many. And how many. Prepare to serve him. And keep on serving. In this wholehearted commitment of life.

Notwithstanding again. The difficulties. And. The problems. This is the challenge. The gospel of Christ. Brings. To the door. Of your afternoon. You. And you remember this. That no man ever.

No man ever. Followed the Lord. Or served the Lord. Without. The Lord. At the same time. Ministering to his needs.

And meeting his needs. Out to the fullness of his grace. Because. Though you are called. To suffer. Remember. You are called to suffer.

[45 : 44] With him. And you will then experience. What Paul prayed for. That I might know. The fellowship. Of the sufferings.

Your fear may be. That if you come. You will be alone. In a sense you will. In the crowd you will. You remember this.

He is with you. He is with you. To help you. To bless you. To strengthen you. And. To sustain you. And is it not therefore.

Worth. Relinquishing all these things. In his interests. Let us pray. Have mercy upon us.

O Lord. And bless to us. Thy word. Help us to honor thee. In our lives. In all that we are called to do. In thy grace.

[46 : 39] Give us grace. To respond. To the glory of thy name. Forgiving our sins. For Jesus sake. Amen.