

# My Work for Jesus

by Jackie Pullinger

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*We must do everything to share Jesus' love with others, while also trusting God to provide and turn our poverty into riches.*

**Duration:** 1:08:12

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:31

**Topics:** "Service"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of believers fully committing to their faith and spreading the Gospel. He shares a story of new believers who quickly embraced Jesus and brought their friends to know Him as well. The speaker encourages the audience not to settle for a half-hearted commitment but to have a burning desire to advance the family of God. He also highlights the rebellion of some individuals who didn't conform to societal expectations and challenges the audience to step out in faith and preach the Gospel, especially to the poor. The sermon references Deuteronomy 15, where God commands believers to give to the poor and forgive debts every seven years. The speaker emphasizes the freedom believers have in Christ and the need to share what they have with others. The sermon concludes with the reminder that preaching the Gospel is more fulfilling and meaningful than simply attending meetings and going through religious motions.

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## Transcript

That's why I avoided her. And that's why every Wednesday and every Saturday, I don't, I never know if it's a wonderful thing or not. I never know if I'm delighted or in pain.

I really, I honestly don't know the difference, because every Wednesday and every Saturday, we have a queue of people, and they might be friends of Elfride's. They might be people who've seen her and said, How have you changed? And she said, Oh, it's Jesus. And they've said, just as she told you, Oh, can I come along with Jesus too? And she'd say, Yes.

He's in the World City on Wednesdays and Saturdays. And so they come in. This is absolutely true.

Most of the brothers here, who are on the stage with us tonight, came in this way. And they come in through the door, and they say, OK, where is he? And someone who's known him a little time introduces them to Jesus. It's rarely been more than five minutes.

They pray with them. We don't give them a lot of doctrine. We just tell them who he is and pray with them as soon as we can.

And the praying with them is the amazing thing. I'm going to do some of that practice tomorrow, so you can know that I think it's actually the easiest way to share the Gospel is to pray with people. It's fun.

Anyway, we pray with them, and nearly always, they will end up saying, Well, you know, I just said I believed in Jesus to please you, but when you prayed in Jesus' name, my chest felt relaxed, or my heart felt easy, or I haven't wanted a cigarette for an hour. They're surprised. And then we tell them that, along with knowing Jesus, he'll give them a language to help them pray, and then they begin to pray in tongues.

They think this is normal, which, of course, it would be if you think about a wonderful father, a wonderful Lord who knows we don't know well how to express ourselves. So this is how they get born, not understanding much doctrine, but being touched by a God who loves them and understands where they are. The pain, of course, is this, is that when one of these people comes to know Jesus, I actually believe that we're obliged to house them.

What would you do if you had to house all your converts? Well, maybe that's not yet been a problem for you. But what would you do? Would you pray for converts or not? Or would you pray for bigger places? Or would you wait until you got a bigger place before you preached the gospel? You see, it's all one. You want to know why she believed in Jesus, and you want to know why they believed in Jesus so quick.

It's because they know that we're going to provide the house with the words. You see, that's why they believe. And quite right.

The word goes out, you see. If you back your words up with action, and if it's the action of the heart of the Lord Jesus, it will become famous. It's rather like in Jesus' time when they queued up.

And there were people always running after Jesus, always running after him. And you know that amazing time when he wanted a rest. I don't know if it was his specified day off or not.

But anyway, he took a boat across a lake. And I've seen the lake he took a boat across. It looks to be around about the same size as the one out here.

I don't know if it is, but it looks about the same size. And goodness knows, somebody had been on the telephone before he got to the other side. And I don't know how they did it.

But they got round to the other side before he did. And there was this crowd of people queuing up. And he didn't say, I'm so sorry, it's my day off.

You know, ministers on Mondays. He healed all their sick. And he ministered to all who came.

He was always doing that. That was his heart. And then, of course, more came because more were touched.

That's what I believe preaching the gospel ought to be like. Not a going out and bashing people, but a people running after the Savior who's touched us and touched their friend because they long to be touched in the same way. And so men come into the walled city on a Wednesday or a Saturday.

In the past year, we've only had two days in the whole of 1989 where there were no new boys, no new people coming. Every other Wednesday and every other Saturday there were between two to ten new people. And they all came to know Jesus and were baptized in the Spirit within five minutes of walking through the door.

Not very dramatic. Very, very simple. But, of course, that's awful.

I mean, I don't know what to do if somebody believes in Jesus on Wednesday, has a wonderful time, and on Saturday brings six friends. Would you be pleased? Of course you would. Of course you would.

But, likewise, there'd be an ache in your heart. How can you do the job half? How can you? How can you tell people the words about a God who fills them full and tomorrow you eat their breakfast and they don't have any? How can you tell them about a Lord who promises to provide all our needs and you go home to bed and they have none? I tell you, preaching the Gospel in this way makes you careful. That's why I avoided her.

