

Following Christ Into the Harvest

by K.P. Yohannan

The call of Christ is to abandon all and completely be His, to live a life of surrender and sacrifice, and to understand the ways of God by embracing the cross and suffering.

Duration: 42:28

Scripture: Psalm 73:25, Matthew 9:37-38, Philippians 1:5, Hebrews 5:8, 1 John 1:6

Topics: "Discipleship", "Sacrificial Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of fully surrendering to Jesus, following His example, and living a life dedicated to God's will. It challenges listeners to consider their commitment to Christ, the temporary nature of life, and the call to embrace the cross. The speaker shares personal stories of sacrifice and dedication to inspire a deeper walk with Jesus and a heart for missions.

Transcript

Well, it's been a few years since I came here, and that dynasty does have some impact. And some of you men who are longing to become more like Jesus, follow me. Yeah, I actually was just trying to figure out about going to Bangladesh.

We had a pastor's conference taking place. I was in India just a few days ago, and it was kind of a little conflict the last minute. But thank God the Lord worked things out.

And I was able to keep my promise to fly back to the States the day before yesterday I got here. So there's a thing called jet lag. So if I go to sleep in the middle of my talking, you will know what happened.

I always had very special and high regard for your senior pastor, Danny. I have known him for a long, long time. And David Carroll and myself, we flew to Florida yesterday.

And did you know that Tampa, they're going to spend a billion dollars to upgrade your airport? I want to come back. I hope they do that soon. I don't know what they're going to do, but it's such a nice airport even today.

But we are talking about Pastor Danny, and, you know, we are saying from the time we knew him, someone who is very down to earth, very real. And, you know, just seeing what God is doing among you. And the life we sense has a lot to do with not just knowledge of a man, but his knowledge of God and his teaching of God's word.

And I so very much appreciate the joy of knowing him and his kindness to allow us to be here and to share with you. And we value this immensely. And I'm grateful.

You know, I don't want to think and say to myself, I'm going to do any in-depth teaching about anything that you have not heard. You've been fed very faithfully and very well. And but the things I want to share with you, hopefully, are some things that are practical, things you can think about and hopefully give you some engagement in this journey in your following the Lord.

And, you know, something about life, I do not know how it is for you. You know, when you cross 50, that is age 50, at least something happens. You all of a sudden looking at the sunset and, you know, things you start thinking differently.

And so you are saying, well, I'm only 40 or 25. Don't worry. You are well on the way before you know it.

Life is so temporary and it is not here forever. And if we can live our life in the light of eternity, you'd be amazed how freed we become from the pull of the dust and of this world. And I want to read one Bible verse for you.

And for you, all I need to just say the reference, you will know what it is. This is in First John, chapter one, verse six. First John, chapter one, verse six.

It says, whoever claims to live in him should or must walk as Jesus did. In the living fire of Christ version, this goes like this. Anyone who says he is a Christian or she is a Christian should live as Jesus did.

It's nothing about they must try. Maybe there's a possibility and this should be, you know, something we should try out. No, it's a very simple, plain statement.

If you say, if I say I belong to Christ, I know him, then I'm asked to live today in my life, home, neighborhood, workplace, wherever I may be as Jesus lived. Would God ask us to do something that we cannot do? I don't think he's unfair to ask us to do something that we can't to make us feel guilty and condemned and stupid and dumb and give up hope. It's a very real invitation.

And sometimes we misunderstand that knowledge is spirituality. That is a classic problem we often deal with. You can know, I mean, we can memorize the whole Bible.

You can be the most brilliant Bible scholar, yet you can be going to hell. That's what happened to Pharisees. Jesus said, you study the Bible, you know everything about, you are brilliant.

And you do missionary work, you cross the oceans. And you convert people, make them twice qualified for hell as you are. The reason he said, the scripture you know, but the scripture talks about me.

And you don't want to follow me. You see the dichotomy? And I am honestly not trying to put you on a guilt trip or tell you something, collect some money and go to the next place. That's not at all my thinking.

But I want to ask you a simple question. Do you know him? Do you know him that deep down in your heart that you can say, I am now walking on earth as Jesus walked on earth. No, I am not saying you can be God and you can be perfect here on earth.

