

Season 14: Episode 9 | John Pellowe | How Do You Know Where God is Leading You?

Hello and welcome to Scripture Untangled, a podcast by the Canadian Bible Society. My name is Joanna la Fleur. I'm a friend of the Canadian Bible Society, and I'm going to be your guide for today's episode.

Today, CBS Ambassador Reverend Dr. Andrew Stirling will be in interview with John Pellowe.

Reverend John Pellowe is the CEO of the Canadian Centre for Christian Charities, where he's served since 2003. John is passionate about helping churches and Christian organizations become healthy, effective ministries whose faith shapes everything they do.

At the heart of his work is a conviction that theology should guide strategy and that experiencing God belongs in our everyday working lives. That same passion also comes through in his writings. He loves bringing the Bible to life with devotionals published in a number of different publications, and he has also authored several books that help ministry leaders and boards connect Christian faith with the practical responsibilities of leadership.

Ordained by the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, John has served in a variety of church roles, including pastor, deacon, and elder.

Away from his work, he enjoys reading, good conversations, hearing people's stories, and playing classical music on the organ.

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We're delighted to welcome John to Scripture Untangled for a conversation about Scripture, faith, and following God in our work and life.

Andrew: Dr. Pellowe, I have to say, it is a great delight to have you as a guest on Scripture Untangled. I know that you have very much a leading role to play within the broader Christian community in Canada and beyond, and it really is a joy to have you with us. Welcome, John, to Scripture Untangled.

John: Well, thank you, Andrew. I really appreciate the invitation.

Andrew: John, let us begin, I think, at the beginning. Tell us something about your faith journey and, most of all, and this is a fascinating part of it, how it progressed from having what one would call, or what you call, an awe for God, to seeing Christ as your friend and then, sort of, to your Lord. Because that is, I think, a very fascinating movement in your own progression of faith, and I think it will actually help a lot of people in theirs.

John: Sure. I was born and raised in a Christian family. We attended church every Sunday. I don't recall any of the five kids ever complaining about going to church, and we attended the church that you pastored for many years, Timothy Eaton Memorial.

I grew up there and, as a young child, I cannot remember a time ever not believing in God. But I would say the architecture of that church, for me, the high ceilings, especially the stained-glass window at the front with the Hunt window of Christ knocking at the door.

I sang in the choir for years, and I just had this sense of God as the God on high, the God who created everything, and how big He was. Like, I just, wow. Everything about my experience at Timothy Eaton just filled me with awe for who God is and how big He is, how majestic He is. Just wonderful things that have stayed with me for my

entire life, and I am so grateful for Timothy Eaton Church and the people who were there.

I loved, you know, Dr. Lawson, a previous pastor there. Oh, my goodness, I felt like he was like a father. I remember getting into the elevator with him one time when he was sick and he was coming back to the church, and I just wanted to put my arms around him and hug him. I didn't do that, but he was so... that's who he was in my life.

Andrew: Yeah, that was him. Yeah.

John: And then, when I was eight years old, we went to camp every summer. It was Camp Comak up in Haliburton, and it was a secular camp. Back in the '60s, everybody was assumed to be a Christian, maybe a Jew, but mostly Christian.

For the Protestants, we had church on the island on a hillside. The forest had been cleared there, a slope down to the beautiful water, and logs from the trees had been cut in half. They were the pews.

Dave Schmidt was one of the people in charge of the camp, and he ran Sunday service. It was quite good. One day he asked, he said, "Any of you boys who would like to know Jesus as a friend, come on down, and I want to help introduce you to Jesus so that you can have Him as a friend."

This was just a complete revelation to me. I knew about God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, but I thought they were all about the world. They knew the world existed. Did they know that I personally existed? This was something that was new to me.

The thought that this big, transcendent God up there could come down and be a friend of mine, you know, it was just an amazing thought.

So, I and three other boys stayed behind, and he led us through the sinner's prayer and so forth. He subscribed us to a Billy Graham mail program. Every month, we got a new booklet from the Billy Graham group. I did that for about seven or eight years. He paid for the subscription.

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That's when I really discovered Jesus as someone who was with me and who was personal to me, and that I mattered to Him. And so that was great.

I discovered later, I went to Abe's funeral and discovered that, over his lifetime, he was only supposed to live to be 23. He was a double hunchback, and he had led thousands to Christ. He was a one-man evangelism machine, and he did this all personally.

