

Following Jesus the Man

by K.P. Yohannan

K.P. Yohannan's sermon emphasizes the paradox of Jesus as the servant king and the importance of humility and obedience in the Christian faith.

Duration: 23:33

Scripture: Matthew 5:14, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 11:28-29, Matthew 23:13-33, Philippians 2:5-8

Topics: "Following Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his experiences with people who have obtained PhDs in theology and criticizes their arrogance, pride, deceit, and hunger for power and money. He emphasizes the importance of finding people who are like Christ and embody humility. The sermon then focuses on the final act of Jesus' journey towards Jerusalem, highlighting his choice to ride on a donkey as a symbol of embracing nothingness and giving up everything. The speaker also discusses the pain and agony Jesus must have felt as he watched the sinful actions of mankind, emphasizing the need for redemption.

Transcript

We think about worship, it's important we do that. And it's quite interesting, in the beginning of the Church, the Church Jesus began, if someone wanted to know in a few words, it is the Orthodox faith or Church. All other churches split off and grew worldwide later.

And the early Church Fathers, I suspect from the Apostles, they learned and began to give visible interpretations or godly traditions in worship. And so turning to the East and having the worship with the people, all people, for example the priest is not different from the people, he is part of the people of God. And a lot of beautiful things when you understand the reality of God and how us human beings with a limited understanding how we worship.

For example, if you were here when the service began, I came out and I just paused and looked at the empty cross. And I said to myself, Jesus died on the cross, he is not on the cross now, he is on the throne. And I see the cross as a way, like a window, I look through the cross and see the one who is on the throne and all the angels and archangels and I am instantly brought to soberness that I am here for him and worship him.

And those things make huge significance. But coming to today's our lesson, in the calendar of our church, in the lectionary, it is the what? Anybody remember? The servant, king. It is kind of two words, servant and

king.

They don't mix, it is like oxymoron, it just doesn't make sense. It is a paradox, it is opposite. How do you put this together? Kings will have a lot of servants.

But here is the king who is the servant. That is what the subject. And again, I ask myself every time I prepare to teach God's word or read the Bible, I ask myself why? The question why is very, very important.

Pharisees memorized the Bible, they studied, they had all the answers absolutely perfect. They were brilliant. But Jesus condemned them all to hell.

So we ask the question, why did they do all that? 4000 years, Christ, the second person in Holy Trinity, wait. I mean, if the Bible says, you know, whatever, it is absolute truth. There is no variation, there is no interpretation.

Genesis chapter 1, he is the one who said, let there be, it happened. He is the one who created man. Colossians talks about it.

So here is the creator, now having made man, and he fell away. And now his heart is broken. You know, just the other day I was reading about something about recent people committed suicide.

And people even killed people. I mean, even recently there was a newspaper article, some guy stabbed a young girl to death on the street. And the reason was, he wanted her to marry him, and the girl didn't like him.

And she said, please leave me alone. In the end, he got so frustrated, the only thing he could do was to stab her to death. And all kinds of stupid things people do.

Why? Because there is something inside snaps, emotions, that is so beyond their ability to control. Can you just imagine Jesus having made mankind watching what is happening? Like we read in the Old Testament, which is not really a full story of mankind. Can you imagine him sitting in heaven and watching? Not a billion miles away, because his presence, God is everywhere, not in everything.

And his proximity, his closeness to us is closer than you, to yourself. And he watches parents taking their newborn babies and throwing into the oven to please a goddess. Human sacrifice.

And then this happened, and a million other things. I can imagine his emotions, and his pain and agony. My creation, made in my image, what Satan has done.

And he wants to do something so desperate to stop it, but he can't. Because the Father says, not yet. So it says, at the appointed time, when the Father said, Son, it is time to go.

Absolute obedient as servant. As a matter of fact, the Old Testament passage talks about the prophetic passage of the servant. You know, the highest evidence, form of spirituality is humility.

And the highest expression of humility is absolute obedience to God and to what he says. So, at the appointed time, we read this incredibly beautiful verse. Lord, I come to do thy will, as it is written of me in the books.

So now he comes, and how he is born. The greatest event that ever happened in the history of mankind. It is the coming of Christ.

For what? They want to make him king and all kind of weird things happen. You know the stories in the gospels. Jesus said, no, I came for one purpose, to seek and to save.

What? That which was lost. And how? From Adam, till the end of time. The redemption of mankind from past, present and future will be the eternal sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

For that purpose, he came. For example, I left the Aravena this morning with a purpose. To come here to be with you.

That's the reason he came. He refused everything that was offered to him. And it says, he kept his eyes like a flint toward Jerusalem.

He had no other purpose. Only one thing, the cross. And Mary, the mother of God, recognized that.

If you read that, the Christmas story. But here is the thing. Now he waits 33 years.

30 years rather. Before he would go public. So, here is my imagination.

Did Jesus talk to his father from the beginning? The first, his landing here on earth? I suspect he did. Because the fellowship, the communion was never broken. So, I get a headache.

This morning I woke up at 3 o'clock in the morning, for some mysterious reason, with a headache. And, yeah, you are right, I prayed. This is one of those times God heard my prayer.

Sometimes it doesn't work, so I take aspirin. So, how many times do you think Jesus would have said, Father, now I am living in the flesh. I can see the pain in the eyes of the widows and the orphans.

And the cruelty, the meanness, the abuse and the killing. I can see it. I can see the result of addictions.

And I can't bear it. Can I go to the cross and end it all? And change it? Do I think Jesus prayed like that? Or, was there an earnestness, desperateness in him, and the feeling, just something needs to be done to fix this problem. And he knew what to do.

But he had to wait. Now, another 30 years go by, and then the father says, Okay, it's time. And the three and a half years now remains before him.