No, that would be new age teaching. That's not what I am telling you. But ten years ago what I was, I am not here today.

And I ask my brothers and sisters to consider this. An older brother some years ago told me, he said, why don't you try this. He said, take a pencil and go through the four gospels.

And mark all the verses about the man Jesus. How he walked on earth. And you and I know this.

Jesus attempted in all things as we are. The lust. The pull of the world.

Longing for approval from other people. Acceptance and honor. And money and riches and gain.

And comfort and ease. Everything you ever go through is a shocking thing. But I humbly would say to you, Jesus faced sexual temptations.

Just as we face. But he never sinned. He lived as perfect man on earth.

God walking in the flesh. And he chose one thing. Even not to say something that the father didn't tell him.

He said, I do nothing of my own. I said nothing of my own. I only do what my father tells me.

What does that mean? This kind of gives us a clue right now. Why with all the knowledge and learning, you and I are not understanding the way of godliness. You see, righteousness is a gift.

We can earn that. It's a gift. But godliness is not.

Now, what am I trying to tell you? Jesus learned obedience through suffering. It says in Hebrews. So what can suffering? Six hours on the cross and the blood and the nails and the abuse and beating? Absolutely not.

In Peter, it says, he suffered for us, leaving this example that we may follow in his footsteps. In that case, to be like Christ, let's find someone to crucify us. And beat us to death.

No, he's talking about lifelong. He chose to say no to himself and embrace the suffering. Dying to self so that he may do and be what his father called him to be.

So I did what I was told. Going through the four gospels, I was astounded, shocked to find the man Jesus. And his invitation, follow me.

As the father sent me, I'm sending you. And I realized that Jesus lived not for himself. And he gave up all his very life.

And therefore, he was able to fulfill the call the father gave him to be on earth. The 33 and a half years. Well, this morning, I heard that on the radio, I mentioned one of the stories from my past.

And this is about when I was barely 17. I left home traveling 2,000 miles to North India. Along with about eight, nine young people learning about discipleship.

And trying to witness to the people. I grew up in a Christian community. And everyone there knew about the name Jesus.

And there was no mystery to that. But when I landed way, way from my home, like 2,000 miles up in north. We would ask people this question.

You heard of Jesus? The most common answer was, you know what, 30 years I've been living in this place. 50 years. There's no one by that name live here.

You go to the next place, you may find him there. And I realized all of a sudden, we are among people that never had a chance to hear the name Christ. And it began to become so real and break my heart.

And learn the agony, the darkness, the despair of people that do not know the Lord. And one of the places some of our young brothers went to witness was very difficult mission field. The name of the place was Boondi.

And we were happy with the seventh team to go there. With an old vehicle, booklets and tracts and Bibles and all that. And before we knew it, we were rounded up by a group of men.

And they would beat us up without any mercy. One brother who was with us, you know, he was a leader of the group. Blood was oozing down from the side of his head from the beating he received.

And all of us, our clothes were torn up. And our Bibles and books and everything was unloaded. And they burned it right in front of us.

And told us, five minutes we give you, leave this place or we will kill you. And of course, you know, we left the place. And some years would go by.

A young brother who finished his Bible training. You know, we have today some 53 Bible training centers, three-year-long training. Afterward, you know, they are asked to pray where the Lord will have them go.

Some 2,000 actually every year go into the mission field. You know, in Burma, in Bhutan, in Sri Lanka and all these nations Pastor Danny mentioned. But in any case, this young brother felt the Lord was calling him to go to this particular mission station.

And when he made that known, the leader said, You know what, you are too young, you are too skinny and it's dangerous. And I don't think this is the right place for you to be. Somebody more mature and able should go there.

He said, but the Lord burdened my heart to go there. Would you please let me go? They said, alright. So he did end up on the mission field, the same place.

And within a few days time, one night, while he was sleeping, some six men came and busted the door open. And he found himself, one man that told Rajput that Tarbanani said, you know, pulled him up like you hold up a chicken and said, young fellow, why are you here? We have our gods and goddesses. We don't need your foreign god.

