

Living as Jesus Did

by K.P. Yohannan

The sermon calls believers to live as Jesus did, embracing humility, prayer, and a heart for the lost.

Duration: 38:37

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, Matthew 5:14, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 25:35-36, John 1:4, 2 Corinthians 4:7, 1 John 2:6

Topics: "Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of responding to the needs and opportunities around us. He contrasts a pragmatic mindset that relies on resources and human effort with the example of Jesus, who spent time in prayer and sought the Father's guidance. The speaker urges listeners to live their lives in light of eternity and to prioritize their relationship with God through fasting, prayer, contemplation, and meditation. He also highlights the issue of child labor in India and calls for a response to the suffering in the world.

Transcript

It's always fun to celebrate as a family, isn't it? And to recognize what God is doing in our lives. Great morning. Well, we have a wonderful guest, servant of God, to share the word of God with us this morning.

It's K.P. Yohannan, the founder and director of Gospel for Asia. K.P. was born in India, and in 1978, he and his wife were called of God to begin the ministry known as Gospel for Asia, which God has used to reach millions across South Asia. K.P. is a prolific author and writer, and some of his books are available in our lobby.

You may want to stop by and see what's there and learn a little more of their ministry and what God is doing. Brother K.P., we want to welcome you here to open the word of God this morning, and we thank you for coming, spending the weekend with us. Let me pray for you.

Father, I thank you for my brother. I thank you that you have called him by your grace before the foundation of the world to walk in holiness before you and to serve you. We thank you for his ministry.

We pray that this morning as he opens your word, we would hear your challenge through his words. This I pray in Christ's name, amen. I do want to mention that if you'd please stop by the table back there, we have a few books.

One is called Revolution World Missions. It's almost three million copies in print in a dozen languages. It'll be a huge blessing for you to see what the Lord is doing, and I get hundreds and hundreds of emails, people testifying how the book kind of helped to change their thinking and their life.

How many of you have seen the movie Slumdog Millionaire? Would you raise your hand? Wow, amazing. Canadians are watching movies all the time. But you know, when I saw that movie, I just couldn't help but weep continually, and if you didn't see the movie, please do get a copy and watch that.

In India alone, there are 62 million child laborers, and the newspaper reported in Bombay and Calcutta, in both cities, well over 100,000 children in each city that live on the streets not knowing who their parents are. And that movie talks about this guy who goes and harvests children from the streets and turning them into beggars. And one story in that movie is how he take chloroform and knock out this little boy, six or seven-year-old boy, and take boiling oil and pour it into his eyes and blinds him and turns him into a beggar to collect money.

And I wish it was a fairy tale, but it happens. And by the grace of God, the mission that I am part of, we so far are able to rescue some 60,000 children and giving them education, take care of their food and clothes, and 500 centers we have established. Mostly, these are children from the Dalit backgrounds.

And this book talks about the incredible change taking place and the stories that will, I know people produce 50,000 copies of this within one month, all the books were gone. I think they produced another 100,000 copies and I heard that is also going away. And we got a book called Touching Godliness, which I think we ran out of.

You can go to our website and get it. There's another book, Road to Reality. And one of the famous Canadian pastor, Erwin Lutzer, wrote the foreword to this book.

And it's kind of a strong book. I reckon you get these books, by the way, it costs little money to get these books and you can go and get them. And even if you don't have any money, I give you the permission to steal all the books from there.

Because I don't get nothing out of these books anyway. So, and when you get convicted, you can repent later. But it's really for you to take away, even if you don't have money.

Whatever money you give, it all goes to the Lord's work. Then we have a little brochure, Can You Die to Yourself for One Year? School or discipleship from our ministry, the US headquarters of Gospel for Asia. It's in Dallas, Texas.

We are over 100 families actually are on the staff. And our invitation is, in any given year, we have, you know, every batch, we have some 25, 30 young people come and spend one year with us. Part of the time they go overseas.

And the idea is to have the time to impact their lives so that they will have a whole new perspective for the rest of their life. And the success rate is 100% now. And so if you have kids you want to get rid of, please get this.

And young people, this is a unique opportunity for you. School or discipleship from our ministry. You understand my English? Thank you, that makes me happy.

You know, I went to the United States in 1974. And for the first two weeks, no matter what I said, they said, can you repeat what you said? What did you say? And in the end, somebody who was in seminary with me, Richard Schaefer from Pennsylvania said, oh, KP, just don't worry about it. You speak English and they speak Texan.