Now, you know, there are people with a dual personality. They are normal sometimes. Other times, they are weird.

When you look at Jesus, the man, you are looking at a perfect man in every sense. To the extent, he says, he faced every temptation we face. At the same time, he is perfect God.

Only by his choice, he laid aside his powers. I mean, the disciples said one time, You know what, these people are crazy. Why don't they call some fire from heaven and just kill them all? And Jesus said, Yeah, I can do that very easily.

Anytime he could walk back into eternity and sit on the throne. He didn't have to go to the cross. Being God, he could do that.

But he submits himself to the father, learning obedience, and then, finally, it is like the Olympics, the marathon. It is like the finish line. The redemption of the world, everything has to do with the cross.

And the Eucharist speaks of that. And his death, his burial, and his resurrection. And he did that.

Then he went back to heaven, trusting his body. Those handful of people, and those that will become part of his body, to represent him, and communicate this message. So that salvation and redemptive work of God will be not for them alone, but through them to all.

That's the reason why Paul says, I bear in my body the dying of Christ. It's a present continuous tense. And I fulfill the suffering of Christ that now is left for me to do.

Things like that. You know, the price is paid in full, but the delivery charge, as someone said, taking this message, the delivery charge is on us. This is the reason why the Jesuits would leave their homeland and come to Nepal.

And then the first missionaries ever come there, and one by one, they're faced with huge opposition, difficulties, cold weather, not enough clothes and food, and writes back to Pope about the difficulties, and the Pope would write back to them and say, I sent you out with a one-way ticket. You are not coming home. And all of them died, giving their life in Nepal.

The delivery charge. That you find about all the apostles of Christ. Thomas, Saint Thomas, who came here.

From here he went to Chennai, and those people in Chennai killed him. You didn't. But the reason I'm saying that to you, how do we experience the suffering of Christ, His burial, His resurrection, and we become His people, the little Christ.

When the disciples said, oh, he just wants to see the Father, that's all. He said, you don't understand. If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.

And the instruction is, I'm sending you as the Father sent me. So when people see us, yesterday we were at the IJU service, we were talking about Dr. Ma, we were talking about this. I said, the sad thing about my life journey experience with a lot of people who got their PhDs in theology, and all the theological degrees, some of them are the worst creatures I ever found.

The arrogance, the pride, and the deceits, and the hunger for power and money. And I said, what we want so bad is people who are like Christ. Well, the final act of this drama begins with the passages in Luke.

You read that. You heard it. We read from Philippians chapter 2, and all these passages.

This morning I was reading that, just so that I'll get this into my own system. How was it? Well, Jesus is moving toward Jerusalem. And the final act begins with his choosing a donkey as his car.

Everything you see about him, you don't have to agonize over it. It's one of embracing nothingness. Giving up continually all.

And finally, he has nothing else to offer except his own body. Holding on to nothing. That's what we read in the book of Philippians.

Not very many things Jesus talked about himself, but one thing he said about him in Matthew's gospel chapter, say in Matthew 11, he said, I can tell you, come and learn of me, become like me, for I am humble and lowly in heart. And so, if you and I should be authentic, honest followers of Christ, and carry the redemptive work as the light of the world, as Paul talked about himself, my gospel, that it's no more an outside reality, it is me, I am Christ. If that must be, the only way to do that is to walk the door of humility every single day.

Now, that's a big subject. Mother Teresa said something quite interesting. Of course, you know, she's, I'm sure, sitting in the right hand of the Lord.

And I wrote this little quote in my Bible. Mother Teresa said, I am convinced that when I am gone, if God finds a person more ignorant and useless than I, he will do greater things to that person because it is his, capital H, his doing. If God can find someone more ignorant, and useless.

But here's the thing. What is humility? You know, Lucifer was not the devil, you know that. Lucifer was the greatest, the most beautiful, most powerful creation of almighty God.

But Lucifer became Satan. You say, he committed sin. True, but it's more deeper than that.

Sin was the result of something far more sinister and dangerous. In my book, Touching Godliness, I describe that quite well. What was it? It is pride.

It is in his heart, he said, I am better. In his heart, he said, I am the one who will command to all these billions of angels and they follow my instruction. I am gifted.

And he looked in the mirror and he said, I'm the most beautiful creature in the whole universe. I'm the best. He didn't say that to anyone.

He said that to himself. Andrew Murray said this, if somebody is truly humble, they themselves do not know this and they don't even talk about it. They'll be consumed with others.

Now, I'm not trying to preach theology and trying to interpret anything more than what I'm saying as human beings. God's command for everyone is embrace humility. Because whether you are a Christian or not, whether you know God or not, whatever, even if you're an atheist, I'm telling you, God seems to have a special favor toward people, those who are humble.

And why he would choose Ruth to be the great-great-grandmother of Jesus, God? Why he would choose Rahab, a prostitute? Why he would pick these disciples? They were not theologians. I mean, there were theological seminaries all over there. He went to some of the worst people.

That's the reason Paul says to the Corinthians, just keep in mind, not very many of you were great, powerful people. God chose the nobodies. But when nobodies become somebody by God's grace, they begin to think, ah, it was always in me.

Now the opportunity came and I am able to show who I am. I cannot help you and you cannot help me. These are things that you only can know about you.

But God does too. So, as we walk into this holy week, may I encourage you to find a donkey? May I encourage you to find some way to demonstrate to yourself that you are following the broken one, the humble one. And that gives you the ability to suffer.

And unless we are able to deal with pain, which is represented in the cross, we will give up. We all will. But then the answer to the world, to our country, to all countries, the world is the cross.

And the cross can never become a reality unless we embrace the meaning of it. Philippians chapter 2.

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