

A Missional Encounter

by Jackie Pullinger

Jackie Pullinger emphasizes the importance of experiencing God's compassion and sharing it with others through practical outreach and love.

Duration: 47:42

Scripture: Genesis 3:9, Exodus 19:16, Exodus 33:18, Romans 2:4

Topics: "Missions"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Moses and the encounter with God on Mount Sinai. The people were afraid of approaching God because of His power and might. However, God revealed Himself to Moses as a kind, compassionate, and merciful God. The speaker emphasizes the importance of showing kindness to others, especially the poor and hungry, as it reflects the character of God. The sermon concludes with a call to make a spiritual move in the heart in preparation for a physical move to Wanchai.

Transcript

From the city of Hong Kong, this is The Vine Podcast. We hope you enjoy this message. I have many scriptures today.

I sent them off in PowerPoint, so hopefully you can follow because I won't do them in order. Okay, so in Exodus 19, we have a picture of Moses disappearing into smoke, thunder, and lightning. Everyone in the camp trembled, verse 16.

Mount Sinai was covered with smoke because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently. The sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, and then Moses spoke, and the voice of God answered him.

And the Lord was going to call Moses up to this volcanic mountain. And the Lord had already warned the people, you better not come because you'd be killed by the might of God. And they say, they see Moses disappearing, and later on they choose, no, no, no, no, no.

We don't want to go near him. Moses, you can hear him. For us, we don't want to die.

And Moses receives the law. He receives the Ten Commandments on stone. And as you know, the people got bored down on the bottom of the mountain.

Strange, though, isn't it? That although they did not want to go near the trembling, smoking, billowing volcanic mountain because of the might of God. Strange, though, wasn't it that they so quickly turned to another God? Maybe it wasn't the fear of God that was in them. So they worshipped a calf instead.

And Moses is very angry when he comes down the mountain and discovers what's happened, and later on goes back up the mountain, chapter 33. And he says to the Lord, if you're pleased with me, verse 13, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Now, this is Moses who has been through extraordinary miracles.

He stretched out his hand, and the Lord with his mighty hand causes the people of Israel to pass through the sea on dry land. That is after ten extraordinary plagues. Moses knows as he puts his hand into his coat and it comes out leprous.

He puts his hand back and it is clean. Moses knows as he throws down the stick and it becomes a snake, picks it up and it becomes a stick again. Moses knows the power and the might of God.

And we were singing about the power and the might of God. But now Moses says, I've seen all that. Now I want to know your ways.

Show me your glory, he says in verse 18. And the Lord says, well, this is 19 and onwards. You'd die if you actually saw my glory.

So what I will do is I will hide you. And you can, there's a little crack in the mountain there, and I'll hide you in that and cover you with my hand. Now remember, God's awfully big.

So he's covering Moses with his hand and he says, I'll just let you catch a glimpse of my glory. So Moses catches a glimpse of the back view of God as he passes by. And this is the God who passes by.

Verse 19. I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you. I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence.

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. And I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But you cannot see my face.

For no one will see me and live. And the Lord passes by. This is the explosion that passes by Moses.

It's the goodness of God, a God of mercy, the God of compassion. Chapter 34. Here he is.

Verse 6. The Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands and forgiving wickedness. So he is revealed as a God of kindness and mercy and compassion and forgiveness. That's who he is, the one they were afraid to go near.

God reveals his heart. And although they should have feared that smoking, trembling, quaking mountain, for he is a mighty God and he doesn't leave the guilty unpunished. Yet he shows his heart, which is forgiveness and mercy and compassion and kindness.

How would the people in Wanchai know what he was like? It's called revelation. Moses saw him. And Moses, having seen a kind, compassionate, merciful God, just a bit, just because he only caught his back view, and he was covered.

That made Moses so very shiny that when people looked on Moses, they would have been blinded. Even though the shininess was fading, it was still enough to blind others. That reflection of God's kindness, mercy, love, compassion.