That kind of helped me immensely. But I want to talk to you in the next few minutes about how our life we must live in our following the Lord. The reference, scripture references from 1 John 2, verse six.

1 John 2, verse six. Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. In the living Bible, fire phrased version, it goes like this.

Anyone who says he's a Christian should live as Christ did. Jesus is not someone that we try to explain and explain and dissect and figure out, but he's someone we must experience. Knowing theology and spiritual realities and all about what it means to be a godly person is not the answer, that's a means.

But the call, the challenge is for us to live as he lived. Now, the question is, is this possible? Would God ask us to do something that we can't do? You know, it's quite interesting that Bible verse, one of the brothers who got baptized this morning, he said his favorite Bible verse, Psalm 119, verse 105. Thy word, your word is the light to my path.

Under the old covenant, the law was the light for the people, but under the new covenant, Jesus is the light. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And then Jesus tells you and me, you are the light of the world.

The word became flesh, and now you and I are supposed to live in this earthen vessel just as Jesus the man lived on earth, reflecting the life of the father. Now, that sounds so nice and spiritual, but I tell you, my biggest crisis is not that I don't know this, but my problem is myself. When I was in California some years ago, a lady came to me asking me for prayer.

And I said, what can I pray for you about? Can you please tell me? She said, well, I do have a demon of smoke sitting inside me. Would you lay your hand and cast the demon out? I never had anybody ask me something like that in my life. So I said, dear lady, I can cast out demons, but not your flesh, that I can't do.

See, we blame the poor devil for everything under the sun. I'm tempted and devil did this, and the devil says, what are you talking about? I have no clue about what you're talking about. I didn't make you do that, you chose this yourself.

And so in our pursuit to know the Lord and be like him, as it says in Romans 8, 29, what is predestination? What is it my father want from me? That I may be conformed, change into the likeness of his dear son. Second Corinthians 3, 18. The mirror, the word of God, I look into it.

By the way, this morning when you woke up and looked in the mirror, did you see my face? Thank God that you are in trouble. You saw your face, but it says in the scripture, when you look into the mirror, you actually see the face of Christ and the Holy Spirit that changes you and me into the image that we see in the mirror, the word of God. But the problem is not that we don't know, it's problems we don't see Jesus in the world.

It is not that we don't know the answers, it is that our self-centeredness becomes the biggest hindrance. In 1 Peter 2, verse 21, he suffered for us, leaving this example that we may follow in his footsteps. That is not

the blood, the nail, and the brutal agony on the cross.

No, it was him dying daily, saying not to himself. An older brother some years ago said to me, KP, I give you a recommendation. Take your pencil, go to the four gospels and read, and underline the man Jesus.

I love him, I worship him, he is my God. But now this senior brother tells me, you need to find Jesus, the man, because he lived on earth the way we must live. He faced every temptation we face, including sexual temptation.

He never sinned. He lived by the power of the Holy Spirit. And now he tells me I must live as he lived.

And so I began to do this. I was shocked to find the man Jesus, the one who was tired and weary and worn out and hungry and thirsty, sitting by the well that you read in John's gospel, chapter four, and the disciples goes off to buy hamburger and french fries. And they come back and see him talking to this strange woman.

They said, what is he doing? He's not supposed to do something like that. But anyway, he's the boss, so they didn't talk much about that. They said, master, please eat.

And Jesus said, I already ate. In America, you say, man, that's a real bummer. We did all this thing and brought it, and he says he already ate.

And they say, did someone bring him something to eat? Jesus said, no, my food is to do the will of him that sent me and finish his work. Now, that is more complicated. He was hungry, he ate, now he ate God's will.

Then he says, you don't understand. You say four months and then comes the harvest. I say to you, lift up your eyes from your own tiny world of self-centeredness.

Your wife, your children, your health and well-being and knowledge and education, experience the happiness of a vacation, and whatever else you are talking about, just for a minute, look away and see what I see. It is not four months away, it is now. What he's talking about, when you were gone to buy the food, I ended up talking to this woman, living in sin without the Father's love, and her face became a window for me to see the multitudes like her dying and plunging into eternity without the Father's love, and that realization killed my very appetite.

I just can't eat and drink. I, becoming more like my Lord, I ask myself, every single day, I must say, I have a long way to go. I must repent.