Anyways, so that's that. And then I thought I was a mature Christian. I thought my spirituality was good, and then God just miraculously called me. It was a real specific call to go and prepare, when I was 41 years old, to go and prepare for something new.

I had previously felt called by God to serve the church, and I didn't know how to do that. A church or a group of churches, but the church. How do you do that? So, I didn't want to be presumptuous, and I thought I was called to the ministry. Then I thought all I want to do is preach and teach, and so I just thought I must have heard God wrong.

So, I pursued my business degrees, and life went on until God intervened and I went to Tyndale.

A course there, a mandatory course, *Foundations of Christian Spirituality*, changed my life because it was there that I really learned the spiritual practices and how to discern God in your life.

It was an incredible experience of suddenly realizing that I wasn't just praying to God. I was supposed to be listening for God in my... you know, He speaks in so many different ways. But that was where I realized that I'm not a Christian and sort of following Christ on my own. I am a Christian, a believer who is being guided by the Holy Spirit.

Now that changes everything.

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That's where I say, in my head, I said Christ is my Lord. But when I really encountered the Holy Spirit, that was when I discovered He is my Lord, truly, and that means that He's guiding each and every day.

So that's my faith journey. It's just been wonderful exploring that. Yes.

Andrew: It's tremendous. I mean, it's truly Trinitarian. I mean, the awe of God the Father, you know, the friendship and the relationship with Jesus the Son, and the power of the Holy Spirit leading you to the confession and the experience of Jesus as Lord.

It's interesting, John, because as you talked and I was listening to you, I remember the first time I went to Timothy Eaton Memorial Church. I walked down the aisle as the senior minister, and there before me was Jesus and the Holman Hunt from the book of Revelation, knocking on the door.

I looked up and there were four Gospels in the ceiling, and I went to my pulpit and I thought, "Who am I that I should even be preaching in a place like this?"

So, I get it. But, you know, every Sunday, walking down that aisle, seeing Jesus welcoming me, that was, for me, the most important icon in the whole of the church.

John: That's beautiful. The church is rather simple in design and decor, but it's got, as you just said, the Gospels. Oh, it's amazing.

Andrew: So, John, let's move on a bit now. As a Pentecostal minister, you have been the CEO of the Canadian Centre for Christian Charities since 2003, I think. What led you to that particular calling, and why was it a natural progression from your seminary studies, where I first met you, of course, at Tyndale? What led you to CCCC?

John: Great. Canadian Centre for Christian Charities. We changed our name, but we were stuck with the Four C's because everybody knew us by that.

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But anyway, so this is another amazing God story. I was just following my career, and nothing much was happening in a way. It seemed like it was zigzagging all over the place. I thought, what overall sense is there to my career?

Then God calls me to go to seminary. I know immediately that He wants me at Tyndale. That was not a hard one to decide. And so, yeah, May 25, 2001. That was when I got this very strong, you know, "Do this."

I go home, and my wife confirmed that. She said, "I always knew you would go to seminary."

So, I have my business education, and then I got my MDiv, my Master of Divinity degree. Then, out of the blue, my wife and my pastor both saw the advertisement for my job at Four C's.

I had thought, why would I? I don't know. It wasn't attractive to me.

At Tyndale, I was on a final seven-day spiritual retreat, and I had this encounter with Jesus in the forest. I said, "I've got my denomination saying they've got a couple of churches I could go to, or the Four Cs had said, I'd gone through the interviews, and they said the job was mine if I wanted it. Which way do I go? One is a test for the other, and I don't want to fail again."

The word that I had was, yeah, you can do either, whatever you want. One is frontline ministry and the other is a support ministry, but don't you dare think one was less worthy than the other.

Andrew: Yes.

John: All of the indicators and the people I spoke to said, "You could be a great pastor, but really, very few people..." Including my denomination said very few people could lead the Four C's.

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I realized that this goes all the way back to when I was eight years old, or 10 years old, I think, and God telling me that someday I would be serving the church.

I saw this as the vehicle to do that, and the board agreed. So, I was ideally set for leadership at Four C's.

The funny thing is, when I thought I was zigging and zagging all over the place in my career, when I landed at Four C's and turned around and looked at my past, it was a straight line. It was from A to B with no diversions.

Everything I have ever done in my life is actually being used here at Four C's. I was equipped theologically and spiritually and academically to focus on organizational leadership of Christian ministries, sort of the business side of it, and that's exactly what Four C's does.

So, there's a beautiful alignment there. And here I am, 23 years later, still full of passion and joy and love for the work that I do.

