

Sharing Jesus

by Jackie Pullinger

Jackie Pullinger's sermon emphasizes the necessity of sharing Jesus through personal experience and active love in the community.

Duration: 1:03:52

Scripture: Romans 15:17

Topics: "Evangelism", "Living Out Faith"

Description

Jackie Pullinger emphasizes the necessity of sharing Jesus through personal experience and action rather than mere words. She reflects on Paul's commitment to proclaiming the gospel through his deeds and the power of the Holy Spirit, urging the audience to engage with the world around them, especially those in need. Pullinger recounts her experiences in Hong Kong, illustrating how genuine love and service can lead others to Christ, as they witness the transformative power of Jesus in the lives of those around them. She challenges the church to move beyond meetings and seminars, advocating for a hands-on approach to evangelism that mirrors Jesus' own ministry. Ultimately, she calls for a radical commitment to reaching the lost, emphasizing that true witness comes from living out the love of Christ in tangible ways.

Transcript

Thank you very much for letting us share in your love of the Lord. And all we can share is what we've known of Jesus, because we haven't anything else. And personally, I have no other conversation.

So I'd like to look now at Romans. Romans 15, verse 17. Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God.

I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done. By the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit, so from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. And this is St. Paul talking about the ways in which he had learnt to share Jesus with others.

And he said that he would not speak of anything else except what he personally had experienced of the Lord in his life and in his ministry. And there's nothing else that I can say. And he starts here by talking about preaching the gospel, in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done.

And that's really where I want to start today. Because you people here in New Zealand are famous. You're famous because you responded to things of the Spirit a long time ago.

If you go by decades, you were ten years ahead of many other countries. And you received the news that the anointing and the power of the Holy Spirit was given to all Christians for the work of the Lord. You received and you learnt how to use spiritual gifts.

And I'm not sure after that what happened. I don't want to be too rude. But what I'm afraid may happen, or could have happened, is that that becomes the end.

You see, the power of the Holy Spirit was given to men, ordinary men, to preach the gospel. The power of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit were not given to men so that they could have more interest in meetings. What have we had this week? Oh good, we had three prophecies today.

I used to belong to a group that said that. The terrible thing was that we never listened to what the Lord said through those words. And we didn't act on them either.

And I'm so grateful that you've come today. I don't want to preach at you. I only want to share some of the things that I think are on God's heart and some of the things which I went through.

Because there's a whole world to be reached. And you have to start here in New Zealand. And there are people dying outside.

And I'm very much afraid that unless we learn why these gifts of the Holy Spirit were given, unless we learn why God, in his mercy, promised to pour out his Spirit upon ordinary men, all that will happen is that we play with gifts and go to yet one more seminar, or yet one more workshop, or yet one more meeting and tick off how many famous speakers we've had while a world perishes. And I suppose that you're here. I hope that you're here not to hear me as a speaker.

Because I can't live up to that and I don't want to. If you're here because of the desperation in your heart to reach lost people for Jesus, whoever they are, whatever race they come from, whatever their social status, then let's learn how St. Paul did it. Let's learn how, in his mercy, he's shown me some ways of his working.

And let's above all look and see how Jesus did it. Because I believe he's our example. And St. Paul starts here, not by starting with the power of the Holy Spirit, but by starting with preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles by what I have said and done.

Now, when I first got to Hong Kong, I thought that preaching the Gospel was speaking. I really did. And I don't know which little workshops or seminars you've been to in the past 10 years, but I had been to one.

And it was a very good one. And you've probably been to a similar one. All you need is a table napkin.

A table napkin and a pencil. And you draw a little map. And you start on this map with man on one side and God on the other.

And then you sort of draw an awful valley in the middle. And you write down the middle of the awful valley, Sin. And then you go on to explain to the person who's looking at your table napkin how man is separated from God and man can't get to God because there's sin in the middle.

And then you draw little bridges, you know, good works and all that, and they don't stretch. And then you get to the wonderful fact that God in his mercy sent Jesus over to the sin side and he laid himself down on the cross and then you draw it so it makes a bridge and took our sin upon himself and then man can go over the bridge which is the cross of Jesus to God. Well, I learnt that in four weeks with the appropriate scriptures.