And cry out for mercy. I ask you, not to put you on a guilt trip or condemnation or any kind of trip, no, that's not it. I just ask you as a brother in Christ, in this pilgrimage, when was the last time your heart was so broken over 2% of the entire city of yours that ever go to any church? That you decided to fast and pray for a week? When was the last time when you heard about Afghanistan or Bangladesh or some place where multiplied millions live without ever hearing the name Christ? 180,000 die every single day and plunge into eternity having never heard the name of our Lord.

When was the last time that broke your heart that you decided that you will spend a day or the week in fasting and prayer? Or you decided that you said no to the vacation, no to that material thing that you are dreaming about, no to bunch of things that you're dreaming about and embrace simplicity and pain and

agony. When was the last time you said, I refuse to buy more books and more DVDs and CDs and all this stuff, half of the world that never heard the name Jesus, going to bed with empty stomach and naked bodies. Enough is enough and I choose the way of suffering which nobody imposes on you.

And my dear brothers and sisters, someone like me who spent eight years on the streets of North India and Bangladesh and Indonesia and all that before going to the United States to study theology, how can I forget the times I wept on the streets looking at people that I lost? How can I forget all night long praying with others every first Friday of the month? How can I forget the times I was beaten up and abused for preaching the gospel? How can I forget the millions in the slums living in such suffering and pain? But now having entered into seminary for my higher education, called to pastor Southern Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, enough financial resources coming from my in-laws from Germany, I found myself changing without me even knowing. Preaching several times a week, getting my education. Now it takes me sometimes half hour to figure out what color coordination I must have for my clothing.

I read the book Color Me Beautiful. Some of you men look like you're lost, ask your wife. Some 70 most expensive silk neckties from Europe and suits that I'm ashamed to mention the kind of money I was paying even for Neiman Marcus to buy those clothes.

Any watch not good enough, but must be the most expensive one. Library with books that I may not necessarily read, but it's so great. And in two and a half years of my life like that, all of a sudden I realized I'm no more the person I was.

The world thought I was the best thing. My seminary professors thought I was the best thing, but inside me, I was dying. I couldn't cry anymore.

Oh yeah, being a Baptist minister, I talked about missions and prayer and going and giving. I mean, you talk about, I did all that. And finally, in the mercy of God, the Lord opened my eyes and I remember one day sitting in my study and looking at expensive leather bound Bibles stacked up.

And the Lord said, son, half of the world go to bed with empty stomach and naked bodies. They have never seen one page of the Bible. What are you doing with your life? No, it was not guilt and condemnation to us.

All of a sudden, with all those years behind me now, I'm getting used to a whole different Christianity. It's all about me anymore. And that was 35 years ago.

And I said, Lord, please take eternity and stamp on my eyes. Somebody else's prayer I just borrowed and it worked. It is beautiful.

And so when we look around the need around us and all this stuff goes on, how do we respond to it? Two ways we can do that. One, you can say, man, this is a massive opportunity and challenge, and then we have the resources. We have the money and the budget and the people.

Just do it, get it done. Pragmatic mindset. Moved by needs and opportunities, or as Jesus did the man, spend all night on his face crying out to his father.

Father, I just need to pick a handful of men to continue the journey when I'm gone. What do you want me to do? And the father said, go to the seashores, find those people that nobody wants. They are real creeps.

He never questioned. He picks Peter and John, the one who said, kill everybody. John 17 tells us in his prayer, Father, I pray for these that you have given me.

And all night prayer. Parents, you want to see your children's life revolutionized, turned around, and they are radical followers of Christ to change the world? Church like this will do brilliance because they teach God's word, but the possibility is if you, instead of spending money to find more trinkets, be on your face day and night without telling them, crying out to God on their behalf, and walk with humility and brokenness and simplicity, that will change because your life becomes the light, not your teaching. Please, you should understand me.

I am not angry, upset, I don't have any agendas. I just cry out to you because this been my journey and still learning. 4,000 years, he waited in heaven, watching the whole world in such darkness until the father said, son, go.

Then 30 years, he must watch the creation of his hands in such mess until the father says, now you go. So Christ says, I do nothing of my own. I have plenty of agendas.

I want to rush to Lazarus' home and heal him. I want to do a lot of things, but I can't. I only do what he tells me.

I want to say a lot of things, but I can't. I only say what he tells me. I didn't come here to be the king, no.

