

I Made You for Eternity

by K.P. Yohannan

K.P. Yohannan's sermon calls believers to recognize their role in global missions and the urgency of sharing the Gospel with those who are lost.

Duration: 43:19

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Mark 16:15, Luke 10:2, John 3:16, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 2:9, 1 Corinthians 13:12

Topics: "Eternity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by discussing the importance of missionaries sharing their experiences with the body of Christ. He emphasizes the need for encouragement and challenges listeners to deepen their relationship with God. The speaker then references a passage from the Gospel of John, highlighting the significance of understanding and seeing what God is doing in the world. He urges the audience to have a mindset that goes beyond simply observing global tragedies, but to consider how they can make a difference in the lives of others. The sermon concludes with a powerful story of a missionary encountering a desperate woman and the impact of sharing the gospel with her.

Transcript

For me, this is a very special day to be here, and Pastor Mark and the elders, brothers and sisters, I thank you for inviting me to come to this church. And we travelled by train to this place yesterday. And the first time I travelled by tube, not yesterday, but in London.

I never knew what tube was, now I understand what it is. And I look forward to coming back here again in the future. We have quite a lot of God's people, good people, that are part of our ministry in reaching the lost, especially in many of these Asian nations.

And you are part of that. So in some ways, my coming here is to report to you what God is doing through your prayers and your partnership. It should make you happy.

In the book of Acts, we find as missionaries are sent out and helped, once in a while they come back and share with the body of Christ what God is doing. So I hope the things I will share with you somehow will encourage you also as much as challenge you to some extent to do more and to walk with the Lord closer. I am careful to speak slow.

My native language causes me to speak very, very fast. So I tell myself, go slow, otherwise they will not know what you are talking about. And anyone has difficulty understanding my English? Good, thanks, thanks.

I am glad Brian is here, who represents our work here in the UK. Also, Reverend Wendell Latham is here also, a Canadian director, because he is part of the board here in the UK. So he also flew in and we all are happy to be here.

Would you turn your Bibles to the Gospel of John, the passage we read? Just want to briefly look at this. As you turn your Bibles to this passage, let us keep in mind for our today's discussion that Bible is a very practical book. As a matter of fact, Bible is given to us not for us to gain a lot of knowledge and understand all the doctrines, although they are wonderful, but it is for us to live by.

And Jesus picked up twelve disciples, training them for three and a half years, and then he would leave them to go and change the world. And Thomas, one of Christ's disciples, came to India in AD 52, preaching the Gospel and planting seven churches. Would you believe if I told you that one of the churches he planted happened to be three kilometres from where I was born and raised in a tiny community in the extreme southern part of India.

In America I tell people that makes me a better Christian. But it was such a privilege for me to be born in a Christian home, where at the age of eight my mother led me to the Lord, explaining what it means to follow him. And Jesus didn't have a seminary or college setting teaching his disciples, but rather as they walked with him, ate with him, they walked around and saw normal things happening in life, he took that which was tangible, understandable, and then used those things to teach them about eternal values.

For example, you are driving on the road and somebody cut in in front of you and jammed the brake, and you just almost bashed into them and you say, hopefully you are not using a curse word then. But you are tempted, then the Holy Spirit reminds you, well it was kind of a test I was giving to see if you are growing to have the patience and forgiveness, and to learn the Lord is in control. You see, this is how God always leads us.

And the same thing happens in this passage. You know the famous story of the Samaritan woman. Jesus had to go to Samaria just for her sake and those people.

But then, he is sitting at the well, talking to this woman, and the disciples have gone off to buy fish and chips. It's not quite like that. That kind of tells you, I like fish and chips.

One of the reasons I come to England. But obviously Christ was very hungry, so were the disciples. And when they came back and said, Master, please eat.

That's what you read in verse 31. Meanwhile his disciples urged him, Rabbi, eat something. But he said to them, I have food to eat that you know nothing about.

Now, just stop for a second. That's confusing, no? I mean, they went through all this trouble to buy food and then came back. You can just imagine they are holding the food in their hands and say, Jesus, would you please eat? I mean, according to the culture and custom, he should start eating first so they can also get their food.