I was dying to try it when I got to Hong Kong because there were several problems when I got there. First of all, most of the people I wanted to try it on didn't speak English. And the Sin bit didn't work unless you couldn't speak English.

So that was very, very sad. However, I thought it was pretty good and the verses that went with it were very good. So I tried to find people who would listen.

But there was a great problem about this. The problem was I sat them down and I started with my little map, you see, and man on one side and God on the other and there being this great gulf. And they were already bored.

And we never got to the good bit. We never got to the bit where Jesus came and rescued fallen man and took sin upon himself. The people that I had managed to collar were already bored.

And it began to occur to me that perhaps speaking the words about Jesus were not the best way of preaching the gospel to those people. For they didn't seem to understand my words even when I had someone translating them. How would you and how do you preach to people who don't understand your language? And how do you preach to people who know nothing, I mean absolutely nothing about Jesus? I used to go around the streets in this place called the Wall City which is about 5 acres and there's about 60,000 people that lived in it, if you can imagine that.

You probably can't here because you've got fields all over the place. But this is the most extraordinarily dense place that you can find, I think, almost in the world. And it's completely dark because it was outside the law of Hong Kong.

It was a technical mistake. So that nobody actually administered the law inside and it was a wonderful place for criminals. And they called them Triad Members.

They're kind of secret gangs that run all the prostitution and drug smuggling and so on. And this was the Wall City and those were the people that lived and worked in there. And I thought they should know about Jesus so I used to go up to them and say, have you heard about Jesus? When I could speak enough Chinese.

And they would answer things like om shik chi which means, I can't read. And of course you know you can't be a Christian if you can't read. You know that, don't you? I'm serious.

I'm absolutely serious. How can you be a Christian unless you can look at this every day? That's how you grow up. In the word, isn't it? You've got to.

You've got to have a dose of Bible every day so you can't be a Christian if you can't read. We know that, don't we? Other people said omohai jara which is I have no shoes. Well, I think they could be Christians in New Zealand.

But certainly they couldn't be Christians in Hong Kong. Because in Hong Kong, Christians wear shoes. Not flip flops.

Christians in Hong Kong wouldn't wear sandals to church. You've got to wear proper shoes. Because Christians are very proper, you see.

They wear nice clothes on Sundays. So if you haven't got shoes, if you've only got flip flops, you can't be a Christian. And we know that's true.

And then others of them said ngom tahan ngoyu wansik which is I don't have time. I have to earn my living. And they weren't being rude.

They really didn't have time. They work 7 days a week. And I know many, many people who work 2 jobs a day.

Even still, many of our brothers, their parents, especially their mothers, are doing 2 jobs a day. They work up to 18 hours a day. And never get a day off.

And never get a week's holiday. Perhaps 3 or 4 days at Chinese New Year, that's all. They work and work and work to support their family, to pay the rent.

Because the rents are very high. To better the family. To get them out of poverty.

So of course you couldn't be a Christian, could you? If you have to work 7 days a week. We know that. Because Christians go to a building on Sunday.

You have to have time to be a Christian. Now those were very reasonable answers, I think. But you see, what occurred to me when I went around the streets and talked to people, was that they knew a lot about Christians.

And nothing about Jesus. I read a book by David Wilkerson and you probably read it too. It's called Crossing the Switchblade.

And he wrote in this book how he had a longing to reach gangsters in New York. And it's a wonderful story about how God enabled him to do this through the power of the Holy Spirit. And one of the guys he reached was a gangster called Nicky Cruz.

And he goes up to Nicky Cruz and says, I love you. And Nicky Cruz's heart cracks. And I read this book very soon after I'd got to Hong Kong.

And I thought, this is wonderful. All I have to do is learn how to say, Jesus loves you, in Chinese. And I go up to people and their heart will crack.

Really simple. So, I know that there's a Chinese takeaway fairly new here. You can practice it on them.

It goes in Chinese Yeh so ngoi ne. Yeh so ngoi ne. Jesus loves you.

Yeh so ngoi ne. Yeh so ngoi ne. Yeh so ngoi ne.

Yeh so ngoi ne. Anyway, I got it done to a fine art. And I picked my victim who happened to be somebody who was watching a gambling den in the wall city.