I came here to lay down my life and that's it. Is this possible for us to enter into this life of experience beyond knowledge? Knowledge to make our life happy and wonderful here and take us to heaven finally? Is it possible to live as Christ lived? I believe it is possible. Jesus only had 12 disciples and one went crazy, you know that, so he had 11.

And one of those disciples, Thomas, St. Thomas came to India in AD 52, preaching the gospel. What all sacrifice he made, family, home, wealth, future, security, everything, what all he can only imagine. And he came to India, this most primitive lost community.

And he preached the gospel planting seven churches and one of the church happened to be three kilometers from where I was born and raised. That should make me a better Christian, I think. But what caused him to do that? Following in the footsteps of the pastor, dying to self, not holding on to life.

The seed falls into the ground and dies and bring forth much fruit. Please, would you listen to me? Until you come to the place where you embrace the cross and say not to yourself, you say, but KP, in India and China and Bhutan and Burma and Afghanistan, I understand that. They know to suffer and all this, you know what? The best of suffering and the cross is what we choose.

The answer to the world and all we see is not more, it is less. I had this awesome privilege to grow up in a home where my parents knew the Lord. We are known as St. Thomas Orthodox Christians.

As a tiny boy growing up in my home, the memory of my mother particularly, she would wake up early morning hours, sometime three in the morning. She'd leave the room and go to the other room where we had a family prayer and I watched her. I didn't understand what was going on.

I watched her. She would sit on the mat on the floor like this and she will have the shawl, the head covering and she would be praying sometime three hours, four hours and it was quite confusing as a little

boy but then I got older. I would hear her repeat this statement all the time.

Whom have I in heaven but you, oh Lord and on earth I deserve no one and nothing beside you. I didn't know what she was talking about but later I learned that is in the book of Psalm 73 verse 25. When I finished my high school, I remember telling my parents, father and mother, if they would let me, I'd like to go and serve the Lord.

Before I could finish my attendance, my mother who was sitting on the bench jumped up and said, go. I said, uh-oh, that was an accident. She hates me.

No, after two years of my life in North, I went back home to see my parents and my mother said, I want to tell you a story that you don't know and she was cooking in the kitchen and she said, sit down there and I sat down. She said, you remember the day you came and said you'd like to go and serve Christ? Mother, I remember that. She said, son, you don't know the rest of the story.

I have six boys. I said, mother, I know. You are the youngest.

I said, I know that also. She said, all my life I prayed that one of my sons will serve Christ but one by one, your brother has been into farming and business and all that. I kind of gave up hope but then you were growing up timid, shy and withdrawn.

I lost my hope completely completely and that's when I decided to fast and pray. She said, for three and a half years, every Friday, complete fast. My mother prayed, before I die, Jesus, call one of my sons to serve you and the day you said you want to do that, I knew the Lord answered my prayer.

In 1990, I was on the way to Seoul, Korea to speak at a conference. When I reached Bombay, I heard my mother, at the age of 84, she was taken ill. She'd never been sick, that's what I know of.

You know, hardly five feet tall, small frame, very fragile but incredibly bright eyes and the smile on her face. My father passed away a little earlier. So hearing that news, I canceled my trip and went down south and that weekend, my mother passed away.

Possibly the saddest days of my life. Funeral take place and we, the brothers, met in a room to talk about our mother before I would go back to the United States. During our private discussion about our mother, one of my brother asked the question, anybody know how much money our mother left in the bank? The reason was her sons gave her anything she wanted, whatever, but we never saw her spending any money so we all figured out it all must be stashed up somewhere in a bank and she will have a will made up what to do with all that.

You had to understand our culture to see how this thing worked. I have no time to explain that. But in any case, one of my brother, responding to the question, pulled out this little notebook and said, I found this under the pillow of our mother's bed.

And I was terribly curious. We were all sitting in circle in the room and he opened it up and he said, you wouldn't believe this, pages after pages of scribbings of our mother, names of people studying in Bible schools on the mission field and the money she was sending written down against each name. And I broke down and began to weep.

No, not because there was no money in the bank. Because two years prior to my mother passing away, I remember visiting my home and I got mad at my mother. She was wearing the blouse, he called it, torn from here to here, hand-stitched, really a bad Mickey Mouse job.

And I was so angry because we come from what he called a shame culture. I said, mother, what badness caught in your, are you mad or something? You're putting shame and cowardness on our face, mother. The whole world will think we don't take care of you, mother.