It wasn't because I didn't want her to know. And I knew God could do miracles. I mean, I knew He could provide homes.

One day with an old prostitute, some years ago, that happened. You know, I was trying not to talk to her about Jesus because I know this sounds shocking, but I was trying not to tell her in case she believed. Because I'd got ten young men in my house at that time and I didn't know what would happen, but I couldn't resist it.

She was a similar age to Elfrida. Elfrida's just turned 70 and she was working in her job up until the age of about 66. And she was, when she came to live with us, being injected in her back three times daily because she had no more veins in her arms or legs.

Well, would you not long to share your Jesus with them? Of course you would. But what to do then? Anyway, that night with that one, I couldn't resist it. She was sitting under a lamppost and at that age, that particular one didn't have a home.

She didn't have a house at all and if she got hired for the night, she had a room for the night. She kept her clothes in a laundry. So when the ones she'd got on were dirty, she would get out the clean ones out of the laundry and put in the ones she'd got on.

And I told her about Jesus. I read her that story, you know, the one in Luke about the woman who went to the dinner party. She crashed it.

And she was crying and washing Jesus' feet with her tears. And out of that whole dinner party, out of, you know, all the people who had a name and who had a position, who'd had an invitation and who was sitting properly and who certainly weren't showing emotion in public, she was the only one who was publicly commended. So, I told her about the story of that one who was publicly commended by the Lord.

And she said, oh, she said, that's the one. That's the one I'd like to know. I'd like to know that God.

So, I prayed with her. We were sitting under a lamppost. This was just outside the walled city.

And she was sitting on an orange box in the street. And I said, well, just tell Jesus that he is the one for you and he'll give you a new life because that's why he came into the world and died for you. So, she, in

her heart, told him that.

And then I said, he'll give you a new language to help you pray in. And she began to pray in tongues. And then, it doesn't just happen usually, by the way.

We usually just give as much instruction as that. It's pretty simple with new Christians. And then, the king of the street came up.

And the king of the street was another beggar. And he takes fees from everybody, you know. So, she had to pay to sit on her orange box.

Because that was, he gave the license for that lamppost. And he came up and he looked at her and he saw her praying in the street. And she was smiling.

And he laughed and he laughed and he laughed and he laughed. And he said, you've got Jesus. And she didn't care.

She just went on happily praying. So, there was this wonderfully sublime moment. And then, Oh, God.

What am I going to do now? On that particular occasion, I had no money at all. I didn't even have 10 cents. My house was full.

I'd used up all my friends once more. I didn't know any more people with a house. Still less somebody who'd have her just converted prostitute in their spare room.

So, I had to leave her. And as I was walking off, I saw her looking around. And I thought, Oh, goodness me.

She's still soliciting. So, I went to her and I said, Look, you don't have to look to men anymore for your money, for your living. And she said, Huh? She said, What? She said, Jesus is going to rain down rice from heaven.

And I said, Maybe. He used to do things like that, you know. For a whole nation, he rained stuff down from heaven.

And she got it. She got hold of it. And she said, Tell you what.

Next time I see you, I'll tell you how it came. And I saw her a week later. And a week later, she was sitting there under the lamppost.

And she said, Jesus has been talking to me. And she said, He's told me that it's quite fine for me to expect him to provide my rice money. But not fine for me to expect him to provide my heroin money.

And I never saw her again. I don't know where she is. I used to ask the other ladies like her.

And they were all in their late 60s, still working. I used to ask them, Where is she? Where is she? And they'd say, She doesn't do this anymore. She's started a new life.

And she's got off drugs. And I don't know where she is. So there it is.

There's the tension. You see, I know that she's alright. And I know that she's somewhere where the Lord's given her a home.

And I know because He's promised that He'll fill her with rice. And give her what she needs each day. As well as to heal her from her addiction and the pain of all of those years.

And think of all of those years of pain. I know. But there's the tension.

And there it will be as we shared Jesus. And there it must be. How much will you do when you preach the gospel? And how much must Jesus do? The answer I've arrived with is this.

We must do everything. That's why we're here. We must do everything.

Everything. Everything. We must share our homes.

We must share all our money. Not our tithe. Our property.

Our garden. Our spare room. Our clothes.

Our life. Our time. Our days off.

Our hair washing night. Our night at the cinema. Our booked holiday even.

We must. We must. We must share everything.

For if we don't, who will? If the people of God will not share what we have and what we sing about, for we sing of abundance, do we not? If we will not share what we have, who will? And then again, on the other hand, we have to believe that God will do it all. We have to believe that he can provide the home, the rice, the strength, the means, and the time. We have to believe both.

Always believe both. Never minister out of one or the other, but always believe both. And sometimes you'll be in one or the other.

Sometimes you'll be doing more of the, I must do everything. And sometimes you'll be like I was that night, saying, Lord, I have nothing. I have nothing.

You must provide. And know he will. But don't settle for one or the other.