Pretty good business at three o'clock in the morning. Sitting down this little lane which was about three feet wide. And I went up to him and said in my very best Cantonese, Yeh so ngoi ne.

And not only did his heart not crack, he didn't look at all impressed. So, I tried again. Yeh so ngoi ne.

And he said, which means, what's that have to do with me? So, I learned another word. I learned how to say really. Feeling, you know.

He really loves you. And he said, Run away. Just go find someone else, will you? So, he's not interested.

His heart didn't crack. So, I found an old prostitute instead. And this prostitute, like the one that we brought to New Zealand with us this time, all she ever did was to squat in the street.

I mean squat. She used to squat over a sewer. And she was not beautiful.

And she was quite diseased. She had needle marks in the back of her hand because that's where they inject heroin. And she had been there for ages and ages.

Many years. She couldn't read. She had no radio.

No family. The only way she could get customers was by trying to grab men after they'd come out of the ghoulish film theatre. And so, I went up to her and I thought, well look, if the words Jesus loves you don't work, then I'll try touching her.

Because she'll understand that. So, I said to her, Jesus really loves you. And I put my hand on her.

And she was terrified. And she was so frightened, she nearly fell into the sewer. There are open sewers behind her.

And then she said to me, Dear, you've made a mistake. She was embarrassed. She wasn't embarrassed that I touched her.

She was embarrassed because she thought I'd touched the wrong one. And she said, you see, I know you're one of those nice people, aren't you? You're one of those Christians. And, nobody told you what I do.

I know Christians don't touch people like me. All these people knew something about Christians. And when they knew something about Christians, it ruled them out.

And they knew nothing about Jesus Christ. And I looked back at the Gospels. And I saw, as I looked, to see how Jesus preached good news.

Never once did He go up to somebody and say, I love you. Never. But He showed them His love.

He made the eyes of a blind man open. He unstopped the ears of a deaf man. And the lame man leapt for joy.

And then people began to run after Him. They began to run. They began to run.

And so wherever He went, they ran. Wouldn't you? Did you hear, my friend? My friend's been deaf forever. And he can hear.

He can hear? Who did it? It was Jesus. Oh, can I get to hear Him? Oh, I think He's passing by tomorrow. Let's go.

And so more do, and so more do, and so more do, and then one day, 5,000. Darling, I'm going to take all my annual leave tomorrow. He's coming.

And so off go 5,000 excited men. of course, it doesn't say how many of their wives and children went, but a lot more. And they were all so excited.

The whole bunch of them, they forgot their sandwiches. All they wanted to do was to touch Him. I want to get near Him.

Why? He changed my friend. My friend saw. And another one, he knew all about the woman that lived next door to me.

You know that one? You know that one, don't you? You know about that woman, don't you? You know how many men she's had. And you know the one she's living with now. You know, they used to talk about her like that, but she came back different one day.

My neighbor came back different. My neighbor came back healed. And she was so different, we wanted to see who'd done it.

And we went, and we saw Him. We saw Him, and we said to Him, We came, first of all, and we believed that You were the one. You were the one, because of what she said.

We believed that You were the one, because You knew all about her. And she never told you all those things. We knew, but You couldn't have known.

But now, Jesus, we've seen You. We believe for ourselves. There was a growing number of people who'd seen Him.

Or touched Him. And been changed by Him. Now, this is what I believe good news should be like.

Oh, we make it so boring. We want to introduce somebody to Jesus. What do we do? Will you come to the meeting on Wednesday? Good news it's supposed to be, not the meeting on Wednesday.

I used to go to them, and I got so bored. I used to sit through them, and I'm sorry. I used to say, Oh, Lord, I will stand this, because I love You.

But wouldn't it be awful if I didn't know You? I mean, we inflict those things on non-Christians. Jesus went to where people were, and He touched them where they were in the way that they could understand. Very simple.

Very, very simple. I mean, it is very simple if one minute you can't see, and then the next minute you can. It's terribly simple if one day you're very hungry, and then you're full.

You're so full you can't eat anymore. And there's enough to take home. Some from a basket for those at home who didn't get there.

Those are very simple things. Those are not hard. And so all those people would become witnesses.

Now that's all we're supposed to be. Witnesses. Jesus promised us power.