Andrew: John, this raises the ultimate question for those who are listening: What does the Four C's do? You serve over, I think it's 3,000 member organizations and churches and denominational offices. How do you now help them? And how is that a ministry to the broader church?

John: Oh, okay. If you think about a church...

Andrew: In a nutshell. In a nutshell.

John: Okay. The church is called to mission, but the church owns property. It issues tax receipts. It does a lot of civil stuff, and it has an organization to run, employing people and paying bills, all that kind of stuff.

So, there's the ministry that you do, that God called you to do, and then there's the organizational platform underneath it. That is the platform that supports that ministry.

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We do not touch ministry. There are other organizations that do that very well, and the EFC and others are in there. That's what they're doing.

So, we won't tell a pastor how to preach. We will tell them how to work with the board.

What we have is, we call it, like, a wraparound service. There's the ministry, the church. We support most of it, but the mission we don't touch.

And so, we have a full management team. We have three accountants on staff. We have two lawyers on staff. We have an HR specialist on staff. We've covered off everything that it takes.

We provide group benefits and pension plans and community trust funds, so even small churches can receive gifts of securities that they're not otherwise set for.

So, we do everything we can to help them navigate complexity because there are all these rules you have. We help them strengthen their organization so that they can advance their mission with confidence.

We hopefully relieve them of much of the business of running the ministry so that they can focus on the ministry.

Andrew: Well, I can speak personally, actually, John, of calls that I've made to you and to others on your staff, you know, in times of concern or wanting clarity.

My denomination was always very helpful, but there were sometimes things that we needed that were extra. I found I was incredibly inspired because these were things that were out of the purview of a senior minister, and even our administration and even our board. Our board was very capable, but there were things that you knew. There were papers you'd written, there were examples that you could give, and experiences of the past.

It was a real gift of support. I mean, I liken it sometimes to sort of like, you know, to be a bed that becomes a foundation, and you know that you're safe and secure when you've got Four C's there, right?

John: Yes, yes.

Andrew: And then you can focus, as you said, on the mission, knowing that you've got this sort of foundation under you. A lot of congregations and ministries feel that.

John: Yeah. One final thing, if I could just say: On October the 8th, I will be sitting inside the Supreme Court of Canada hearing a case that we are intervening in.

So, we have the whole legal side and advocacy side of promoting the welfare of Christian ministries and defending them.

In this case, the BC Privacy Commissioner is forcing a local church to hand over its internal documents relating to specific church members.

Andrew: Oh!

John: And your reaction is excellent.

So, this gets to the separation, you know, or even the betrayal of private counselling conversations and other board consultations if there's been a problem. But these documents should not be turned over to the secular government to decide if the church did the right thing. That's wrong.

So, the case is now at the Supreme Court of Canada, and it will be heard on October the 8th. We don't know when the decision will come, but we've had very good success.

We also work very closely with the Charities Directorate, the CRA, in helping them develop their guidance. This is a good group of people to work with. They're at the CRA. Maybe, I don't know, the Charities Directorate is very friendly, and they provide appropriate regulation.

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Andrew: Yeah, I know. Very much so.

John, we are, I mean, you've just outlined it. I mean, you've just named it. We're in a challenging time for the church in Canada, and there is both growth in some areas, which I see, and there is decline in others. How does the work of CCCC, the Four C's, assist in this situation? I mean, how do you help when you have both growth and decline?

John: Okay. What we do, and this is something that we find some resistance to, especially in smaller churches, because they don't think of themselves as an organization. They think of themselves as a family, which is great. It's one of their greatest strengths.

But what we do is we have lots of material and guidance on how to evaluate impact assessment, program evaluation. We help them think through: Why do they think that their model, or do they even have a model for ministry? Is there some rationale for what they're doing? Have they tested the assumptions? Is there a logical link between, like, how do they believe that people change their faith?

How do you go from being, say, a Muslim to a Christian? What's that experience like? You are dealing with a lot more than just an individual, for example.

So, we encourage the checking of assumptions using faith-friendly strategy-development techniques.

I'll give you just an example of a church that I visited in Saskatoon once. I met with the elders and the treasurer. The youngest in the group was 65, but the average age was about 74 or 75, they said. The 65-year-old was the youngest person in the congregation.

This was a church that... they said to me that they raised their children in the church, but none of them, not one of them, had a child who was a Christian, and not one of them had a grandchild who had ever been inside a church.