Because I believe that we are supposed to live in that tension. And I do believe it's supposed to bother us. So that we are, what I would say, constantly exercised.

Why are we here on earth? Why are we in New Zealand? Why are we in Rotorua? What are we doing? What are we doing here? I mean, what is it all for? I've had a look at a little bit of this place today and saw some of the graves. Now you know what happens in Hong Kong. If you're very rich, you can buy a burial place.

But it's very expensive. And you might save up for most of your life in order to get a burial place. It's very important, you see, because otherwise how are you going to live on if you have no grave? Those who don't have that much money, they go to a government place.

And after five years, or it might be three, they dig up the bones and give them back. We don't have space for graves in Hong Kong. We don't have space for bones.

What are people doing in Hong Kong? What are you doing here? How do you spend your time? It's been very interesting for us in being here in this city in the last few days. It's been interesting for me to see what is the same and what is different in our city and yours. There are many things that are very similar and there are many things that are very different.

The first thing I would say is completely different is the feeling of how to spend time. We have found it very difficult in Rotorua to do anything but sleep. I don't know if it's the same for you.

I don't know whether everybody gets here and crashes out. I don't know what's behind it quite, apart from the baths. But you know, in Hong Kong, it's totally the opposite.

We are controlled, if you like, and even us Christians are subject to what I would call driving spirits. Most of the brothers that were with us here today, their mothers have done two jobs a day all their lives in order to pay enough for the family to live in one room. Because space is so expensive in Hong Kong, most mothers will be working 18 hours a day.

I know most of them. And they work for very little. And they work seven days a week.

And they work 51 1/2 weeks of the year. No Sundays off. We have a brother whose mother has worked like that for, oh, 40, 50 years.

Never, never a day off. What's she doing it for? What for? To get money? What for? For her son? What for? So he can have a better life than she did? For all she does is work, work, work. She runs a newspaper stand.

She gets very little money. She gets up very early in the morning, 3 o'clock or so, and sorts the papers and sells them for almost nothing and sits there all day in the heat. Eats her lunch on the job.

She has no holiday. I'm sure she doesn't have time to watch television because she has to go back at night and go to sleep to get up at 3 o'clock to work again and to work again. What kind of life do you think her son had? Well, he had a life knowing that his mother was working so he could go to school.

And he had a life, I suppose, knowing that his mother sort of loved him because that's what she did. That's what he did it for. But he didn't know her.

He didn't spend time with her. There are differences in the way we live, but there are many similarities too. And I've seen around here in New Zealand, every time I've come, there are people who are just as unsettled as many of the people that we have in Hong Kong because the big and important thing in Hong Kong is to get on, is to get on, is to get on, is to get on, is to get on.

You must be at the top of the pile. That's why you will work harder than everyone else. And you see the Chinese students in New Zealand.

They'll work harder than everyone, won't they? They'll come into your schools and within a year they've learnt your language and they're top of your class. Always. You'll see that.

They must get on, they must get on, they must get on, they must get on. For what? So they can advance the family. For what? You see, they never seem to have time to enjoy what they're working for.

And the guys that we've got with us here today, they rebelled. I'm really glad they rebelled. They rebelled very young, our guys.

Most of our guys here didn't finish primary school. Maybe they couldn't go. Maybe their families were too poor.

Or maybe they didn't see why they should have twelve examinations a year and four hours of homework at the age of seven. Maybe they didn't see why they should be repeating lessons for hours and hours and hours just to get into this competition of Hong Kong so you can get more money. So that you can get more money.

So that you can get more money for what? Maybe buy a grave. So that people in future generations remember that you were there. They rebelled.

There was pain in our brothers' hearts. There was pain. They got nagged at by mother, or they didn't get nagged at.

They were guilty. Many of them were beaten. And they didn't know what to do.

They didn't know where they fitted into Hong Kong. It's very similar to some of this society here. They came from a long and wonderful Chinese culture like many of the Maori culture here.

But in Hong Kong, what are they? All Western films and fashions. And the family can't even live together anymore. Granny can't look after the grandchild.

All the values have broken down. And so what's a Hong Kong boy now? Proud of his Chinese heritage. But where does he fit? It doesn't work anymore, what Granny told him.

It doesn't work. Granny's still trying to tell him, but it doesn't work. He doesn't feel he belongs.

He can't keep up with school. The rat race of competition and commerce is too much. So some of them cop out at the age of seven.

They drop out at seven. They live in the streets. They shine shoes.

They open taxi doors and they join gangs. Not much different from some of you here, is it? And at least in the gang you belong. You're someone, and they do look after each other.

They do. Never despise gangs. There's a degree of love there, which sadly many of us Christians never show.

They really do feel that they belong there. They are someone. And that's what happened to many of our brothers.

They joined the gangs. Then, of course, they had to fight. They had to take oaths.