We can tear you apart like we do with a chicken, but not tonight. You leave this place first thing in the morning. This is not where you want to be.

And they left. He really got scared. I would too.

He went back to the mission station from where he was sent and he reported the whole story, what happened. He said, I'm scared to death. They will kill me.

And they said, well, we told you that could happen. And the senior brother, the elder, said, son, I want to ask you one question. Did Jesus ask you to go to Boondi? He said, I know he did.

My heart was burdened for the people. And he said, son, you go back. They will come back and harass you and give you a little problem and, you know, maybe some difficulties.

There's a small possibility also they'll kill you. But, son, if you must lay down your life, therefore, Christ, who gave his life for you, wait in heaven for us and we will come and see you later. He knelt down.

They prayed for him with tears. He said goodbye like the last goodbye and went back to the mission station. Not a single Christian believer in the community.

They did come back to him and say, why are you here? We told you not to come back. After listening to their threat, their warnings, he responded. You know what? The sooner you do your job, it is better for me.

I will not leave this place. Jesus sent me here. I mean, what do you do with someone who actually want to die and die fast? A year or a couple of years or so, someone goes by.

I get a telephone call here in the United States. Hello. Yeah, it's me.

Brother, we are calling. Can you please come to Boondi? I said, what? That's the last place I want to go in my life. The memory is so raw.

He said, no, no, no, no, no. We just finished the construction of our church. Would you please come and be the one to inaugurate it? Because the story was quite famous that I was beaten up quite bad.

And of course, the following month, I will be traveling and reach there. And, you know, some 120, 130 some adults and children all worship in the Lord Jesus Christ. And I taught through the Bible and Scripture and weeping through the whole thing.

When it was over, this brother said, he is the man who said he carried me like a chicken. And that is his wife and that is his friend. The very people that was the worst enemy of the gospel, now radical followers of Christ.

But here is the question. Amen. But here is the question.

How did that happen? Was it because now he knew all the answers? He had such courage, he mustered up. And he decided he's going to be a martyr and died for a great cause. There was a serious exchange took place deep within him.

That my life is not my own. It doesn't matter. It belongs to him.

If he chooses for me to live forever, fine. Die tomorrow is fine. I don't care.

Unless the seed falls into the ground and dies, it remains as it is. But if it dies, bring forth much fruit. My precious brothers and sisters.

The crisis of modern day evangelical Christianity. It is that we know so much. But we are lost without understanding the ways of God.

And he will never impart his life to us unless we are willing to embrace the cross. Parents are desperate to get their children. Be moral, wonderful, upright young people.

Homeschooling to special teachings and sessions and Sunday schools and what not. But I tell you what, you can do this and a million things more. They will not know the ways of God.

Your life and my life becomes the light, not what we say. Could it be your son and daughter, after 20 years, somebody run into that kid. In the university or somewhere and say, what on earth happened to you? Why are you not worldly? Why you walk as though you are not here on earth? What is it that makes you so pure? So different? And the daughter of you and the son of you will say, you really want to know? And say, you know what, I was 5 years old.

Middle of the night I heard somebody sobbing. It was dark. And the noise was coming from the living room.

And I went there trying to figure this out. And I saw my dad on his face, burying his face in a world map. He was weeping and crying.

And I went to sleep. Later, my mom and dad, we talked about not going to vacation where we planned, but going to Mexico City. And live two weeks among the poor and the naked and the hungry and the destitute.

And serve. Then I saw as a young boy growing up, when as a family we watched television. What was happening in Rwanda, in Bangladesh, in Afghanistan.

Tens of thousands dying overnight in typhoon and calamities and Christian suffering. My father took off from his work to spend 3-4 days in fasting and prayer. And they never said a word to me about anything.

But you know what made me? It was those sobbings, those times I watched my dad and mom live for one thing. Jesus. And like Him.

Please understand me. I am not trying to get anything out of you or make you feel less spiritual. But I am simply telling you.

The call of Christ on your life is to abandon not just half a day of your life. But all and completely to be His. Say not to sin and the world becomes so easy when you fall in love with Him and being His.

And that's the only way to live this life. But when I was reading through these Gospels, I ran into passages that broke my heart. And convicted me of my lack of understanding of His heart.