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This hurt. It just hurt my heart.

I thought, how did this happen? And how long ago should you have noticed that this was happening? Why are your children not adopting the faith on their own? What was your faith like in the home? Did they see that faith mattered to you as a parent? Did you talk about your faith, or was it just a Sunday thing?

I'm thinking probably at least 20 to 30 years ago they should have noticed that people are leaving our church. The young people are leaving the church, and they're not going to another church. They're just leaving the church.

Andrew: Just leaving it, yeah.

John: Yeah. And, you know, somebody missed the boat. "Gee, we have to close our children's program because there are no children."

I was really impressed with a church in Winnipeg that was in a similar situation of elderly people, and they were down on their resources. But they took their last resources and invested in hiring a young adult pastor when there wasn't a single young adult in the congregation.

Today, you know, it's really going well. They've survived and, you know, they're not a huge church, but they are certainly on the uptick.

So, what we do to help them is: don't just do the routine. You've got to stop and say, "What is really going on here? What are the cold, hard facts?"

And that's what we want churches to do when they're in decline.

I believe that... I don't believe, really, God wants any church to close. But sometimes I recognize, yeah, it's better to merge or this or that. There are reasons for that, and that's okay. But I don't think it should happen because of neglect by the church leadership.

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God's Book: The Series: Before we return to today's conversation, here's a first look at an exciting new small-group video series from the Canadian Bible Society: *God's Book: The Series*.

What does the Bible really say about science, miracles, violence, and suffering?

God's Book: The Series is tackling the Bible's toughest questions in a new eight-part video series created for young adults and others who are asking honest questions about the Bible.

Featuring Bible scholar Dr. Andrew Ollerton and three Canadian young adult hosts, *God's Book* explores some of the most challenging questions surrounding the Bible through thoughtful and accessible conversation.

The series is launching very soon, and you can be the first to know when it arrives. Preview the trailer and a full episode and download the free launch kit at godsbooktheseries.com.

That's gods book the series . com.

And now, back to today's conversation.

Andrew: Well, you see, that's a gift because, you know, I've seen the same trend. I actually think I've met that pastor of that church in Winnipeg, by the way, just as a matter of interest, at a conference when I spoke there. I have a feeling that was the same church.

John: Ah, small world.

Andrew: Yeah, it is. Yeah. I think I know of whom you speak.

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We've got another issue, and it relates to something Biblical now. I'd like to sort of move to the Bible a little bit.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says, "Then give back to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

How does this advice apply to churches today? And does the Four C's help in determining Christian priorities? You know, to whom do you give, and what do you give? And what are our responsibilities unto Caesar?

John: Okay, so let's start with Caesar.

The fact is that I think all churches are registered charities, and so we come under the Income Tax Act, which is regulated by the Charities Directorate, CRA. That imposes some rules on us. It imposes some rules about sending money out of the country, and just how, you know, what you can issue a charitable receipt for.

There are other laws out there, provincial laws, employment laws that, you know, affect how you treat employees, and so on.

So, the privilege is you don't pay income tax on the surplus that the church has. But the opposite is, well, they have to abide by the rules.

So that is a lot of what we do, helping churches to navigate the rules and regulations and laws that apply to them, because they can lose their charitable status.

Andrew: I've seen that happen, John.

John: Oh, you have? Okay. Well, that's our mission, to make sure it doesn't happen.

So, I always say if they don't do the right thing that we've told them, it's because we weren't persuasive enough, or there was something that was impractical, or it's our fault.

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But we want churches... we should be a witness for, you know, perfection in complying with all of the laws and whatnot that go on.

But everything a ministry does to fulfil its mission is service to Jesus Christ, and we have to be faithful to Him.

So, God's realm in this is how the ministry organization is run. Does the organization model life in the Kingdom of God? That's what it should do. It should be as perfect as we can get, a representation of, "This is what life is like in the Kingdom of God."

Churches should do the same. Like, some people, I can imagine, or some churches, maybe somebody comes to visit, and they see that there's conflict in the church and it's not being dealt with, or something like that. "If this is what Jesus is about, no thanks, I'm out of here."

So, what we want... we cover all the leadership, the management, the operational aspects of running an organization, but we build it on a solid Christian foundation.

In other words, we do not add our faith to secular practices. We do not try to slap a verse on and make it Christian. We start theologically with the actual Biblical foundation, the values, you know, God's character.

Are we modelling God's character ourselves? You know, righteousness, mercy, and so forth.