And I'm sharing this because the whole of this book is about his heart and then how we are to share it. And as you're preparing to make a physical move to Wanchai, I'm going to pray that you will make a spiritual move in your heart because you won't be able to do it in Wanchai if you don't start now. It won't happen there.

Just, we've had a wonderful man visiting us who is interesting. I came to Hong Kong in 1966, having got on a boat from France in October 66. I got here in November.

On the same boat, or the next one, we can't quite sort out, was this man, going from England to India. And he shared some great scriptures with us last week, and I thought I'd share some of those too. Genesis 3, 9. This is the first question that God asks man in the Bible.

You know what has happened? Man has defected to the enemy, out of arrogance, because man wanted to be as wise as God, wanted to be like God. And God never meant for man to know evil. He already knew good.

Man chose to defect to the one who was evil. And then knowing, both Adam and Eve, knowing that they had done wrong, and they had, in that moment of defection, lost the life with God that they had. They hid.

And God comes looking, so kind. And he says, where are you? Where are you? As he would say to you, where are you? Wherever you are, there's nowhere he cannot go. There's no darkness that could overcome him.

There's no deep sin that would shock him, or stop him touching you. Whatever our offense, or our shame, or our pain, he can reach us and says, where are you? Later, having found man and woman in that state, he dresses them, as he will us with forgiveness. He dressed them with clothes to cover their guilt and shame.

And in the next chapter, chapter 4, verse 9, second question, that man asks, God asks of man. And I'd never noticed this before. You know that Cain, who was one of Adam's sons, had killed his brother Abel.

Here's the second question. Where is your brother? Where are you? Question one. Question two.

Where's your brother? I went to a church in England that quite a lot of you know well. I do know that. And I spoke to their youth group, and I was talking about the poor.

And you know, of course, that it's 1 in 4 in Hong Kong, or 1 in 5, lives below the poverty level. This is not a little. About a quarter of the world doesn't have enough to live on, and a third are destitute.

It's not a little. It's not a remnant that are hungry. It's not a few that are suicidal.

And I was talking to the youth, preparing to go off to college, and said, would it not be wonderful if you could study subjects that would equip you to build waterways, to grow food, to reach a world that is hungry physically and in their hearts for the love of God? They need both. And this boy came up to me, and he said, are you saying that we're supposed to go to the poor? And I said, absolutely not. It would be awful if you felt obliged to take the love of God to the poor.

No, he doesn't want people who are under duress. No. We go to the poor because he came to us.

We go out of the overflow of gratitude. This is not a hard mandate. It's a brilliant invitation.

And we were praying before we came here this day, and upstairs, and someone was talking about people here who needed to reach out to God. And I thought, yes, of course. That's what most gatherings are about.

And indeed, that's where we start. We reach out to him because he reached out to us, and we touch him, and we receive his forgiveness and his mercy. But the other part of reach out is outreach.

And I would dare to say that it's not possible to have known his love and not share it with the poor. Wesley agreed with me. You may not, but we'll look at some scriptures.

We sang this song, 1 John 3, 16. This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

You see, it always goes together. He died for me. Therefore, I can love my brother like he loved me.

Goes on a bit awful, the next verse. If anyone has material possessions, now look at that. That's everyone, because it doesn't say if anyone's got a lot of material possessions.

It's if anyone has material, that's everyone. That's everyone. Even slaves have something.

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need, but has no compassion on him, pity is the wrong word, how can the love of God be in him? You see, what the world is waiting to see is what our God is like. And they're not remotely impressed with how many people are in our meetings. They want to know what he's like.

And they only couldn't know what he's like if we're like him. That's it. That's it.

Now, when they translated this bit of the Bible, I had a problem. This was in King James's time. The word pity should be compassion.

When they came to translate this bit, there wasn't a word in English. So they had to make up the word compassion. It wasn't there.

It's only a God word. And actually, if you look at the old version, which is rather good, it says bowels of compassion. It has something to do with the guts.