And here in New Zealand, you'll be very familiar with these verses. And most of you here, I guess, will know Acts 1-8 off the top of your head. The one we always trot out, isn't it? But you will receive power to be witnesses.

The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and you're going to be witnesses in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria until the ends of the earth. And what we forget is being witnesses is terribly simple. In court, nobody is allowed to be a witness unless they have seen something.

You're not allowed to be a witness if you merely heard somebody talking about it. Hearsay will not do. It's not admissible from a witness.

The judge will say, No, I cannot admit that. What did you see? Not what did you hear someone talking about what they'd seen. What did you see? What did you hear? That's all we have to do.

And you see the people that Jesus touched became instant witnesses. not difficult to understand. I mean, you would understand if somebody who begged all his life because he was blind came back the next day and he didn't have to beg anymore because he could see.

That's not very deep theology. Or is it? It's the gospel. It's good news.

And I guess the next thing you'd say to him was, Who did it? How did it happen? And he'd say, His name was Jesus. I called out to him because I thought he was the one. He was very smart, you know, that blind man.

Very smart. The two blind men were smart too. You know what they called him? Son of David.

Ever wondered why? Oh, they had a very strong suspicion that he was the son of David. Nobody goes around saying to me, Oh, Jackie! Daughter of Jeffrey. Nobody knows who my great grandfather was or my great, great, great, great grandfather.

They don't talk to me like that. Why, when Jesus comes along, do they say, Son of David! Son of David! Because he was the one they hoped for and they knew. There were prophecies about David's sons.

The one that was going to come from him and be the king and be the redeemer. They were waiting and the blind men recognized him even though they couldn't see with their eyes. Son of David! Son of David! So very easy for them to be a witness.

Now I can see. And it was the son of David. Pretty simple.

And so more people would run. More people would run to touch him or to be touched by him. Now wouldn't it be great if that happened in New Zealand? If instead, I'm not saying to cancel the meetings, you know, if we've got to have a few like this, fine.

The worship's lovely. But wouldn't it be wonderful if instead of inviting people to our meetings to get them saved, it was the other way around. They actually began to run after Christians because they wanted to touch us or they wanted us to touch them.

Now that's how Acharn became a Christian. He sort of missed the punchline. It's quite hard when you're working in another language.

But that's how he became a Christian. That's how he came to know Jesus. That's how nearly every single one of our brothers comes to know Jesus.

And it's it seems to be almost unfair. But this is a typical case. Somebody will walk down the street let's say Acharn and he meets an old friend.

Now previously, the old friend would have been very thin because you know addicts can't afford money for food. They use all their money for drugs. So Acharn meets a previously thin man who is now very fat.

And the first thing Acharn says to him is, why are you so fat? And the fat one says, it's Jesus. And Acharn says, okay, I'll have him. Where can I meet him? And the fat one says to Acharn, he's in the World City on Wednesdays and Saturdays at five o'clock and I'll take you there.

And so they come to the World City. This is true. This story happens every week.

I'm not making it up. They come down to the World City and they come in the room and they say, okay, where is he? Jesus. Because he changed my friend, you see.

He made a thin man fat. Now that might not mean a lot to you. But you see, addicts can't get fat.

Not where we come from. And if somebody has become fat and stayed fat, it means they're blessed. And they're very impressed because most of them have tried kicking drugs in prison, in drug centers.

They take themselves off to mainland China. They do all kinds of things. We've got one brother that actually chained himself to a bed with iron chains and then threw the key away.

They go through all these things to try to get themselves off drugs. He managed to break the chains, of course. That was before he believed Jesus.

Because the desire for the drug is so strong. So they are impressed when someone's free. That's what the fatness means, you see.

He's free. Okay, who did it? Jesus? Fine, I'll have him. We actually have people who have never known anything about Jesus queuing up to meet him.

We don't have to do hard sell. They come in the door, where's Jesus? We say to one of the other brothers, you sit down and introduce Jesus to him. They share very, very simply.

We don't encourage them to talk a lot. At the most five minutes, at the most. But what we ask them to do next is pray with them, very quickly.

In fact, we would rather people pray with people than talk to them. Because it seems that when people are that hungry, the Holy Spirit says things better. We want to get out our four verses, but you know, we finger on things a little better sometimes.