So, what we do is we say, "Here is how you basically apply your faith to building your organization." And that affects everything you do. It affects your relationships with vendors. You know, how you treat your employees.

I figure I am representing Jesus to my employees. And I'm not Jesus, but, you know, they have their churches. I don't interfere with that.

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But one day I will stand at the pearly gates, and God's going to say, "John, I entrusted you with all these people working for you. Did you help them to fulfil the purpose for which I made them, or were you a hindrance to them?"

And I will have to give an account.

Andrew: Yes, yes.

John: And the ultimate question is: if Jesus walked into our... well, we're virtual now... but if He walked into our office and said, "I want to work here," and if I hired Him, how long would He stay?

Would He look at me and say, "Hey, John reminds me of Myself"? Or would He say, "I think I'll go and apply my gifts and skills somewhere else"?

That's the acid test.

Andrew: Oh my gosh. I've never heard it put that way. Honestly, in all my years in ministry, I've never heard anyone say that before, and I love it. I love it.

John: So, it comes to a conflict. The conflict comes between Caesar and God. There is a tension there.

And, you know, so we have laws about same-sex marriage and other things. There are all kinds of things out there, social issues and things that impact the church.

And so there can become a conflict between the convictions of the church and, say, the requirements of the law.

So, what we do in that situation is we make it very clear. We address those issues and we say there's a range of responses that you can have.

We don't tell them what to do, but we do say, "Here are four options. Here are the legal consequences of each. Here are the faith consequences of each." And we also talk about how each choice affects their public witness.

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So, when Caesar encroaches into what is God's, that's when we engage in legal interventions to support the rights of Christian ministries.

But it's also when we say to ministries, "Make your choice with your eyes wide open." And if that leads to civil disobedience, you know the likely consequences going into it.

So that's what we do.

Andrew: That's brilliant. That's brilliant.

At the Bible Society, we, of course, place a premium on Bible production and Bible engagement. Clearly, the Bible played a large role in moments of spiritual transformation in your life.

Do you see the Bible as an essential part of the church's ministry? And how do you see people engaging with it on a daily basis? I mean, you have kind of a global view of things. How central do you see the Bible in the discourse, in the decision-making, even at the local level, and even in your own life?

That's a very broad question about the Bible, John, but just briefly give us a sense. These people who are listening here are Bible Society supporters and encouragers.

John: Right. So, you want to hear that the Bible is very important, but I would tell you that anyway!

Like, when you think about it, if we did not have the Bible, what would our faith look like? How would we even define our faith?

The Bible is the anchor. It is God's revelation to us. It's the foundation for everything that we believe.

And it's not just about belief; it's about practice.

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When I studied at Tyndale, that was when I first really learned about the overarching, we call it the metanarrative, or the overarching story of the Bible. It's all singular. It's one story.

It's not like Plan A in the Old Testament, that didn't work, here's Plan B in the New Testament. You realize this is a beautiful story that God has told about Himself, and it's one continuous story.

I like that Revelation shows where it ends. But Acts, the book of Acts, is the book that invites us into our part of the story because the book leaves the story of Paul incomplete.

It does not tell us what happened at the end of his life. It leaves with him preaching the Gospel, preaching about the Kingdom of God, and teaching about Jesus.

There is nothing, there is no sense of finality to the book of Acts. It is Paul still in ministry. And that's where we hook in. His story goes through the millennia, through the centuries, to today. And we are as much a part of the story as Paul was.

And so, the Bible can be extremely inspirational to us, and it is very practical.

I want to say the Bible is central to my spiritual growth. When I read the Bible, I invite the Holy Spirit to give me insights as I read.

And we read it today for many reasons. You know, it teaches us the history of our faith. It teaches us about God and His ways. But at a deeper level, it provides wisdom and guidance that we use to make daily decisions.

I have to say, I'll just give this as an example, because both my wife and I came to the same decision independently without ever talking to each other, and it was a major decision.

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We had met a woman from Nigeria who was a foreign student, had a young three-month-old baby, and was really in hard circumstances. She was being thrown out from her place because they didn't want babies there, and she had nowhere to go.

We helped her for weeks trying to find a place. And then independently, we both, through prayer, decided to take her in.

So, she's been with us for 13 months. She's leaving in a few weeks. She's graduated and so forth.

But that came about because we thought about all the stories in Scripture, Old and New Testament, of the care for the marginalized. That no one should be left on their own. That we are there to be God's love to other people and to care for them.