Such as in the Gospel of John chapter 4. You know the story about the Samaritan woman. He made that long trip just because of one woman that the Father wanted Him to talk to. And He sits there by the well.

Hungry and thirsty and desperate. Just like the disciples. And they go off to buy hamburger and french fries.

That isn't Greek. And they come back. Just picture this like a movie in your mind.

They come back and holding the food in their hand. Simply saying, Rabbi, Master, please eat. Because culturally they couldn't do it unless He eat also.

And then Jesus said, I already ate. And they said, that's a real bummer. What else would He say? Then they said, did someone bring Him food to eat while we were gone on this trip? Then Jesus said, no.

My food is to do the will of Him. Oh no. What on earth is that now? He said He ate.

Now He says He ate God's will. Jesus didn't have classrooms. No.

He taught them to understand God as they walked on earth. And Jesus said, lift up your eyes and see what I see. Lift up your eyes for a minute from your own self-centeredness.

And your dreams and ambitions and your health and wealth and prosperity. And approval and affection of other people. And be known and loved and be secure and protect yourself.

Would you walk away for a minute from your own little world? And see what I see. Don't say four months later. No, the harvest is right now.

In other words, Jesus saying, when you were gone, I talked to this lady. And her face became the window for me to see multitudes like her. Dying and going toward hell forever.

That realization literally destroyed my physical appetite. And then He invites them. Would you go? Again, this is only for you to think.

Not to convince anybody else. When was the last time you spent a day fasting and praying for people you know do not know Jesus? When was the last time you thought about taking a day off from your work so you can go out and talk to people about Jesus? When was the last time you took a day to fast and cry out to God for tens of thousands of beheaded, crucified, brutally murdered in Iraq, in Muslim countries that believe in Christ? Unless you care, will you embrace the pain? Who will, I ask you? I live in a world with these conflicts. I mean, I spent about three, three and a half months of my life in America and Canada and some in Europe.

But basically, my life is in these nations. And I'm so grateful to learn about brothers like the one I just told you. You know, I was in Los Angeles just a couple of months ago in a hotel room and got a telephone call from Bhutan saying, would you please pray and dedicate this church as we are praying for this church.

I said, how many people you got? I mean, you cannot build church buildings in Bhutan. You can't build houses. We got a couple of dozen missionaries that are serving God there, Bhutanese and Indians, who are trained to reach out to the people.

And this brother said, oh, we got 225 baptized believers. And then he said, they're all first generation believers from Buddhist background. I hardly could talk anymore.

I never walked on the streets of Bhutan. But I said to myself, how blessed I am to have been given this privilege to link my life with that dear brother somewhere in Bhutan, climbing those mountains and those valleys, preaching the good news that I am part of his life, praying and helping to get the job done. I encourage you, as time flies by so fast, to please read the Gospels afresh.

Please read the life of Paul who followed him in his footsteps. Read 2 Corinthians and try to figure this out for you. Ask the Lord, give me the grace.

What you must do in this journey that you will know that you are living for him. We are six boys in my home. That is back in southern part of India.

I grew up in a Syrian Orthodox family. My father went to be with the Lord much earlier, in 1974. As I was growing up, as a tiny little boy, I used to watch my mother.

It was a normal daily thing. She would be up at 3 in the morning or earlier. She would go to the middle of the house and put the mat on the floor.

She would be sitting there with her head covering and pray for the next 2-3 hours. I didn't know what was going on. As I was growing up, I would hear the statement that she would often repeat to herself like she was crazy.

Whom have I in heaven but you? And oh Lord, on earth I deserve nothing and no one beside you. I didn't know where that came from. But later I learned it is in Psalm 73 verse 25.

She knew the Lord so intimately. She was kind of 4 feet 6 inches tall. Very fragile and such incredible bright eyes and a face.

She was weird. She lived in a village, never left the community as such. But she knew him.

The only thing I ever saw her reading was only the Bible. She had nothing else to read, I guess. When I finished my high school, I remember.

She led me to the Lord when I was 8 years old. When I finished my high school, I told my parents if they allowed me, I would like to go and serve the Lord with this mission organization. Before I could finish my sentence, my mother was sitting on the bench by the dining table.