And so they very simply say, will you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? And none of them understand this. They don't understand that. No, you don't have to understand it.

Will you believe it? Yeah? Will you believe he died on the cross for you? Yep. Yep. Anything.

Anything. I'll believe anything you ask me to, they say, because I want to come into your house. Are they making up their belief in Jesus? Yes, they are a bit.

They'll say yes to anything we ask them to believe in. Because we've got what they want. And I think that's quite valid.

You see, they've seen that he works. So we'll say, do you believe he died on the cross? They've never heard of that before. Okay, you say that's what he did? Okay, I'll believe.

Because I know that's how I'm going to get into your house. And I want to come and live in your house, because that's how I've heard that Jesus touches people and gets them free. So we take them through these questions.

Is Jesus the son of God? Do you believe he died on the cross for your sins and rose again? Will you accept him into your heart? Yes? Okay, then we pray with them, and the power of the Holy Spirit comes upon them. They speak in tongues. Usually never more than five minutes.

And then, three or four days later, we teach them. They're still on heroin, by the way, how to prophesy. And how to pray for the sick.

And how to pray for the other new man who's just come in. Of course, it's a bit terrible for us, and I really mean this. I'm not boasting, but it's a bit terrible, because what will happen is that if your new man today comes to know Jesus, after he's been prayed for, he'll look up and he'll say, Wow, she'll look, wow.

Oh, I feel really comfortable. You know, many of them can sit there for four hours without a cigarette, and without heroin, some of them for five hours, and they say, Oh, I'm so surprised, I feel so peaceful. And they go away, and the awful thing is they're quite likely to come back three or four days later with three or four friends who all want to know Jesus, and I never know if I'm happy or sad when they bring three or four friends along, because, you see, those three or four friends all want to come and live in our house too, and they'll all say, Yes, yes, yes, I'm willing to believe anything you ask me to believe in, because we've got what they want.

So we keep having to open new houses, and we keep getting more people, and of course, it's a very wonderful problem to have, because the more people that get healed by Jesus, the more people they bring along, and then the more houses we've got to open, and then the more people get saved and healed, and then the more people they bring along, we can't catch up. It's really wonderful. But what a problem.

But what a problem. We haven't got to go out and do hard sell. They're queuing up to know Jesus.

Why? Because he touched their friend, and they can understand that. Because he came and lived with their friend. Because he was where their friend was, and he's where they are.

And that is where I believe that we need to start in our preaching of the gospel. It's the beginning. I was at a convention just a year ago on a mission, and there was somebody showing lots and lots of slides on an overhead, and I got more and more worried as I saw these slides going up, because they took us through some breathtaking percentages, and they were saying, at the time of Christ, what percentage of the world

believed in Jesus, according to the population.

And then they did it 500 years later, and then they did it 300 years later, and then they did it 200 years later. Then they went to the beginning of this century, and then they went through each decade. And, of course, each time the percentage was going up.

And I'm afraid it had the opposite effect on me. It didn't make me want to preach the gospel at all. The effect it had on me was, oh well, the numbers seem to be doing awfully well.

I think God will manage without me. And I don't really need to be in this. It seemed to be a foregone conclusion that the numbers were going to go on, that the whole world was going to turn to Jesus Christ eventually.

There was somebody else that did some breathtaking slides too, showing us all the countries in the world where people were believing in Jesus, and he said this. He said, we don't have to go to Africa as the old missionaries did and spend a life of toil and hardship to win people to Christ. He says, we've got television stations and videos and now we can send a video and we can preach the gospel and get Saturday morning prime time.

And I thought about that. And thank God for all the Christian resources we have. But look at the country in the world where there are none of those, China.

And see that that is the country in the world where there is the quickest and greatest revival in all of history. And then look at the country where they are absolutely floating in Christian resources. And see its spiritual poverty.

Now Jesus could have sent a video from heaven. I'm sure he could have written in the sky. I'm sure he could have beamed into every home the gospel.

Every eye could see him. But God in his mercy sent his son. He did not send a message from heaven.

He sent, not a tract, but the living word. Jesus Christ, Son of God. I'd like to look at John 1. Verse 14.

