

# A Reason to Live

by K.P. Yohannan

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*K.P. Yohannan's sermon challenges believers to move beyond self-centered living and embrace a life dedicated to serving others in the name of Christ.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:25, Mark 10:45, Luke 9:23, Romans 12:2, 2 Timothy 3:2

**Topics:** "Purpose in Life", "Selflessness"

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## Description

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes that Christians are called to live for a purpose beyond their own comfort, challenging the self-centered mindset prevalent in today's society. He illustrates this through the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, highlighting the danger of ignoring the needs of others for personal enjoyment. Yohannan warns that the Church has become too focused on self-gratification, forgetting the call to serve and sacrifice for the sake of the Gospel. He urges believers to adopt the mind of Christ, which involves self-denial and a commitment to reaching the lost. Ultimately, he calls for a radical shift in perspective, where life is seen as an opportunity to serve rather than to be served.

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## Transcript

"You are trying to make us feel guilty," the woman protested loudly, interrupting the meeting of one of my staff members who was out sharing about the lost world and the work of the native missionaries. "No," he assured her, "that is not my intent at all, but I believe God has put us here for a reason besides living for ourselves." In my own travels, I often encounter similar situations. People get upset or defensive because they don't want to be disturbed in their comfort, the pursuit of their goals and in living their peaceful lifestyles.

To be confronted with the reality that over 2 billion unreached people will plunge into hell unless they receive a chance to hear the Gospel is irritating, troublesome and uncomfortable to many believers. Why? Because their desire is to enjoy their salvation, families, church fellowships, seminars and conferences without such a painful interruption. When Jesus was telling the story about the rich man and Lazarus the beggar, He illustrated very clearly that the two had nothing to do with each other.

The rich man was in his mansion enjoying the best of life, while the sick beggar was outside the gate hoping for a handout. It wasn't Lazarus' fault that there was no interaction between the two. He had positioned himself strategically at the door where the rich man could see him clearly every time he went in and out of his gate. However, the rich man chose to ignore the beggar for a very calculated reason. If he looked at Lazarus and the dogs licking his sores, he wouldn't be able to enjoy his steak dinner in peace!

What was his sin? He was selfish with his life and with all God had entrusted to him. Similarly, when the apostle Paul described to Timothy why the last days would be so difficult, his number one reason was: "For men will be lovers of themselves" (2 Timothy 3:2). There is no statement that more accurately describes the mindset of our present generation. We are constantly bombarded and counseled to be protective of ourselves, our possessions, our rights and our wants. Everywhere we turn we are told that we deserve the best.

In fact, we are offered self-help books and services on every conceivable subject. What about the Church? It is sad to say that this self-centered mindset has infiltrated much of the Body of Christ, especially in more affluent countries. Our worship, our teaching and our spiritual desires are primarily focused on, "Lord, bless me, give to me and let me enjoy." Whatever happened to the war we are supposed to be in and to the command: "And do not be conformed to this world" (Romans 12:2)?

Jesus taught us that the laws of the kingdom of God are in sharp contrast with the mindset of this world. For example, "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25). We are fooling ourselves if we attempt to practice a Christianity without embracing the cross and death to our own selves. Winning this world for Jesus will never happen until we have the mind of Christ: "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

A few months ago while on the mission field, I met a brother who has a death warrant on his life for preaching the Gospel. He has been imprisoned many times, beaten, stabbed, shot at and on the run for months at a time. Yet he is eager to endure all these things in order to win one more soul to his Savior and King. "My life is nothing," he says. "It all belongs to Jesus." This brother has a wife and children who suffer alongside him--willingly. For them, Jesus is worth it all--the best reason to live.

Having the mind of Christ sets us free from our self-centeredness and enables us to minister to the Lazarus in front of our door! How can we get that mind of Christ? Jesus gave the answer: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). It starts with a deliberate decision to walk away from the mindset of self-preservation and allow the Lord to pour out our lives for the millions who have never before heard the name of Jesus. The tragedy of the modern-day Church is that we have misunderstood obedience as legalism.

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