So don't think compassion is, oh, poor thing. And I bless you to visit those old ladies in Wanjai. But two hours of Chinese New Year is only a beginning.

It couldn't possibly be it. It's just to make you thirsty and hungry to go on. What is compassion? It's gutsy.

And it's about churning in your heart like his heart churns for us because he sees our needs. He sees our fears. He sees our worries.

He sees what position we're in. He sees who's sick. He sees who's dying.

He sees which children are running. And his heart churns with him for what the enemy has done to us. And so he comes down.

And compassion is never, never, never me looking at somebody's difficult circumstances. It's feeling them. And you will find that compassion in Scripture is always linked with action.

Always. It's never a feeling. He had compassion on the leper and he healed him.

He had compassion on the 5,000 and he healed them. On the 4,000 and he fed them. On Jerusalem and he died.

We have a girl with us at the minute whose father came to me in Hangfoot Camp in the 80s and said to me, Jackie, I don't have compassion for the poor. Could you please pray for me? And I suppose some of you will say that today. And I said, well, actually, I don't think it quite works like that.

I don't think you'll get compassion for the lost or the poor here. You actually get it as you go. You don't need it here.

You get it as you go. But I will pray for you. And I prayed a prayer like this.

You know, when you're in hospital, if there are any nurses here, but a question they often ask you seems to be rather important in the morning. Have you opened your bowels? Seems to be important. So I laid my hands on him and I said, Dear Lord, open the bowels of his compassion.

And he had diarrhea for three days. Quite right. Constipated church.

More, Lord, we say. More, Lord. More, Lord.

And it needs to shift. It's overflow. Going to introduce you to Anjay now.

He's one of our many guys who lived with us. He's only got one leg and he's just trying out a new false one. So Lee's going to translate.

It's about 10 years ago because of my drug addiction. So I have to amputate one of my foot. And I was really depressed at that time.

I didn't want to see anyone. Anyhow, I didn't have any friends. And some people who believe in Jesus came to visit me.

And they encouraged me with their words. And they bring me some food. So at the time I was hospitalized and in the hospital I received Jesus.

And I left the hospital and went back home. And not because of being on my own and all the emotions, I started to take drugs again. And those people who believe in Jesus continue to come to visit me while I was at home.

And they invite me to say, oh, why don't you come along with us and come to our place and worship together. And I replied to them, well, I don't have money for the bus fares. No problem.

We'll give you the money. So just come. So they gave me this bus fare and I took the bus and went to the place.

And then later on they said, well, why don't you come and live with us? So I said, sure. So I went and lived with them. Of course, at that time I was still taking drugs.

I was a bit afraid because I was scared that during the withdrawal that all the pain would come up. And they said, no worry, we'll pray with you and we'll pray in tongues with you that we'll serve you during your withdrawal. So the first 10 days I was living with them coming off drugs, I didn't have any pain at all.

I've never had that experience. I have been on drugs for so long, but I never did have one time coming off drugs without pain. And so now the Lord had given me a revelation.

He asked me to stand up and walk. And I have been to India for a year and a half now. The Lord gave me a picture that I should cook for the poor.

It was just only a little group of people. It was about 200 people in India. This is the last year I did cooking for the small group of people, roughly about 200.

And in the railway station we gave out food for the people living around the train stations. And before that, prior to that, I was in the Philippines. But the Lord gave me this picture in India.

When I arrived in India, I was really like back home. I didn't really speak a lot of English, but same as Hindi. But for now, I've been learning and I've improved a bit.

With the children in India, they don't speak English, but they speak... Hindi, so they understand my Hindi, just only the little children. And the Hindi, they understand my Hindi and also the actions that I do with them. I'm just really happy.

And I really thank the Lord that I can walk. So the Lord asked me to walk. And in India, I saw many dying children and I saw them being resurrected.

And the first time, about two or three years ago, this was the first time I went to India. I met this little... I saw this mum holding a baby, but this baby was not her child. And that was a dying child this woman picked up.

