

Audio ■ Being A Disciple Of Christ

by K.P. Yohannan

This sermon emphasizes the importance of giving up material comforts, wealth, and ease to truly follow Jesus, drawing parallels between worldly possessions and spiritual growth. It challenges listeners to embrace simplicity, sacrifice, and a deeper commitment to Christ, highlighting the need to prioritize spiritual values over material gain. The speaker warns against the dangers of superficiality and the pursuit of wealth, urging a genuine, daily choice to carry the cross and follow Jesus wholeheartedly.

Scripture: Luke 14:33, Matthew 19:21, Mark 8:34, 1 Timothy 6:10, Matthew 6:19

Topics: "Sacrifice", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

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Transcript

Ice coating. When I was driving along, before I knew it, my car began to spin like this, continually. There was no grip.

My tires were not made to drive on smooth surface. No car, no bicycle, nothing moves unless there is tension. It is grip.

It is tension. It is pain. It is rubber hitting the road.

It is smoke. It is wearing and the loss of energy. And that makes you move further.

Please listen to me. There is a direct correlation between physical, material things, comfort, love of money, and ease and smoothness, and all the stuff, senses we live with. There is a direct correlation between that and spirituality to the extent.

Jesus said, unless you give up all, everything you have, you cannot be my disciple. A rich young man came to Christ. He was a just man.

He was obeying all the commandments and explained the whole thing. And Jesus said, you really mean to be mine? He said, yes, I do. Jesus said, go and sell everything you have and give to the poor.

Then come, you will have life. And the Bible says, he was so grieved, so sad, because he could not see something beyond the senses, something beyond his experience here on earth. And he walked away sad.

Being rich, having affluence and money and comfort, two different people's different things. A poor man can be greedy and loving money and comfort and ease in his world as much as a rich man who got lots of money. But the question is, where is your heart? What are you thinking about? You know, it's strange, isn't it? These American charismatic preachers are creating more damage to the church in India and Africa and European countries than anything else in the history of the church, I believe.

You know why? Because these superficial pseudo-preachers, false apostles, they're telling us God's life and meaning you will experience by having lots of money, great health, lots of wonderful things in life, the best and most expensive cars, and the best of clothes. What a phony, plastic, satanic, devilish, hellish teaching. Yet Indians, by millions, are bringing this in and perpetuating it and they're damning their life and the church's life.

Take Christ's life. When he died on the cross, how much property there was to divide among how many people? He just had his shirt. When Jesus sent his disciples to speak on behalf of heaven and the eternal God, he said, oh, by the way, don't take too many things with you, just carry what you are wearing, nothing else.

And when Paul, who was actually born and raised in an extremely rich affluent family, when he came to Christ, he not only lost his wife, she said, you can pick Jesus or me, you can't have both. And he said, Metropolitan, where did you get that from? Well, simple fact, he was a member of the Sanhedrin and you can be a Jewish man, member of the Sanhedrin, if you are not married. So you don't read any more about his wife.

What happened to Thomas? You and I, especially Syrian Christians, we claim our heritage to St. Thomas. Particularly me, because I am from Niranjanam. That's where St. Thomas came and one of the places he preached.

So that makes me a better Christian than you, I guess. You are asked the question, what happened to his wife and kids? The man who wrote more about faith, Apostle Paul, you read about him in 2 Corinthians, he said, the proof of my spirituality, I was hungry, I was naked, I was in shipwreck, I was abandoned, I had no one, I was lonely. And in the end, in prison, asked just about his life to be cut off.

He tells Timothy, oh Timothy, please do come and don't forget to bring my blanket. I'm kind of cold. There's never instruction.

Oh Timothy, by the way, I just got a whole lot of property, some money in the bank, and I have some stuff, material things, and by the way, this is my will, you divide all this and give it to my relatives, or this and that. There's nothing. So what do you think about American pseudo-apostles now preaching to people all over the world, yet living in immorality and all the wicked sins and the charismatic world embracing it, and their lives have been destroyed, and destroying simple people from the tribals and from the communities that do not know anything else.

Now here's what I want to tell you. This is an extreme statement. You can dilute it and apply it to where you want to.

There's no way you're going to understand the life of God here on earth without giving up comforts and ease and material things. Yes, Jesus was not ascetic. Jesus was not a hermit.

He was not sitting on the top of the mountain in a cave, no. But look at his life. He didn't have money to give offering.

He told the disciple, go and catch a fish, you'll find a coin in the mouth of the fish, let's give offering. You find him 40 days fasting and praying, you find him that he was absolutely desperate, hungry. He couldn't even stand up on his own feet.

In John 4, you find him weary, tired, worn out, sitting at the well, waiting for the disciples to bring some chapati and some sabji. In the measure in which you embrace the nicer things in life, your refusal to give up comforts, your refusal to give up luxury, your refusal to give away money out of pain. Giving tent? Any sinner can do that.

There are people who are all outright crooks, who rob people, go to the temples and the churches and give money just to pacify their conscience and hopefully the good they do outweigh the bad they're afraid of, what's going to happen to them. Anybody can do that. But to be a disciple, your life revolves around one simple thing, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, and what his heart longs for, what he lives for, and that is all I want.

Now it is strange and maybe a horrible paradox or a silly thing for me to use in illustration for my life. I don't think it means much. I honestly don't.

Because I'm the Metropolitan of the Church and I have somebody drive my car. Although I don't own the car, just let you know that, by the way. It belongs to the Church.

But maybe instead of telling you a thousand stories from my life, some years ago I had a habit. Not a bad habit. A habit of chewing gum.