But then he said, I have food. In other words, I already ate. So they are confused.

Then he said, did someone bring him something to eat in verse 33? And verse 34, Jesus said, you don't understand. My food is to do the will of him and finish his work. Don't you think it's confusing? He was hungry.

They brought food. He said he ate. Then they said, who brought him food? He said, no, my food is to eat and be satisfied with my father.

You don't need Greek and Hebrew to understand that. It's confusing to me. But then he is taking that which is tangible and explaining to them something eternal.

He said, lift up your eyes and see the field. They are white for harvest. While the disciples went off to buy food, Jesus now happens to have this conversation with this woman who didn't know the father's love and she was on the way to eternity to perish without knowing God.

And that encounter destroyed his appetite. He had no more hunger. And he says, if you understand what I understand, if you can see what I see, you will know what is happening.

And my brothers and sisters, I would ask you to think about it. When you read the newspaper about what is going on in Iraq, or in Sri Lanka, or India, or Bangladesh, a typhoon that wipe out over 100,000 people overnight, or 30,000 children becomes homeless and helpless through tsunami, or whatever else happens, I pray that we will have the same kind of mindset that when we see these things, it will not be just, oh man, look at these people again killing each other, what is wrong with them? No. If you belong to Christ and you are a child of God, you are not supposed to be thinking like somebody else.

But you see something that nobody else can see. That is the reality of people in the light of eternity and how lost they are, how much they are in desperate need. I remember just a few years ago, I was sitting in my office in Dallas, in our mission office, and my wife Gisela came by and handed this letter to me and said, you want to read this letter.

And I started reading this letter. This is a letter that came from one of our Indian missionaries in Northern India. And I was sitting on my comfortable chair reading this letter.

By the time I finished reading it, I was no more sitting on my chair, I was on my knees weeping. And I'm sure you're wondering what or not was in the letter. I'll tell you.

When he writes this letter, there was a celebration going on by river Ganges in Haridwar in North India. Now, river Ganges, I do not know if you ever heard about this river. Hindus believe, God sent this river and to find forgiveness of sins, at least once in your lifetime, you must go into the river and wash yourself.

Now, if you want to know the river Ganges and the waters of this river, I can tell you like this, the most polluted, dirty, stinking, rotten water on earth. Tens of thousands of bodies are cremated and they're dumped into these waters. Often in the morning time you'll find dead body just floating, people just dumped it.

They believe that's a way of salvation. I've been there, I lived there. And this missionary, this particular week, he was witnessing 35 million people having come from all over the land, going into the rivers for holy bath.

And he writes in the letter, that evening when he was coming home, after all day's work of distributing gospel tracts, witnessing and sharing about Christ, he saw a young woman sitting by the bank of the river, weeping uncontrollably and pounding upon a chest. Knowing this is a very serious problem, whatever she was dealing with, he writes in the letter, he went to her and asked, what happened to you? Why are you so desperate? Why are you crying like this? Then he writes, she responded saying, you see, we are very poor people. My husband is ill, he's sick, he can't work anymore.

And my sins are so many that nobody knows about. To find forgiveness for my sins and solution to the problems of my home, I have given the best offering I can give to Goddess Ganges. And she said, my only child, my six month old baby boy, I just threw him into the river.

Paragraph, he writes, I sat beside her and explained to her, but your sins are forgiven two thousand years ago. Jesus died for you. All you have to do is just to believe.

God loves you. He didn't make you poor. He is not your enemy.

As he explained the gospel to her, finally she wiped her tears and looked straight into his eyes and said these words, why didn't you come to me half hour sooner? I didn't have to kill my child. It is too late, isn't it? It is too late. And she went back crying again.

That is not an exceptional isolated story or event. There are some two billion people live in our generation heading toward eternity that never heard the content of salvation, the Christmas story. Yes, they heard Jesus name here and there, maybe some of these people, but they did not know what it means like you and I know.

I remember way back in the days I was studying in seminary and pastoring a church in the United States some thirty years ago. One time the Lord gripped my heart and said to me, Son, half of the world have never seen one page of the Bible. Look at your library, over seven most expensive leather bound Bibles sitting on your shelves.