But this, when I look at the baby, his eyes almost like speaking to me. And I saw this as if he was talking to me about, come and help me, come and help me. So we pray for the baby.

Every day we visit the baby. Now he's alive and he's really growing and he's gorgeous. And I also met someone else who had a severe burn on his body.

And because of the burn, he kind of shriveled up and just hide in the train station. And as we uncovered the cloths that he's wearing and all the flies were just come in and stick on him. And so we wrap him up and take him to the hospital.

And every day we visit him and we pray for him in the hospital. We thought that it would be at least take two or three months for him to recover. But it seems the Lord is really hear our prayer.

Six days only then he left the hospital. Really thanks a lot. Praise God.

Thank you. They live in a slum in Mumbai and he'll be going back. John 13, 34, 35.

How will one Jai know who Jesus is? And you command, I give you, love one another as I've loved you. So you must love one another. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.

And it doesn't matter how many songs we sing in the building you're going to move to. If the people around about those buildings are not touched by you, they will be unaffected. There have been so many moves of God in the last 20 or 30 years.

And I hear of another one and I have a mixture of how wonderful and God, not another, sorry. Because I've seen so many people, they have money, of course, taking airplanes to those places where there is a move of God. And I say, God, it's supposed to be the other way around.

Those of us who know anything of his love, it costs nothing to reach out to our neighbor. It costs a lot to take an airplane to the move of God. And when, when, when, when, when, if it is a move of God, when will that overflow to a hungry world? And the Christian says 10 years later, there's another church with a better move.

Let's have that. It's as if those of us have eaten so much, must have more when there are people who've not tasted anything. Now in Wanjai, there was a lady, she'd been cast out from a home in Macau.

Her, she watched her father after her mother hung herself at the age of five. She watched her father having affairs with all kinds of relations through the keyhole. And she was thrown out of home by her father when she slept with her fiance.

So she ended up in Wanjai, probably not very far from where you're going to be. And there are many, many, many like her. When we were praying for you, here's a picture that one of us had, a street with bars, et cetera.

And there are many people going to that street. There are many people. There are hostesses, prostitutes, and men who go to drink and find the women.

And they're all alone and looking for something. This lady, her name was Elfrida, served in Wanjai as a, she had to sell herself, of course. And then she took drugs to make it bearable.

Or she sold herself to pay for the drugs, because you never know which way around. And she ended up, because you would end up, in a place where people couldn't see that clearly. That's in the wall city, because it was dark.

And I met her when she was in her late 50s. That's not a time when you need to be selling your body. And she used to touch me as I walked down the street in the wall city.

She pulled on my sleeve, and she would say, please let me come and live in your house. And at that time, I got 12 men living in my house coming off drugs. Men like Wanjai who just shared.

Now, this is not where you want to put a just converted prostitute. So I was, I'm ashamed to say, I avoided that street. Because what am I going to do if she believes in Jesus? Leave her there? The scripture says, you love not with words, but in actions and in deed.

And it makes no sense to me to leave someone. It's just like the epistle of James says, you touch a hungry person or a cold person, I bless you, be fed, be clothed, be warmed, and you go your way. What is that?

They don't know what that is at all.

Remember seeing a Snoopy cartoon like that years ago? Where Charlie Brown goes up to Snoopy, and there are lines coming out of him because he's freezing. And it's snowing. And Charlie Brown's got a muffler and a scarf and everything on.

And he looks at Snoopy, and then in the next box, he says, oh, be of good cheer, Snoopy. It's Christmas. And in the last cartoon, Snoopy's got a question mark over his head.

Charlie Brown's gone his way. Warm. Snoopy's still there.

Cold. So I didn't want to tell her about Jesus in case she believed. Because I didn't have room for her in my house.

But in the end, how could you resist it? You see, when you are going to get involved with these people, the words will not do. Anjay cooks for them. He washes the babies.

They take lice out of their hair, and they pray for miracles. It's all the same. We're talking about a quaking, smoking mountain, a God who does miracles.