The word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory. The glory of the one and only Son who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John was very excited about this. Both in this gospel and in his epistle he says similar words. We have seen his glory.

Imagine writing. We have seen his glory. He lived here among us.

It wasn't that he sent a Bible from heaven. Neither did he send a tract. Do you know what I used to do when I first went to Hong Kong? I used to give out tracts to people in the street.

And some of them said nice words about Jesus. Sometimes we stamp the tracts. So that the person reading the tract would know where our meeting was.

The problem was that most of the people that I was giving tracts out to were drug addicts and they were very far gone. And they couldn't read either. But what they did do was this.

I saw it several times. When I'd given them the tract, they'd roll it up, smoke it. Quite a handy way to heroin.

Smoked the Word of God. But of course it wasn't the Word of God at all. It was just a piece of paper.

Said some words about the love of God, but it wasn't the love of God at all. It was a piece of paper. Why would they understand? Why would they understand that God sent his only son into the world to die a heart-rending and painful death for their sake when they've just received a piece of paper they can't read? God didn't do that to us.

God did not send us a message from heaven. He sent us his Son. And I believe that the way in which we start preaching the Gospel is by being Jesus to people.

We may have to say some words at some time. I'm sure we will. But after I'd been in Hong Kong for about four years, I met a big gang leader.

And what he said to me was this. He said, we've been watching you. And he said, many people come.

Many people come to help the underprivileged people in Hong Kong. And he said, it doesn't touch us. Why would it touch us? He said, they still live in their nice houses.

They have their servants and their refrigerators and their air conditioning. So what? He said, it doesn't touch us. They still live there and we still live here.

He says, others of them come and write about us and take our photographs and put us in sociological boxes. Even some of them get famous because of us. But he said, God have mercy, it doesn't touch us.

It has nothing to do with us. And he said, we watched you. And he said, we didn't mind if you were offering rice or noodles, hymn singing or judo.

We didn't mind if you've got needlework classes, a large room or a small room. All we were doing was wanting to see, are you anything to do with us? And he said, we get most people out within six months. Listen to this.

Non-Christians know that they can discourage Christians. They usually give them six months. We live in a fast age, don't we? Most of us want instant success.

The non-Christians gave the Christians six months. And he said, when you've been here four years, we thought maybe you meant what you said. They weren't listening to anything that I said before that.

They were watching to see what I did. If I was anything to do with them. When they beat up my place, when they smashed the windows and painted sewage in the place, what was my reaction? Huh! Huh! I'm a martyr for the Lord.

I'm going back to London because we're going to have nice Bible studies and sit around and discuss verses. I've suffered for the Lord. Not one dinner party in four years, Jesus.

I'm going away. Anyway, it wasn't me who wanted to play ping-pong. I did it for them.

It was my friends who did it, by the way. It was the people I had at the youth club before who smashed it up. My reaction was to close it.

Okay, if they don't want to play ping-pong. If they don't want Jesus, I'm going to wipe the dust off my feet. And the Lord said, No.

You bless those who persecute you and you turn the other cheek and you open the door tomorrow. So I did so, not because I wanted to, but because He told me to. And that, in fact, was the beginning of lovely stuff because we got one of the chief gang members who was sent down to watch me then.

And he was sent down to guard me. And years later I found out why he'd been sent down to guard me. And he was sent by the top 14k leader who was in charge of several thousand men.

And the top 14k leader said to him, and said to the others, you go back and you watch over her. And they said, we cannot. We have offended her.

We have broken up her place. And he said, you go back. And they said, she will not forgive us.

And he said, you go back. She has to. She's a Christian.

The world is watching to see how Christians behave. And when we behave like Jesus, they will believe in Him. It's very simple.

Very simple. Because there are millions who are just waiting to believe. There are millions who are waiting to meet Him.

When we begin to behave like Him, instead of preaching sermons about Him, they will believe. They were hoping it was true. They always were.

And they're longing to see Him. 1 John. 1 John 1. Here's John again.

So excited because he saw God in Jesus. That which was from the beginning which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at, and our hands have touched. Imagine touching Jesus.

John did. I mean, that's how he starts his letter. He's talking about seeing Him and touching Him.