And most of them got on drugs, got on heroin, and blanked out. Just as I know many people in this city and many people in New Zealand try to blank out through drink. Our society is not that much different from

this one.

You see your bars and pubs at night. I want to tell you something. The people in those bars and the people in those pubs they're probably going to be the redeemed ones.

They're probably and I have a great bias about this they're probably going to be the ones that the Lord is going to pick to be the ones who are going to confound this country about His grace and mercy. And love and compassion. And you know why? Because they know that they're desolate.

They know that they're poor. And as our father Norman shared this morning in some awful way they know they're bankrupt. When our brothers come to World City and we tell them about Jesus and they're surprised because He touches them and many of them see visions and pictures.

I mean we can't do this. God does this. Amazing.

And when they're surprised afterwards they say to their friends I was chosen. It's amazing. I never know where they get this from.

I was chosen. These are never words that I use. And then they have sort of inbuilt instant wonderful theology.

They go off to their friends and they say and you can be chosen too. They think that anyone comes through the door is chosen. But look at the chosen lot.

Some of you heard this afternoon that God wanted to use ordinary people to preach the gospel. What did you think of Elfride? Not ordinary she. Not ordinary.

She's extraordinary. Because she's been transformed by Jesus. And you? You may not be as rich as she.

You may not. Because you may have started with more of the other things you could rely on. She didn't.

No school, no love. And she didn't tell you half of her story. We won't repeat it here but I don't think I've ever met a life which is more awful.

She's witnessed two murders which have never been reported. But I think she may be richer than many of us here. Because in her extreme and awful poverty there was nothing else for her but to call out to Jesus.

So she can be made full and rich in every way. And my prayer for us here and for this city and for New Zealand is one, that we should realize our poverty and bankruptcy. And two, having called out to the Lord to turn that which was poor into riches.

Then to be so generous with those riches that the other poor in this place become rich too. And they won't need much convincing. This way of preaching the gospel almost works by itself.

Once a poor man catches a glimpse of a rich man and they've been poor together. He'll run after him. What have you got? Oh, Jesus did it.

Okay, I'll have him. It happens all the time. And this is the ministry.

I used to call it ministry to the poor but it's a wrong term. I call it ministry with the poor. Because in no way am I ministering to the poor unless I understand poverty myself.

So I minister with the poor and with the rich. And this is what I want to challenge you in this evening. And just to share a few scriptures with you so we can check our hearts.

Because in becoming part of this ministry, which we must become part of, if any of us belong to Jesus, it's going to depend entirely, entirely on the attitude of our heart. The basis for ministry with the poor is the attitude of our heart. And nobody therefore will minister to the poor or with the poor in this city, in this country.

Nobody, I hope, will preach the gospel out of obligation. When I was first called to the mission field, I don't want to share the long story, but when I was first called, it really was out of obligation. I mean, I was five.

And this missionary came to our Sunday school and said, could God want you on the mission field? And I can remember thinking, well, the answer can't be no. I'm sure he wants everyone on the mission field, whatever a mission field is. And grew up with the idea of a rugby pitch in my mind.

That was the mission field. And I was sure God wanted everyone on it, whatever it was. So I grew up with this idea you had to be a missionary because it was smarter to be on God's side.

You know, sooner or later you're going to see him and he's going to say, how have you spent your life? So I thought it would be better to be on his side. But I didn't much like being on his side because I didn't like him. That's because I didn't know him, of course.

You know, I thought he was adding up my sins in a book, so I wasn't much looking forward to meeting him. Anyway, it was quite some time later that I went to a meeting in England and I met people who enjoyed him. Now, I had met some Christians before.

I think they were. But I hadn't liked them, you know, because they were funny hats and they used to say things to me like, oh, when you know the Lord, it'll be different. And I used to think, oh, I hope not, you know, because I thought they wanted me to be like them.

You know, and I didn't want to be like them because they didn't look nice. And it's true. I'm sorry.

But anyway, when I met some who looked as if they liked Jesus, you know, then I listened to what they said and they seemed to be having fun. And they were talking about racing cars and bikinis as well as Jesus. And I thought, well, this is all right.

You know, they didn't nail me against the wall. I could talk about Jesus or not, you know. So I felt some breathing space and I listened.

And then they told me that Jesus was the Son of God and it was only through Jesus that you could get to the Father. And I thought that was a bit much, you know, because the way I was brought up was that you could all go whatever way you liked, you know, as long as you're sincere, you know, like believing in Father Christmas or something. And so I then had to make a decision if what Jesus said about himself was true or not.

Either he's the only way to the Father or not. And reluctantly I decided he was. And so I said to him, Jesus, I don't like this too much.

You know, I think it's a bit narrow that you're the only way to God, but I'll accept that. And after such a condescending and begrudging prayer, he changed my heart around. He's so kind.

You know, I actually thought I was giving my life to Jesus. I didn't understand. It was he who was giving me life.