You know what a chewing gum is? If you go to America, you'll find people in church and everywhere, even preachers are like a cow. And I think the disease also now we have. In Singapore they restrict that, by the way.

If you chew gum and spit some air, they fine you \$200, I think. But some 30 years ago, I picked up the habit during my studies in the United States. And one day I was thinking about it.

What am I doing? It's like a pack of cigarettes. Chewing gum. And I said to myself one day, you know, each chewing gum represents one gospel tract in terms of its cost.

I must make a choice not to buy gums anymore and give that money to print gospel tracts. Because I knew of stories of people on the way to commit suicide having received one gospel tract. I know one or two people personally that read that gospel tract and gave their life to Christ.

If you don't believe me, go and talk to one of the most respected individuals I have in my life, our Bishop Dr. Narayan Sharma. From a super upper-class Brahmin family. His brother is a professor at the university.

As a young man, he read a portion of scripture, a tract. And that's what led him to give his life to Christ. Now you believe me.

Why would I make an exchange for chewing gum? Do I hate? No, I still chew gum. If somebody gives it to me, I'm not against it. It's not a sin.

Fast forward 100 years. Would you be happier as a follower of Christ to come to the end of your life and sigh your relief. Thank God I gave away my property, my land, my money to serve the Lord.

To understand his heart. And when I see him face to face, I can say, Jesus, I walked on earth giving up all just like you did. And I am yours.

You'll find in scripture when Jesus talked about in the gospel of John chapter 6 to a whole lot of people that want to follow him. Jesus turned to them and said unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no part in me. The next verse.

And they said it is hard, difficult saying how can he say things like that. The next thing. And they decided to leave him.

There is a tendency which is very extremely dangerous right now for people to think. Life and blessings and God is all about how much more money I can get. How much more comfort I can have.

How better clothes I can have. How easy life can be. But I tell you, it is like driving on the glass.

You get nowhere. You spin the wheel and make a lot of noise. But I challenge you in the name of Christ who died on the cross.

Think about ways in which you can exchange your comfort, your money, your position and take less money for what you do for God. And trim down everything. Walk simple.

Embrace simplicity. You don't need fancy things. Nobody cares about you.

Absolutely none. Embrace simplicity. Do it not for you to become spiritual but to be dying to self.

Going farther than the senses. First, how I wish, how I wish more Christians read the church history. The foundation of the church was built on poverty, struggle, simplicity, hunger, thirst, giving up everything, walking into the deserts for months, seeking God, not for anything from him but for God alone.

And they embraced simple lifestyle. And they wanted nothing more. Can we do that? Is there any way to take Jesus serious enough that we can do that? I think we can.

But not majority. A few will. And by the way, God will wipe out the whole earth just to say one family.

He is not worried about 10 million, 1 crore, no. He is only worried about 5 people, 6 people, 1. Will you be that one who will take the terms of discipleship Christ called serious enough to walk away from this visible, stupid plastic world to be more on your knees, to be someone who says I don't need all this stuff. I just want to know him and to be his.

And that involves sacrifice, daily choosing the cross, not for 10 years, not for 20 years, but a daily choice so that in the middle, like I have known lots of Christian workers, full-time Christian workers who began as burning light with all sacrifice and everything they gave up. But along the way, wife and husband and

children and house and cars and comforts and ease and opinions and the whole thing goes down and they dip and they fade out. May God help us.

May God help us to become authentic and not to be superficial. And I know you heard me well. Now my prayer is the Lord take what I said and help you apply whichever way, however he will want to.

But I make my choice to continue the journey. Ask for his grace. Will you stand with me for prayer? Just pause for a few seconds.

I can't tell you what you should do or you shouldn't do, I told these, all what I know with my feeble words, what I felt the Lord wanted me to say for just one person, someone here. You need to hear that, I guess. So my request is that ask the Lord during these few seconds and minutes of silence that he'll give you understanding as to how you can interpret what you heard for your life.

Don't worry about someone else. And some of you will hear him say, you know what, I'm delighted, I'm happy for the choices you made already. Continue walking this.

There's no condemnation, there's no criticism, there's no put down. No. He loves you anyway and he loves you and he will love you till the last, very last second of your life because he wanted to succeed.

But he can't make you. You have to choose. Let's pray.

Lord Jesus, thank you for your word that tells us when we seek after you, when we long for you with all our hearts, we will find you. You are a God who never, never disappoint those who seek you. Lord, none of us are perfect.

I am part of the story. All of us, Lord, we struggle. The enemy of our soul, our life.

Continue to fight and battle with our very life for us to walk away from pain and suffering and the cross. Seeking ways in which to make us comfortable. Forgetting that the road that you walked on, it was paved with pain and anguish and loneliness and suffering, hunger and thirst.

And you did all that for the sake of your Father. And you, you are the one, Jesus, that tells us today, as the Father sent me, so send I you. And I do pray for my brothers and sisters and for our church and all our clergy and missionaries and workers in all levels, in all institutions, oh my God, I pray you help us to come up higher, to see the world and life and time and eternity from your perspective.

Forgive us, oh Lord, forgive me, forgive us, oh Lord, for the callousness and the shallowness the love of materialism and ease that hindered us and crippled us from knowing you the way we ought to know you. So that you can once again be the redeemer, the reconciler in this our generation, through our lives. And thank you for the choices that are being made and already made.

I pray for the power of the Holy Spirit you will give them grace, give them the power to experience reality and I pray, oh God, it will not be the work of the flesh, but rather it is joy, peace and mercy. And thank you for doing all that for us. We say this to you Father, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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