That's part of the creation mandate, that we care not just for the world, but we care for people and for systems. That's why we get into advocacy. You know, what systems are keeping people oppressed?

And so, you know, we prayed, but the Bible was there with all of the lessons. And there were specific passages, you know, that you could say, okay, they're there.

But then there's also the general, I would say, character of God and the intent of God. Have you absorbed that?

And you absorb that by studying Him in the Scripture.

The Bible is full of failures. You know, and you get, "Come on, people, can't you get it? How many times do you have to go through something?"

But anyways, through it all, God is revealing Himself. And we need the heart of God, and you can't have that if you are not studying His Word.

This is His own explanation of who He is. I don't have to read somebody else telling me who God is. God tells us in the Bible who He is. It's right there.

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So, I think the Bible is absolutely crucial, that we work it in and then that we actually use it in daily decisions.

And I know some people, like somebody told me she was hyper-dependent on God just recently. She told me, you know, "What do I wear today?" That kind of thing. Or "God, give me a parking spot."

You know, I kind of poo-pooed that years ago. But after I discovered the Holy Spirit, I realized, like in a real meaningful way... I'm looking back now, like the parking-spot lady was like 40 years ago. She is the most... two superlatives... she's the mightiest prayer warrior there is today that I personally know.

Her faith built from little things like that.

The other person about the clothing, she is just learning how to involve God in her daily life. And, you know, she doesn't have big things that she's dealing with, but, you know, she's listening. She's learning to listen.

Andrew: So, John, this is a great testimony to the power of Scripture and passionately delivered. And you got me hooked. I'm with you, brother. I'm with you.

I want to just end now. Time's running short, so just two very quick questions.

You're an organist.

John: Yes.

Andrew: No, you didn't know... didn't see this one coming, did you?

John: No, I didn't.

Andrew: You're an organist. A, who is your favourite organist that you listen to? And two, which organ have you played that you say, "Ah, I remember that. That's a great organ"?

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John: Jonathan Scott from the Scott Brothers is excellent. He would be the one I would say is my absolute favourite. He plays on organs all over the world. He's got his YouTube channel, Scott Brothers Duo, or Scott Brothers Duo, I think it is. Anyways, Jonathan Scott, by far. I'm a real fan.

I haven't played on that many organs. I learned to play the organ on the five-manual Casavant at Timothy Eaton. That was my first. That was where I learned to play the organ.

Andrew: Right. I didn't know that.

John: Yep. That was Dr. Octoloney, and going in to see him to ask permission to... Anyways, that's the organ that I learned, and it's excellent.

Andrew: Sorry, the organ is an excellent organ, and it was redone a few years ago. It was made more Germanic in the tonal sound.

And then, of course, the day that I met you at the church, they were installing that beautiful pipe division at the rear of the church.

John: Yes.

Andrew: There's now a trumpet en chamade.

John: Oh, yes. Yes. Whoa. Okay, you know the lingo, Andrew. Do you play yourself?

Andrew: No, I do not. No, I just stick with the guitar. I'm not sophisticated like you, John.

And finally, John, one personal question, and just from your heart. I ask this of everyone, ever since my first interview with Rick Tobias.

John: Oh, Rick, yes.

Andrew: My first one. What can we pray for you?

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John: Okay, that's a pretty easy one: discernment.

Right now, Four C's is in the process of discerning God's intentions for Four C's as it continues to serve Him. And so, we are reviewing our strategic initiatives.

We're really looking for guidance as to: How do we increase our mission impact? Where are we going?

I have, after 23 years, another couple of years to go and, God willing, I'll be retiring.

I'm also all about a legacy at Four C's. That's not my personal legacy at all. I don't care if they forget my name. But have I left a really good organization? Have I left a strong organization where someone else can come in and they don't have to fix things? They can just jump in and take off.

And so, this is the period that I'm in.

So, it'd be a real blessing if you would pray for spiritual discernment in the preparation of Four C's for this transition and for the strategic review that we're doing right now.

Andrew: Well, John, I know our listeners will do that. They are very good, actually. I hear their prayers.

And you've got quite a cloud of witnesses out there who will be listening and praying for you.

John, on behalf of the Canadian Bible Society, thank you so much for your time today, for your candour, for your joy, for your passion.

And indeed, may God continue to bless Four C's and your ministry in it, and whatever in your life transpires beyond.

God bless you, John.

John: Thank you, Andrew.