I thought I was going to give up things for him. It was quite the opposite way around. Then I understood that all men can come.

This is not a narrow way. You know, have you ever seen those dreadful posters when it's talking about the narrow way to eternal life? There are some awful ones. They've got this narrow way and sort of little Christian having a horrid time on the narrow way and the broad way leading to destruction.

The man's going to fall off a cliff, of course, but he is having a lovely time on the way. And he's rollicking along. I think it's a silly picture because it says narrow is the way that leads to life eternal.

And it's narrow because it's through Jesus. But when you go through Jesus, it's a broad and wide place. It's not a narrow life at all.

I don't know what made me think life with Jesus was narrow. So, what I want to begin with in encouraging us here about future ministry is to ask you, where have you come from? Now, I know this question has been asked today. The question has been asked culturally and it's been very interesting for me to hear how people got to New Zealand.

Why did your ancestors come? For what reason? Where did they come from? And why? And where were they going? And as John Dawson shared with us this morning, he said, no accident. There's no accident that any of us this morning or any of us now are sitting here. It isn't just an accident that we happen to have turned up now.

We're actually part of a plan and a destiny. Well, I want to know where you came from. There's going to be no way that any of us can begin to minister until we know where we came from.

In Deuteronomy 5.15 it says, remember you were slaves in Egypt. The Lord your God brought you out with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore, observe the Sabbath.

The Lord is talking to the people who've come out of Egypt. They've crossed the Red Sea and they're on their way to the promised land. And he says, remember, remember where you've come from.

Now the problem about that particular crowd was that they were always remembering the wrong things and forgetting the wrong things. They would remember the lovely time they had in Egypt, which was an entire fantasy. And they would forget that they were slaves in Egypt.

Now any one of us here who's ever heard the words Jesus Christ came to give you life. Your sins are nailed upon the cross. There's no condemnation against you.

Any of us who've understood any of those words, is that not extraordinary? I, who offended the God who made me, I've been forgiven. I was a slave. And God Almighty sent His Son, Jesus Christ, and nailed His Son to a cross.

Allowed Him to be nailed. He became the Passover lamb for me. So, as the children of Israel came out of Egypt, each family having had the blood of a lamb over their doorpost, I, now, today, I'm where I am, because I was a slave.

I was in sin. Now much of the reason that many of us never get to minister is that we don't understand that, or possibly we're still slaves. And tonight we want to pray that some people get set free.

Where did you come from? Do you know that the only hope for our future is Jesus Christ? There isn't any other life. Being good enough, building enough good things, or studying enough, or getting to the top of parliament, or becoming the chief in the village, none of these would do. Instead of eternal life, be they good things or not, our sins separate us from God.

Have you been set free? He said, if you have been set free, remember how, 1 Corinthians 6.20 says, you were bought with a price. Therefore, honor God with your body. I was bought because Jesus died.

That's the most awfully unfair thing in the world. People are always going around talking about their rights, their rights, their rights, their rights. It's extraordinary how quickly we grab hold of what we think our rights are.

Extraordinary. And the most unfair thing in the world is that someone who never sinned at all, at all, at all, someone who was perfect, and who only ever healed the men that he laid hands on, and fed the hungry ones, and welcomed the outcasts, the most unfair thing in the world was that he was spat at for my sins. I was bought with his death and his blood.

Therefore, I must honor God with my life. That was the price. If we know that we're bought with his life, and it cost the life of God's own son that we should have life, what else can we do with our lives, but give the whole of our lives back? Now, the reason I'm starting from this point of view is that so many of us are exceedingly begrudging or condescending about our lives and our property.

We actually think that they're ours. Extraordinary. This is mine.

My family's given me this. I deserve this. I'll give God that much.

But if we actually understand that we should have been in death, and God sent his son. He bought our lives. The price for our lives was his blood.

Therefore, our life doesn't belong to us anymore. What else have we to give but our whole life? And even that's little. Therefore, we're then free.

We're completely free. And as a result of that, he said in Deuteronomy 15, you must give. He said you must give to the poor man.

And, you know, every seven years, they were supposed to forgive debts. I don't think there's ever been a better money system. Everybody got forgiven after seven years.

And he says in that particular chapter, just because the year for forgiving people's debts is coming up. If somebody says, can you lend me some money, or I'm in need. Don't not give because the year for forgiving debts is coming up.

Because he says, don't show ill will towards your needy brother and give him nothing. If you do, he can then appeal against you. And you will be found guilty of sin.

Not sharing what we have. Even if we think we earned it or our father gave it to us or whatever, not sharing what we have is sin. And I believe that there are in this particular culture, what I've learned so far

is that the Maori brothers understand this a lot better than we Pakihas.

They understand about sharing what they have and about giving liberally. And we as Christians should learn from this. For nothing we have is our right.

And what about the land? In Leviticus 25 they were told you may not sell the land permanently because the land is mine and you are but aliens and tenants. The people of Israel were not supposed to be selling the land that God gave them because it wasn't theirs. And nobody was supposed to own it and say it's mine by right.