Books that you purchased that you may never read, but don't you care? And Jesus is asking his disciples, He says, I am not here to train you up and brainwash you and make you a brilliant Pharisee with PhD and all the understanding and theology. I am here to tell you, Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. And this one woman, her lostness became the window for Christ to see not just one face, but multitudes.

And I hope this morning, and I prayed early morning hours and said, Lord, as my brothers and sisters see my face, hear my strange accent, they will remember, not just me, they will remember over a billion people in the land of India, over a billion Muslims, Afghanistan with nineteen million people without one known church in the entire country. It is estimated less than two thousand secret believers may be in that country. Some five hundred thousand villages in India alone without a church.

And I said, Lord, please don't let them forget this. It is not about me, but it is about you. But Jesus said, the harvest is now.

I grew up in a home where my people are rice farmers. When the harvest time comes, I saw my parents and my brothers and my relatives in America they call it acting like the chicken with the head cut off. You know what that means? Oh, good.

That means you are not taking a vacation to Grand Canyon. You are not going to see beautiful countryside and have a leisure time. No, it is panic.

Harvest, you know why? You let it go for three weeks, the monsoon, the rain will come and the entire harvest will be destroyed. And someone said, harvest is a fixed time. You cannot say, when all my problems are settled, I will go and do this.

When my kids grow up and be well off, I will think about mission field and do something about it. When I have more time, then I will maybe think about praying half hour, an hour about the people that do not know Christ. When my retirement schemes, everything is so settled that I am secure, then I will think about what I can do for God.

And then there is a million things you can add to that list. But, think about it. This is not, it is not about rice and beans and corns.

It is about people. I don't know how many of you know this. In that part of the world, some 80,000 people die every single day and plunge into eternity without knowing the Jesus that you know, that I know.

And this is why we must respond to harvest with urgency. Well, you know, one of the most amazing things taking place today is the Dalits outcry, out of pain and desperation in the land of India. You know who the Dalits are? They are the untouchables.

Many of you know that. Especially English people should know that. In India, about, you know, close to 300 million people, the population comes under the thing called untouchables or caste Dalits.

And these people are, they are treated less than human beings in value by the upper caste. Among some of those people, 90% illiteracy, abuse rejected, poor, forsaken. And you know what's happening during the last 10 years or so? All over the country, the leaders of these people are saying out loud, we are sick and tired of Hindu caste system.

We are getting out of it. Many of them are going to Buddhism and Islamism, but the greatest majority are saying, Christian faith is our only hope. You know what that means? If Martin Luther's reformation was significant, it's nothing compared to what we are looking at.

Some people estimate, I did not know this is absolutely the way it is going to be, but possibly, if we respond correctly, we may have no less than 100 million people may turn to the Lord Jesus Christ. But what does that mean? It means, Jesus said, look at this, he's telling the disciples, others have done the hard work and you are given a free ride. It's all yours.

Go for it. That is the privilege the Lord gives us. You know, Bhutan is a very small country, Buddhist country, but a close country.

It is illegal to be anything else other than being a Buddhist in the country. You can't have a church in the country. We have missionaries trained in India from Bhutan and we send them back.

And I think we have 16 or some fellowships or churches that meet in homes. I don't think I will ever go and live in Bhutan. Personally, I've never been there myself.

Many of our leaders and our missionaries go there. We have a Bible college that trains workers for Bhutan. Just recently, when I was in Delhi, I heard one of the most amazing stories about what happened

among one people group.

One of our missionaries heard about a group of people living three, four days away from where he was. They never had the gospel preached among them. So he and his co-workers carried the little projector and the Life of Jesus, a film that is made in India, and literature and whatever they could.

And they walked and walked and walked and finally got to the place to discover the entire community was controlled by one man who was a witch doctor. Tremendous evil powers he had. And finally, people, everyone, looked to him like their God.

And some people began to teach that he actually is God. Sent by the Gods to be among them. How dark, how hopeless, how desperate.

And our missionary and his co-workers, they set up the film and put up a white bed sheet and start showing the Life of Christ. And a lot of people came. But, a miracle.