But we're talking about a God of compassion. And the only way that the lost and the poor will know his compassion is if you're it. And you're kind to them, whether they believe in Jesus or not.

You can't put that bit in too quick, by the way. Don't flog Jesus at them. Just touch them.

Ask about them. Find out how they're doing. Get involved in their lives.

Have coffee with them. Visit them. And at some time, say, can I pray for you? Nearly everyone will say yes.

You pray for them before they've believed in Jesus, of course. It's a wonderful way in. I couldn't resist it.

In the end, I found a little cupboard. It was, she's very small. She was only four foot something.

And put her in the cupboard and the power of God came upon her. Of course, it's the power of God. But we also stay with them for 10 days.

Every minute of the day, there's someone with them. That's why we don't go to many conferences in Hong Kong. You won't see us.

Because we're doing the night duties. And she came off drugs. Actually, she came off drugs just up the hill.

It was in Honington Road, just below Babington. And that was fine. It wasn't the end of the story, though.

She behaved like a little girl. She's 60-something now and she behaved like a child. Because she'd never been one.

You know, it isn't hallelujah she's come to Christ. By the way, she couldn't read. So you have to tell the stories.

And she was jealous, I remember, of my pussycat. You know, you love your cat more than me. I can't believe I'm doing this.

But we had to go through it. Every time we worshipped like you, she cried. And I thought, God, how long is this going to take? You know, we were always praying for her.

And God, you know, she's had more sadness than anyone I know. When she came into our house, she had bruises on her back. That was where they injected her with heroin.

Her brothel owners, by the way. That was her payment. Three bowls of rice a day and three injections.

For selling her body. She wasn't free. She'd watched two murders in her brothel and was afraid of dying without anyone knowing who she was.

You have no idea what the people in Wan Chai have been through or what they're feeling like to be there. You have no idea what the person who lives next door to you or drives your car or bumps into you on the MTR. You have no idea what they've been through.

How they're feeling. But God does. After praying for this lady for so long, I said, God, it's going to be forever.

You know, murder, suicide, rape, incest, injustice. How long is this going to take? And then we found the answer. We took her to visit old people's home in Sham Sui Po.

And after a few times, she came back. She was curious. And she said, well, you know, in that old people's home, they don't sing to them.

They just give them food and not even vegetables like we have. They don't look after them. So she started to go take vegetables, wash them and pray for them.

And that was when she really started getting healed. She went to an old prostitute in the walled city. One who'd been in her brothel and was no longer wanted.

She couldn't control her bladder. So she stuck to the bed that she slept on. And she was strange in the head.

Well, you would be too. And she deliced her. And she washed her.

And she sang to her about Jesus. Romans 2, 4. Then we go to pray. It is God's kindness that leads you to repentance.

Please stand. Leave the scripture up. It is God's kindness that leads to repentance.

The poor around you, the hungry, don't invite them to an evangelistic rally. Be kind to them. It's very easy.

It's what the world's waiting, waiting for. To know a kind God. You can all do something.

And it's very, very simple to be kind. Ask the Lord. So if you just close your eyes.

Now, come first of all, come first of all to a God who is kind. Yes, he's a God of wonders. Yes, he does miracles by his spirit.

But he does not leave the guilty unpunished. Now, come, come, come to a God who sees our guilt and was punished for us. So kind, compassionate, full of mercy and kindness.

Come and say, thank you for dying for me. Thank you that you showed me your kindness. And though I should have been punished, I was loved and forgiven.

I receive your forgiveness. And now, Lord, I really want to reach out. I want to share the kindness you've shown me, the compassion you've shown me.

I ask you, Lord, to open my bowels that the world around who's waiting will know who you are by the way I act amongst them. If that's in your heart today, I want some of you to come forward. And when there's no room, the others, you open your hands.

If it's in your heart to reach out or to outreach with the love and forgiveness he's given you, just come forward and we'll pray for you.

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