She jumped up and said, go, you must go. And I said, oh no. I was an accident.

She hated me. No, I didn't know this. No one knew.

She prayed that one of her six boys would go and serve God. And one by one they went into farming and business and all that. And I was the last one, skinny, withdrawn, shy.

You won't believe it. And she kind of gave up hope. And that's when she decided she would fast every Friday until God answered her prayer.

Three and a half years, every Friday, my mother fasted for one prayer request. Call one of my sons to serve you. And the day when I told that, she knew God answered her prayer.

And she never made this known to me or anyone. 1990 August, I was on the way to Seoul, Korea from the United States to speak at a conference. When I reached Bombay, I heard my mother was taken ill.

She was 84 years old. Had she ever been sick, I can think of. And that weekend, you know, I canceled my trip and went down south.

That weekend my mother passed away. The saddest day of my entire life on earth, I imagine. And the funeral takes place.

And all six of us, you know, my brothers, we met to talk about our mother. And according to our culture, you know, they're fairly well-to-do people. We gave her whatever she wanted.

I mean, the farm, everything. I mean, whatever. Nobody asked any question what to do with the money.

And all of us figured there must be a whole lot of money somewhere in the bank that she hid away. Because we never saw her spending any money. So asking this question, one of my brothers said, would anybody know where the bank is, how much money she left? Anybody know about it? And my older brother pulled out a notebook and held it up.

He said, I found this under the pillow of our mother's bed. And he turned the pages, pages after pages. He said, the pages are filled with scribbles of our mother's handwriting.

Names of so many studying in Bible schools, many on the mission field. Against each name, the amount of money she was sending them every month. She never told this to anyone.

I broke down weeping. Not because there was no money in the bank. See, what happened, two years prior to her going home to be with the Lord, I was visiting my village and saw my mother.

I got mad at her. I was so angry, you wouldn't believe it. I said, Mother, what madness got into your head? Don't you care about your sons? You're putting cow dung on our head and shame on our face.

You know why? She was wearing old cloth that torn and she stitched by her own hand. And in our community, it's a shame culture. When people think we don't take care of our mother, that's the worst thing to happen to us.

And I was so furious, she listened to all my anger and threat. This incredible smile and the bright eyes, she said, My little son, you don't understand nothing. Someday you will.

It was as though she walked back to the room and put her arms around me and whispering in my ear, My little boy, now you understand. I could have purchased a new dress every month if I wanted. But my son, I saw something beyond my little life.

Her last wish, she left for us, her sons. When I'm dead and gone, the only thing I will leave behind is my earrings, my wedding ring, and the gold chain my husband gave me when he married me at the age of 19. I want you to sell these items and give the money to preach the gospel among people that never heard my Jesus name.

I want to meet them also in heaven. Do you think my mother, now sitting with my Jesus, saying, Oh man, I wish I spent money on myself and took care of myself and didn't pray like that and didn't fast. I don't think so.

We're living in a world with 2 billion people that wait to hear Jesus name for the first time. You are blessed and blessed and blessed beyond you can imagine how much more stuff you need before your heart break. And say enough is enough.

And repent and change and embrace the cross. What does that mean for you? I don't know. But for me, you can have the whole wide world.

All I want is Him. When I see Him, all I want for Him to say, You've walked as I walked. And nothing else I want.

When life comes to an end, will there be regrets? And you wish you could live all again? The Holy Spirit came to take the things of Christ and show Him to you. The real Christ, not the American Christ. And I pray that you will make your life decisions, your friendship and the music and the money you spend.

Where do you go? In the light of the fact that nothing here is permanent. And He longs for you. And long for Him.

And one more thing I encourage people to do, as Pastor Danny said, If the Lord have you to go to Bhutan, Burma, India, anywhere, please do. But most of you may never end up in some of these countries. Like I don't live in Laos and Cambodia, although we have churches there now, by God's grace.

And I encourage you, if the Lord speaks to your heart, there's one other thing you want to do as a practical thing. Pick up this card and sign up and get some of these brothers and sisters that you can pray for and link your life. And it's just about \$30 a month you share until they plant a church and become self-supporting.