That witch doctor and his family showed up. Sat through the whole thing. And saw Christ being crucified and buried and resurrected and all the amazing story of the gospel.

And when the invitation was given, 54 people came forward, including the witch doctor. And they were baptized publicly. The first church to be born in a community.

A few days later, our missionary was arrested and put in jail for doing what he did. But, with some suffering and difficulties, the Lord spared his life. But here is the thing.

Someday, when I get to heaven, I wonder, how many people from Bhutan will I be able to meet that I may be able to hear things like this. KP, oh so nice to see you. I said, what do you mean? Do I know you? Yeah, you know us.

I'll tell you the story. You remember you went to England and you were at this church that you talked about the beautiful building and all these things. And you talked about harvest and helping missionaries and praying for them and being unselfish and all these different things.

And you know, it so happened, there are few people in the congregation decided to become unselfish and fast and pray and give their resources and send some missionaries. And couple of those missionaries they supported, prayed for, happened to come to our community. And they told us about Jesus.

They taught us about the ways of God. And we came to Christ. The church was born.

Our kids grew up knowing Christ. We sent them to Bible college. And they came to be missionaries.

And the word began to go forth. And then they might remind me, you forgot. Now we see things as though through dark glass.

Then we know all things as they are. What a day that is going to be. So, I said to myself, as Christ spoke here, Lord, those brothers in Bhutan are laying down their life and paying the price and seeing thousands hear the gospel.

And Lord, I never been there. I never went to live there. But thank you for the privilege you gave me to have a part in the harvest.

I remember some of our missionaries sharing the gospel in Rajasthan, known as the graveyard of missions. They were preaching and distributing gospel tracts and Bible portions. And a man in his late 50s picked up a little gospel tract in Hindi language.

He was an upper caste Brahmin. The story is that he was running away from his home to an isolated place to commit suicide, kill himself. He had cancer in his body and he lost all hope.

Not to bring shame to his family, he was running away to end his life. It was on the way, he got this little booklet, started reading it on the street. First time about the Lord Jesus Christ who loves him and died for him and alive and cares for him and all this wonderful story.

At the end of the booklet there is a prayer he could pray asking Jesus to come into his life. There on the street the man prayed that prayer and gave his life to Christ. Such peace came upon him.

He felt something happened to him. He didn't kill himself. He went back home and went to the hospital and said, Doctor, I don't know what it is but something about it that I feel OK.

All of a sudden I have the energy, I am doing well. Would you give me another check-up and see if anything happened? They said, Well, there is nothing we can tell you. Everything we have done, we could do, we did for you, there is nothing more to do.

He said, But please, would you? And they checked him up, down, everywhere possible. They said, Whatever happened, we don't know. You were sick, dying, but there is nothing wrong with you now.

He pulled out the booklet he had in his pocket and said, Doc, this did it. They thought his screws are loose. With the address on the back of the booklet, he travelled to Kota, the mission station and tells our brothers there at that time what happened to him.

They explained the gospel to him and this man began to cry and said, Now I know, this Jesus is my God. Then he said, I am the landlord in my community, would he just come and make all my people Christians? He had no clue how this thing worked. A couple of missionaries went with him, preached the gospel, dozens of people came to Christ, baptized and the church was born and the man spent his money and resources to build the first church in the community.

But let me ask you, how did that all start? With one little gospel tract that cost less money than what I pay for a chewing gum. This is very interesting. I was looking to see if anybody is chewing gum here.

You go to America, almost every congregation you will find, somebody is doing this. I am so glad you don't do that here. But the chewing gum cost just a few pennies, but a gospel tract cost a penny.

What a difference it makes when you and I begin to look at our time, our resources, our pennies, what we spend, how we live and conduct ourselves in the light of eternity and how much we can make a difference for others if only we start thinking like this. There is a verse in the book of Jeremiah. It is a very sad verse, but it is a very thought provoking verse.

The harvest is past and the summer has ended. But we are not saved. The harvest is taking place.

The Dalits who are crying out for freedom in one place a few months ago, 800 adults got baptized one week. All those who came to Christ as they were able to hear the gospel through the little children that we had embraced what we call the bridge of hope centers. We have some 50,000 children, 49,000 plus

children scattered throughout this nation Nepal.