We've looked at and our hands have touched. This we proclaim concerning the Word of Life. He's not preaching doctrine.

He's talking about meeting and touching Jesus who became His life. The life appeared. We have seen it.

We've seen it. And we testify to it. We didn't have to make up doctrine.

We didn't have to go to Bible school even. All we had to do was testify. All we had to do was put down what we saw.

That's being a witness. It's very simple. We were with Him.

When the woman with the back, you know, straightened up, what could that have been like? Did you see the Jesus film? They did it so nicely, didn't they? You didn't see the Jesus film when the woman who had the back all bent for so many years. She straightens up. Did you see in that same film the man who went to wash his eyes? The one who had Jesus put mud pudding in his eyes and then he washed his eyes.

And then all the lights and the rainbows and the glittering on the water when he washed the mud out of his eyes and he could see. That man didn't need to go to Bible school to learn how to testify. I was blind and now I can see.

John's so excited about it. I'm not writing you doctrine, my dear brothers. I'm telling you what I've seen.

This is what I proclaim. He was with the Father and He has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard so that you may also have fellowship with us.

And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. Our joy complete.

Not yours. We write this to make our joy complete. We were joyful when we touched the Lord.

And we were even more joyful when you did too. And when we wrote about it, we got excited all over again. Our joy is complete.

Brothers and sisters, preaching the gospel is good news. It's good news. It's good news.

It's not a system. It's good news. Somebody else was excited in the same way.

It was Peter. Peter with John on that mountain with him. Up the mountain when Jesus began to shine.

I was thinking of that just now when we had that prophecy about the streams. And in the prophecy about the streams, it was talking about all these different backgrounds and things that we enjoy, these streams which all come from the Lord, flowing into this beautiful river which then returns from the Lord. And I was thinking, what a mystery, but that's like Jesus isn't it? How could God have sent God in the form of a man? How could you contain God in a man? I mean, he was walking around like you and me.

I don't know how he could have done that when Moses nearly got blind just seeing his rear view through a crack. Amazing that God bought his life and sent his son to earth in the form of a man who was even broken. That we receiving that life could be reunited with the Father and begin a little bit to comprehend his greatness and his wonder.

And to have our eyes opened so that we're not getting completely blind by the wonder. Amazing. Here's what Peter says when he's remembering how he shone in 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 16.

Peter's simply being a witness. We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We had not gone to a seminar on power evangelism.

We had not learnt how to do the stuff. We did not follow cleverly invented stories or somebody else's doctrine when we told you about the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. We saw him for he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the majestic glory saying, this is my son whom I love.

With him I'm very well pleased. We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. He would never forget what he saw and what he heard.

Brothers and sisters, neither do men in this world ever, ever forget when through you and me they see and hear Jesus. They never forget. They never forget.

And I believe that where we start in preaching the gospel is by understanding how Jesus preached. Not by asking people to meetings. Not by sending paper messages.

But by touching ordinary men and women where they needed touching. And by dying on a cross. For it says in Philippians 2 5 Philippians 2 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God as something to be grasped but made himself nothing taking the very nature of a servant and being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death.

Even death on a cross. And I don't believe that there's going to be a shortcut to preaching the gospel. Tomorrow I'll get on to the signs and wonders and the power of the Holy Spirit.

I wanted to start here because many times Jesus was invited to do miracles by those who wanted to see tricks and he wouldn't. The same as he wouldn't perform for Satan in the desert. Signs and wonders will never convince anyone unless they're with the heart of Christ.

And then of course they'll speak of Jesus. And of course Jesus did many, many, many miracles when he was upon the earth. And they touched men.

Not to believe in the miracles and signs, but to recognize the Savior. And the Lord will give us the power of his Spirit. He'll give us signs and wonders but they're to accompany the Word.

They're not instead of the Word. But the Word is living. The Word is for you and I to be Jesus.

And if we want to reach New Zealand, the world or even our own neighbor, it's going to kill us. It's meant to. It's what it's all about.

Let your attitude be the same as Christ Jesus who did not stand on a platform and have the adulation of thousands of Christians or even appear on television or use any quick method. Let our attitude be the same as Christ Jesus who was above all things and yet humbled himself and became as a man and humbled himself even to death on a cross. And if we're going to reach the man next door, if we're going to reach the person even in our own city whose culture and background is difficult, it is going to kill us.