And again, it's not just the money. But my mother still lives through the lives of so many on the mission field. And I think she must be dancing all the time in heaven.

Because with the angels, they are screaming and shouting when every time somebody repents. And we have tens of thousands that come to know Christ on a weekly basis. And churches planted.

May the Lord bless you and guide you and bless this church and the pastors. We are blessed immensely for the privilege of knowing you and walking in this pilgrimage. May the Lord bless us.

Be seated just for a moment. And look, there's no need to leave now. Come on.

You leave now to go get that, just so you can get a first seat at the restaurant. What a godless thing to do at this moment. Would you bow with me just for a moment? I feel certain that the Lord has used Brother KP to speak to many of us.

You know, people go to church every week and don't know Jesus. They know about Jesus perhaps, but they don't know Jesus. And it could be you.

This morning in this church meeting. You've never really repented. This means to turn.

You've never really received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. And you need to do that. And you'd like to do that right now as we're bowed.

Holy Spirit drawing you. Jesus said, nobody comes to me unless the Father draws him. And that's what the Holy Spirit does.

He draws us. He's drawing you right now and you'd like to repent. You'd like to turn from going your way.

You'd like to receive Jesus Christ. Why don't you do that right now? I'll lead you in the prayer. You're praying the prayer.

You pray it to Him. You can pray it from your heart. He hears you.

Just say, Dear Lord Jesus, Thank you for dying on the cross for my sin. Forgive me. Come into my life.

I receive you as my Lord and Savior. Now help me to live for you the rest of this life. Head still bowed just for a moment.

You prayed that prayer. You need to tell somebody. Jesus said, You confess me before men.

I'll confess you before my Father. You deny me and I'll deny you. You don't have another Christian in your life.

You can tell that you prayed that prayer. Come down and meet one of our prayer team right after the service and tell them. You're here.

You're a Christian. You don't doubt your salvation. But the Holy Spirit has spoken to you about a fresh commitment.

About making a full commitment to Jesus Christ. Maybe you've become half-hearted. Maybe you've become lukewarm.

You're a Christian. You'd like to make a fresh commitment. And as a Christian, all of us say to the Lord, Lord, we want You to lead us.

And if You make clear You're leading, we want to follow You wherever. Do whatever. Lord Jesus, as so many make that fresh commitment, thrust forth laborers into the harvest field.

Truly it's white unto harvest. So thank You, Lord, for those who I believe by faith You have saved in these moments. Thank You, Lord, for those who are saved and have made a fresh commitment.

And now may the kingdom be furthered and our lives enriched because we said no to self and yes to You. And Lord, we know from Your words that's how we find true life. Thank You for that tremendous truth.

In Jesus' name, amen. Now don't leave. Just one more thing, and then we're going to sing this little song.

We didn't plan this, but we've got a class starting this Tuesday. It's called Hidden in the Open. I didn't name it.

Our Missions guys did it, and they had a reason for it. But it's all about missions, not only around the world, but locally here. And it's a great, timely thing that this would begin this Tuesday night.

And if you'd like to sign up, you can do it on the iPads or you can go online and do that. It begins this Tuesday evening. And I hope you'll take advantage of it.

Please, please, please, on your way out, don't forget the card you'll get as you sponsor one of these pastors. You'll get a picture with information on them and their family. You'll be able to pray for them regularly, daily.

And we'll become partners. I mean, what a great thing. Paul said to the Philippian church, thank God for your partnership in the Gospel.

They never went where Paul went, physically, geographically, but they went spiritually because they supported his ministry. So, what a great opportunity. Thank KP and David and the rest.

Thank you. Thank you guys for coming. Let's stand.

Prayer team making their way forward. And as they do, let's sing this to the Lord. O to Jesus I surrender all
To Him I freely give I will ever love and trust Him in His presence daily live I surrender all I surrender all All
to Thee my blessed Savior I surrender all Sing I surrender all one last time.

I surrender all Lord I surrender all All to Thee my blessed Savior I surrender all Amen. Prayer counselors
will be up front. Have an incredible week.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/2yuQFnNFqAE.mp4>

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