Children of the Dalits, the untouchables where we teach them and train them and feed them and clothe them and more than anything else, share with them about the love of Christ. And they go and tell their parents. And their parents hear the gospel during the weekend when we meet with them.

And what an incredible event that is taking place right in front of our eyes in terms of people coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ. You know, we are one of the many missions seeking to reach the lost. But so happened that we as a mission, Gospel for Asia, in a very unique place.

You know, India was one of those nations that where William Carey came and Amy Carmichael and thousands of missionaries from England and western nations and if you come to India, many places you'll find the graves, the inscription, the names of these missionaries and their wives, their children, Hudson Taylor and Jetson, so many people like that. And they lay down their lives and their children died there, preaching the gospel, giving everything they had. And what God has done out of their life and sacrifice, church came up.

But then as the Second World War came to an end, country after country, they refused to let foreigners to come to be missionaries for preaching the gospel and planting churches. But you know what? Who can stop our God? God, in his incredible wisdom, began to raise up men and women in these nations with the same passion William Carey had, same passion the disciples had, same passion of Christ himself through the Holy Spirit, saying that we will go. But they happened to be from places where they are poor.

They don't have the resources. This is where, as we read in 2 Corinthians, those who have blessed with our compulsion and force and guilt trip and manipulation, they joyfully choose to share their resources with those who don't have. And it is our privilege.

It is our awesome privilege. And I remember after reading the letter that my wife gave, on my knees, I prayed a simple prayer. Lord, I surrender my life and all that I have and everything I know that I am to you, Lord, that I may never again read another letter like this.

And my brothers and sisters, you live in this country and the Lord knows where you are and what you have and how long you live on earth and all these things, but I urge you to consider something that might help as you make decisions. I went to Germany in 1973 December and spent a little time before going on to the United States. I grew up in India and going to school, always loved fountain pen.

You know what a fountain pen is? Real men use fountain pen. Real ink that you put in the barrel and write. But this ballpoint little pens you write and throw it away.

I never liked it. So one of my weaknesses is that I like fountain pens. So when I went to Germany I found out one of the best writing pen in the world is Mont Blanc.

That crazy thing costs lots of money. But I bought one. I got one for myself.

Now couple of years later I am sitting in Dallas, Texas in my own private study one afternoon writing with my Mont Blanc expensive fountain pen. Strange thing happened. It was as though the Lord gently spoke to my heart and said, son, I said, yes 100 years from now who is going to use this pen? I said, what? My pen? He said, oh I was asking 365 US dollars that one pen cost.

100 years from now I didn't want to give it up. But now I knew what he was saying. Half of the world go to bed with empty stomach and naked bodies.

I hold on to my life so dearly. My books, my clothes, my ambitions, my plans and dreams. But the Lord is saying, son I made you for eternity not for time.

Don't waste it. Walk away from all this superficial things. I didn't throw my pen away and he didn't ask me to.

If I did I would have done it. I did a lot of things, most stupid things that people think I am really crazy. The Lord told me walk away from it and I did.

But I ask you today how many more years you have left here on earth? Add 100 years to your present age who cares what other people think about you? How you look? What car you drive? How much money you have in the bank? Your life is his. And he longs, longs for you to be his so he can touch the lost world and bring them to him. If that be the case I encourage you to think about the most incredible opportunity the Lord has given to you and given to me right now in this generation to see multiplied millions of people come to Christ in India, in China in Bhutan and Burma and Cambodia and these nations where you and I may not be able to go and live there yet according to Romans 10 it says all those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved absolute.

They only need to say Jesus save us. And by the way every single day our missionaries now see more than 10 churches planted among people that never had a church before. That's a miracle.

But the Bible says but how can they call upon him in whom they have not believed and how can they believe unless they hear about him. Then it says how can they hear without a missionary, a preacher going. The last question how can they go unless someone send them.

So, doing God's work there are two things. One, people need to go. If God calls you to go you please go.

Don't think about riding the two the rest of your life here. But I imagine most of you will never pick up your bag and go somewhere in these nations. But here is the opportunity.