Or even I got here first. But the Lord has allowed me to farm this land, to use this land. I am his tenant.

I am his steward here to use this land for him, for his people. Therefore, the basis for our ministry is going to be gratitude. And I suppose none of us can effectively work for the Lord until we're grateful for what he's done for us.

That's all. And if we are grateful that he who did no wrong at all gave his very life for us, I mean, what is it to give away our money or our house or our car or our time? I mean, that's nothing. It's nothing.

He gave his life. Of course, the wonderful thing is, I won't have time to share all these scriptures, but I mean, the gospel has lived like this. It's so terrifically unfair again.

It really is unfair if you take God at his word, you see. Because if you did give away what you have, you'll always get more back so you can give more away. And that's not why you give it away.

You don't give it away in order to get more back. It's the other way around. He says you should give everything away because he did.

He gave away his life. Therefore you may. And he says you'll always have enough.

That's what it says in 2 Corinthians. You'll always have enough to give. Right.

Now I've asked where have you come from? And hopefully most of us here know that we came out of bondage. Where are you now? Well, you know, when they came out of Egypt, they got stuck in the desert for a long time. And actually they were on their way to the Promised Land.

And it should only have taken them a few days to get from once they crossed the Red Sea, to get from there to the Promised Land. It really was not a long journey. I don't know if you've ever looked at that end of your Bibles.

But it's not long. It shouldn't have taken them 40 years. It was not a 40-year journey.

They were just walking in circles most of those 40 years. Okay, so I'm going to ask you now, as I ask myself, knowing that Jesus has changed my life and most unfairly forgiven my sins. Where am I now? What am I going to do with my life? I had a career in music.

Somebody here talked about two of our sisters who came with us, who have given up their lives or given up their careers to help the poor. Well, of course they'd say, rubbish, they've given up nothing. I mean, what was worth having? The adulation of the world? One of the girls that was up here with us is a doctor.

Not a medical doctor. But so what? So what? So what? In comparison with praying with people in the streets who have nothing. I mean, they don't care if she's a doctor.

They just want to know if Jesus is touching. Where are you now? Are you living still in Egypt? Do you know Jesus? It says in Deuteronomy 15, 15, Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord redeemed you. Are you living in the desert? Well, you know what happened in the desert? They had this really nice menu provided.

And if you look up manna, there are several different ways of cooking it. Apparently you could bake it and boil it and several different flavors mentioned. But they got fed up with it.

And in Numbers 11, 6, this is what the people of Israel say to Moses, that now we've lost our appetite. We never eat anything but this manna. Now we're fed up with this manna, manna, manna, manna.

Every day it's manna. Manna, manna, manna, manna, manna. Well, we might say that about Christian meetings in New Zealand.

One more meeting and Jackie's going on and it's quarter past nine. One more meeting, meeting, meeting, meeting, meeting. We're fed up.

We've lost our appetite. They weren't supposed to be eating manna for 40 years. They were supposed to be having milk and honey.

You know, they were supposed to be in that country where there were grapes and pomegranates and all that nice fruit. You know, they bought some sample fruit back sometime. You know, and Joshua and the others, they bought it on a poll and they said, look, here's some sample fruit.

There's lots more like that. We bought you some sample fruit today. We bought you a row.

There were 10 of us with sample fruit. With? With fruit that came from the promised land. You want to go get some? You want to go get some fruit? Well, they didn't listen to Joshua and Caleb.

They listened to the others. The others said, oh, you know, big people there. Big giants.

You know, and they overused their imagination because they said, we look like grasshoppers in their eyes. You know, they didn't even talk to them. Silly things.

So they never got in that lot. 40 years. Because they said, oh, you've got to be really careful about this.

You're a big man. You know. And they were supposed to have gone in and got some more fruit.

Gone in and possessed the land. Where are you brothers and sisters? Now you do have a choice. You could do going into the promised land.

You could go get some fruit. And if you will ask the Lord, if you'll listen to some of the things that some of the brothers and sisters are sharing over the next couple of days, you'll know it's not hard. It's for the picking.

It's for the picking. You know, Elfride can preach the gospel. She can't even read the Bible.

I bet most of you can. She can worship because she worships from her heart. You can go out and get fruit.

There's plenty. There's plenty in the promised land. Or you could go on going to meetings for 40 years.

It wasn't very good tonight, was it? Didn't think much of the speaker. It was manna, manna, manna, manna. It was really flavorless.

There's always she wrote a row. We never get the good ones in our bitter town, you know. All the best speakers around in Christ's church were... You're not supposed to be walking in circles and you're not supposed to be eating that diet.

You're supposed to be listening to what the Lord says. And if He says preach the gospel, and if He says preach the gospel to the poor, I mean, He's not going to ask you to do anything that He's not going to equip you to do. So why not say, God, I'm terrified, but I will.