Thank God who wanted that life anyway. Now, if you're prepared to reach your neighborhood, your city, your area, New Zealand, if you have any heart at all for lost people who don't know Jesus, for oppressed people, for hungry people, for lonely people and sick people, for those who've never had one person saying, it's alright, I'll sit with you. If you care at all, it's going to upset your life.

It really is going to upset your life. It just won't be the same as doing a personal evangelism course on Tuesdays, having your Thursday assignment and fellowship on Sunday. It won't.

It's going to really upset your life. It's meant to. You see, Jesus left heaven.

That's upsetting a life, is it not? His place with the Father and the angels and the singing. Oh, that beautiful place. He left His place with His Father and worse than that, for a while He lost His communication with His Father because He took our sin upon Himself.

Oh, He was upset. Yes, He was upset. That's what giving up your life is.

It's doing the will of God so that men may have life. It's going to kill us to preach the Gospel in this way. And it's meant to and it's what we're asked to do.

Because Jesus said, you're my friends if you do what I tell you to do. He says this in John and in fact what He's just said is that you're to give up your life for one another. It's going to upset your spare room because I hope your spare room is going to be full of people who don't have homes.

It's going to upset your hair washing night. It's going to upset the time you put aside for yourself. Because there's a funny teaching going around that we all have needs and we must look after our needs.

Not in the Bible. Absolutely not in the Bible. Some funny kind of Christian humanism that we have to look after ourselves.

People are always saying, Jackie, look after yourself. It doesn't say you're supposed to do that. It says you're supposed to look to the Lord for everything and He who knows what you need will care for your needs.

And He knows a whole lot better than we do. We think we know what we need. We guard our time, don't we? If I don't have Wednesdays off, I won't be able to survive.

I need my eight hours of sleep. If I don't have my hour quiet time in the morning, I can't survive. Supposing somebody in desperate need needs some of your quiet time.

It is going to upset our lives. Our time and our limits. Well, not badly.

Because you see, He does know what we need a whole lot better. And if we could give up every single one of our rights. I'm longing to see Christians do that.

Every single one of our rights. Lord, I'll preach the gospel as long as I could have a bedroom to myself. Sorry, no minimum.

No minimum qualifications at all. You may not. You may not.

Now, if He thinks you need a single bedroom, He'll give you one. Did He not promise to give you what you needed? We're awfully busy in having little protection structures so we can survive. It makes many more upset Christians, I promise you.

I know nobody else says this. People have been talking to me for years about burnout. Jackie will get burnt out, and they're all burnt out, and I'm still there.

The Lord does know our needs. He gave up His life that they be met in Him. So, if we're going to preach the gospel, we're going to reach the unhappy teenagers down the street.

The angry old woman next door. The bad-tempered caretaker of the school. If we're going to reach that person, we're not quite sure what his or her nationality is.

We don't know quite what they are. But they're not quite like us. If we're going to reach those people, it's going to upset us.

It's going to upset our little patterns. But it's so rewarding. You'll die a thousand deaths.

You'll die a thousand deaths. And He'll go on asking you to die daily. But you'll be able to write things like John did and Peter did.

We saw Him. We touched Him. And other people will be able to write things because they saw you.

She was there when I needed her. We had an old man who was a street sleeper and he was a drunkard. And he drank in that neat spirit.

And we used to give out rice boxes under a particular flyover. I don't know if you call them overpasses. But for a whole year he used to curse at us.

I mean that's all he ever did. It was very bad cursing too. And we just kept on taking rice boxes and blankets and food and saying, can we pray with you? And then he used to scream and curse even more.

But he watched all that time. And what he saw was that his friends got housed. And that his friends got blankets and his friends got off drugs.

And he began to want what his friends had. And now he knows Jesus. But people bothered to keep going.

They kept going and kept going and kept going and kept going and they kept loving him until he couldn't resist. Who could resist? He saw Jesus. For a long time I think he had a horrible suspicion that somebody was trying to get him into a church.

And then he met Jesus. Now of course he is in the church. It's not like he thought at all.

He met Jesus. He saw him and he touched him. Let's stand and let's meet him.

Amen.

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