Even though you are here you can absolutely have the privilege to be a sender of brothers and sisters reaching these nations with the gospel. And if that be the case I want to make just a few applications and conclude before Brian comes and take a few minutes to explain about material books and stuff here. One, consider taking a day of the week for fasting and prayer.

For physical reasons you may not be able to. Don't worry about it. The Lord understand.

But you are praying and why don't you think about adding another half hour to your daily prayer time. Not praying, bless my child, bless my grandchild, bless my hair and my nose. No.

Pray for some people, groups, some need, some opportunity and use television, news magazines and information you hear. Make it prayer letter. And start praying for the lost world.

Even here make the list of ten people that do not know Christ. Your relatives, your neighbors, people who you work with, your friends. And daily pray over them that they will come to know Christ.

You'll be surprised what God can do when you pray. I recommend just one day for fasting for the lost world. And I tell people, you will not die.

But if you die, you let me know. I'll reimburse it. It's the most amazing thing to say no to our flesh and die to self for his sake.

Second application. You know, I'm not here to tell you what house you must live in and the car you must drive and clothes you must wear. This is nobody's business.

The Lord can direct your life. But this much I can tell you. I have no right to live the way I want to live.

In the light of the suffering and the dying millions around me in my generation. I must be sober minded. Ask the Lord to guide you about how you must spend your resources.

If you really need to buy the stuff and do the thing, whatever. And by the way, God still speaks when you talk to him. Listen, he will.

Number three. Ask the Lord what he will have you do with your life to serve him. Maybe you are old enough that you are going to pack your suitcase and go somewhere.

But you got a son, you got a daughter, you got a grandson, granddaughter, children. Why don't you pray that the Lord will call at least one from your family to serve the Lord. My mother prayed three and a half years every Friday fasting that one of her six boys will become a missionary.

She never told this to anyone. And I am the product. If the Lord is calling you to serve.

I know Brian, our UK leader is looking for people to come and join his staff. You say, what kind of people you need? Your kind of people? Any kind. God has a servant heart.

We will take you. And talk to us about that. And the final application.

I am here to tell you that there are 8,000 brothers and sisters now in our 54 Bible colleges in these 10 nations. After three years of excellent training, they are sent out to mission fields. Every year some 2,000 graduates go to the mission field in these places.

And what we are asking for is, would you please pray for some of these missionaries and help them. You say, Brother KP, what does that mean? Well, when you go out after the service, there is a table out there. There is a little card with a green color like that.

And what we are asking you to do, if you would do this as the Lord directs you, decide to sponsor one or more of these native missionaries from India, or Nepal, or Bangladesh, any of these places. And what do you mean sponsor? Well, one, you pray for them. Secondly, you send about 20 pounds a month until they plant a church and become self-supporting.

And when you fill this card, all the details are on here. When you fill this card and give it to us or send it to us, whatever, we actually give you the real photograph profile of that missionary or missionaries and you are the sender of that missionary. You say, 20 pounds a month can help a missionary to pay rent and have his food and take care of his children and preach the gospel.

Well, no. One or two other people join with you. It takes sometimes 60 pounds, 90 pounds, sometimes over 100 pounds because some missionaries got more children than I have.

I have two. Some of them got five, six. The Lord bless them, I guess.

But, we want to see them taken care of. And your support of the 20 pounds along with somebody else, that missionary is able to do the work. And within a short time, they plant a church, become self-supporting, then you don't have to give the money anymore.

You can support somebody else. And so with the children that we are dealing with. And as you do this, you can take home with you today.

Right, Brian? You can take home with you today your missionaries. What a deal! And you can start praying for them. It is not by compulsion or force, but ask the Lord to give you the peace to do that.

And by the way, when you give your money, every penny you give, all of it go to the mission field for the purpose you gave. We don't take one penny out of that. For our home office or overhead, we trust God to provide our needs through other sources, other than taking percentage from the missionary support and the children's support.

But, as I close, and I say this to you, may the Lord guide you and lead you to understand Him and know His heart. And may you listen to Him as He speaks. And may He give you the grace to obey and follow Him.

And may His name be glorified. And I thank you for listening close. Amen.

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