At least it will be better than 40 years more of meetings. It has to be. It has to be better than 40 years more of meetings.

You know, it's much more fun preaching the gospel in the streets. We don't preach the gospel in church in Hong Kong. I can't remember making an invitation.

No, I lie. Eighteen months ago in church, I did in Hong Kong. We do it in the streets.

We don't ask people to meetings to get saved. You're supposed to go out to where they are, in the pub, in the bar, sitting in the employment queue, waiting for the benefit, outside the clinic. It's a pretty good place to start praying with people.

That's where we're supposed to be preaching the gospel. Pray that God will show you where the hungry people are. There are hungry people here.

There are. I've seen them. Pray that God will show you where the hurt people are.

There are hurt people here. I've seen them. Can you see them? Or can you hear them? Because they are crying.

But it might be painful for you. I tell you where I live in Hong Kong, or where I lived. I just moved.

It couldn't be more different from this. I mean, it couldn't be more different. Here you've got all this green and you can see the sky and you've got sheep and land and air.

It's a bit smelly here, but you've got beauty. My room in the World City, I have no windows. One of my cats had never seen the sun.

He used to sunbathe by the lamp. So when I wake up, I don't know if it's morning or night. I've no idea what time of day or night it is.

I don't know why I'm talking about World City now. Anyway, I better get off that. That's a whole different way of life.

And at night time, when I first went there, I could hear people fighting through the wall because there were 60,000 people living in about 5 acres, so we're all a bit squashed up. And I could hear the people screaming, other children screaming and I get very worried about children being beaten or women being beaten by their husbands. I can't go to sleep if I can hear it going on.

The trouble is in World City, it's very difficult to find out where things are happening because it's like a maze in there. When you can hear the sound, it's very difficult to find the family it came from. But what do you do? I mean, I used to lie awake, and then I used to get out of bed and think, I must see if I can trace the noise to see where it came from.

And could I do anything about it? You see, I can't, cannot turn my heart off to the sounds around. Of course, it means you don't sleep very well. The other choice is to go to sleep and get used to hearing the sounds and turning off your heart.

I have to tell you, if you're at all concerned about people in your city or this area, and you ask God to open your ears, you may start to hear them. I don't mean always literally, because there are a lot of people here crying quietly, and I hope you hear them. Because they'll be very easy to reach for Jesus.

Are you living as if you're in the Promised Land? There are a lot of Christians who know I'm saved. Good, I have eternal life. And I believe that some people may have originally come to this country and found the Promised Land.

Good, I have my place. This is a lovely country. It's a rich country, at least in terms of things that you can grow.

It's got beautiful weather. You've got space. The creation here is extraordinary.

What a wonderful place. In your own life as a Christian, do you know that you're forgiven? Do you know that you have eternal life? Okay, so now what? Praise the Lord. Forty more years of meetings? Ah, but I'm not in the desert, you see.

I know! I'm in the Promised. I've crossed. Well, I'm not going to give the answer as to where one is, because I'm talking about the heart.

I'm talking about what we do on our way to where we're going. That's what I'm talking about. Now, on the way to the Promised Land, two and a half tribes, I can't say their names properly, but they are the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the other one is Manasseh.

Well, I used to say Manasseh, but I heard John this morning saying Manasseh. Anyway, that's the half bit. They said, we've found our bit.

We've got our bit. They haven't crossed the Jordan. And they've got it all mapped out.

They've got their territory. Now, there may be some of us that, as Christians, actually feel we've arrived. That's all right.

It seems to be quite biblical. I have eternal life. This isn't anything that starts once I die.

I now have the benefits of eternal life, and some people even claim them, you know. Like, you know, you can ask the Lord for this and this and this and this and this. Okay, seems to be quite biblical.

So, these two and a half tribes got their allotment, and then what? Moses talked to them and said this, you might have got to where you're going, but the rest haven't. So, you can have your bit, and now, having settled into your bit, would you mind getting up again and assisting all the rest of the tribes who haven't yet got to their bit? So, you see, there's no getting out of it, fellow Christians. If you think you've got to the

promised land, fine.

It seems to be quite biblical that we can claim eternal life now, and its benefits, which some people are very busy claiming. That's good. Claim them for all you're worth, and then get up and leave them to assist those who have not yet laid hold of the same promise of abundance and land, peace, possession, security in the Lord.

You may have finished your journey, but out of love for the rest of God's nation, get up, be exercised, be disturbed, and assist them to their inheritance. For although... Oh, OK. Sorry.

I'm reading another scripture. This is probably where I'm going to leave it here, except to just read one more scripture from Matthew 29. I beg your pardon.

Matthew 25. Matthew 25. This is the story of the sheep and goats.

I can remember first hearing this before I knew Jesus. I was sitting in a church in England, and we had an Irish vicar. He had a wonderful voice, this Irish vicar.

Wonderful. The trouble is, it made you go to sleep. By the way, you're doing awfully well.

My mother did go to sleep in one of his sermons. You always knew with him, you had to have Sunday lunch late. But anyway, Mummy just was beginning to nod off in the middle of one of his vicar's sermons.

My sister was so afraid she was going to snore that she thug her in the ribs, whereupon Mummy leapt up from her seat, picked up the hymn book, and said, What's the number, dear? Anyway, this Irish vicar was talking about the sheep and the goats, and how there seems to be, you know, the sheep get in and the goats don't. That's not a very nice story. In Hong Kong, they call it long-haired sheep and short-haired sheep.

We don't have two different animals. And so, it seems to be very important that you know the length of your hair. Matthew 25.

Here's Jesus giving this parable about the end of time, when the king separates the nations. All the nations will be gathered before the Son of Man. And on one side he puts the sheep, and on the other side he puts the goats.

And he says, To the sheep, when I was hungry, you fed me. When I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you invited me in.

When I needed clothes, you clothed me. When I was sick, you visited me. When I was in prison, you visited me.

And those people said, Lord, we never even sought you. And he said, When you did it to the least of these, you did it unto me. And then he turned to the others, who were going to be the goats.

And he said, When I was in prison, you didn't visit me. When I was sick, you didn't visit me. When I was hungry, you didn't feed me.

And when I was a stranger, you did not invite me in. And they said, Lord, we never saw you. I mean, Jesus, if I'd seen you, I'd have whipped a cup of water to you.

I got one. Do you get used to the television? Do you get used to the pictures of the babies who don't have any in their stomachs when we have such a lot? I'm not here to make you feel bad. What I'm talking about is what Jesus talked about in this parable about the end of time.

And those people said, Jesus, we never saw you. Had we? We'd have given you a cup of water quick. He said, what you did not do for the least, you did not do for me.

It could be that he's outside, Jesus. Have a look when you pass the bars. Next Friday, I don't know if Friday is the right day, he could be sitting in the unemployment queue.

It's probably where you'll find him. It's the kind of place he'd turn up. And for those of us, and I fear that I would be one, for those of us who've passed by, he says, then they will go away to eternal punishment.

And they're righteous to eternal life. Now this is not at all what I learned about when I did my verses about salvation. They're really not the verses I learned.

I mean, I learned that if I believe in my heart and if I confess with my mouth that Jesus is the Lord, then I'll be saved. You know, I knew my verses quite nicely. So, by faith, I'm saved.

I'm saved. I'm saved. This parable says something different.

Apparently, it's going to depend on whether we've looked after the poor and visited the prisoners. Surely not. This is very muddling theology.

This is going to really muddle everything up, is it not? No. No. Because, you see, brothers and sisters, it's really simple.

If I know in my heart that Jesus is Lord, and if I confess with my mouth and I tell you I believe he is, if I know that he's rescued me from bondage, then I want with all my heart to minister to the hungry one, the poor one, the sick one, the lonely one, the one who is hurt, the one who's lost, the one who feels rejected. I want to very much because, you see, I know what it's like. I was there myself.

If I know where I've come from, and if I know where I'm going, and I'm going to have to talk to him about my life, it's not hard then to respond to the poor around. I would say it's a natural outcome of knowing Jesus. And it comes from gratitude of heart.

It doesn't come from obligation at all. I am not obliged. My life has been bought.

I was a slave. I did wrong. I offended the living God and He died for me.

He bought my life with His life. He gave me life and I can give it away. I can waste it.

I can waste it. That's what they said about the woman who put the perfume on Jesus' feet. What a waste! What a waste! Always adding up sums that lot.

I want to tell you that if you're ministering to the poor, it's going to be nothing to do with money. Nothing to do with money. It's going to be nothing to do with taking up collections.

This is a great relief, isn't it? Nothing to do with collections. Nothing to do with adding up. They made that mistake.

Oh, yes, wages. Could have given it to the poor. What does Scripture say? They didn't care about the poor.

It said that He just liked to help Himself to the money plate. That's why He said that. If we know that we've been forgiven by Jesus, we can waste everything we have on Him.

We can pour ointment on His feet. He might be sitting outside the bar. Go look for Him in a minute.

Did you hear Elfride tell you? I didn't tell her about Jesus at the beginning. What would be the point of telling her words about a God she knew not? It was more important to give her some food. Then she could understand a little bit about Him.

Actually, she doesn't remember everything because she was on heroin at that time. But when we share Jesus, let it be in word and in deed and with the power of the Holy Spirit, signs and wonders. It's very, very simple.

It's very, very simple. We're going to do some practice tomorrow on how we might pray with people. You'll be very encouraged, all of you, to know that God will equip you all to minister.

You'll all be able to pray for the sick and then watch what He does. So we'll do some practice of that tomorrow. But right now, I'd like to ask you to stand.

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