You have money to buy whatever you want. Why you do things like this to us? And she smiled, looked at me and said, you little boy understand nothing. Someday you will understand.

No, she never left our community. She never studied philosophy, theology. A little village woman.

But she loved him. More than life and anyone or anything. And now, sitting in the room, it was as though she walked back into the room, put her arms around me, saying, my little son, now you understand.

I could have purchased a brand new dress every month if I chose to do it. I didn't have to spend days and hours on my knees. But I saw something that others didn't see.

Son, it's worth serving him and loving him. The last thing she left with us when I'm dead and gone, the only thing I 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 wanted to sell these items and give the money to preach the gospel among people that never heard Jesus' name.

I want to meet them also in heaven. I can assure you, she didn't do what she did because she had all the theology and philosophy and mission challenges in a mission conference. No.

She had this alone journey with the Lord. There was a strange look in her eyes. Sometimes I said, she's really not here, she's somewhere else.

Colossians chapter three, she understood that. I must conclude. One of the questions Jesus asked me 34 years ago, sitting in my comfortable study, writing with my Montblanc fountain pen that cost \$600.

Son, who is going to use this pen 100 years from now? I literally looked at the pen holding it up. It was not guilt or condemnation. He was simply asking me to follow him.

So I leave you with this question. 100 years from now, what does this matter? The reputation you are seeking, the honor, the recognition, the security, the money, the accounts and all this stuff that we are running after. I plead with you and I beg of you, live your life, make your decisions in the light of eternity, and that is how Jesus lived on earth.

Four simple applications. One, think about taking one day of the week for fasting and prayer. Average Christians in this culture spend less than eight minutes a day in prayer.

No wonder we do not know God. Learn contemplation, learn meditation, learn to be with him. If you fast one day of the week and you die, you please let me know.

Ask him, he'll give you grace. Second, I'm convinced the worst enemy of godliness, hindrance, it is comfort, ease, materialism and all that. Learn to embrace simplicity.

Thirty-four years ago when I made that choice, I said I will keep two jackets and a few pieces of clothes. Do I look bad? Nobody really cares how you look, by the way. Fashions will come and go.

Hey, please don't interpret it wrong. I have friends who are multimillionaires who have Mercedes Benz and BMWs, and BMWs, but they walk with the Lord intimately and they're changing the world. So I'm not dictating to you about the house and cars and clothes.

Please don't do that to anyone nor to yourself. But you must follow him as he directs you. And one of the key is simple lifestyle.

Third, some of you the Lord have been talking to you about walking away from everything you are familiar with and job and comfort. And some of you, sisters, you need to give up that job to stay home and to pray and agonize and raise those children. Give up those ambitions and go to the mission field somewhere the Lord has been calling you to go.

If you can go, even for a shorter period of time, whatever, obey him. There's not much time left. Finally, people like us cry out to you even though you cannot go and live in Bhutan or in China or India or Sri Lanka or Bangladesh.

You can pray, get the book Operation World and then help financially and prayerfully people who are willing to go. And may the Lord help us to once again walk here on earth as our Lord walked. Amen.

Amen. I ask you to stand with me for closing prayer. Brothers and sisters, we've heard from a man of God and the time has come for us to become quiet before the Lord and do business with him.

If you need to stay after the service and kneel at the altar, you come and you do that. Spend some time with God and you simply ask God to give direction to your life. Some of us need to make some changes today because of what we've heard.

And don't leave this place without doing that. You need to do it. Heavenly Father, we are thankful for the time that we have spent in this place.

We are overwhelmed with your presence. We know, Heavenly Father, that you have called us to walk as Jesus walked. And Heavenly Father, how quickly we forget and become involved in a life that has nothing to do with the life of Jesus.

Lord, today, in this very hour, we repent. And we wanna say, Lord, however you call us to walk, we will obey. Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.

Heavenly Father, come, speak to your people. Oh, Heavenly Father, help us not to, on the final day, be ashamed in your presence, but rather have us lift our head high and say, Lord, for all that I abandoned for the sake of the cross, it was but nothing. For what I have received in return has so overwhelmed my soul.

Heavenly Father, the riches of knowing you and the riches of being found among the people of God are more than enough. Heavenly Father, we are also ashamed that we live in a city, in a world, where so many have not heard of Christ. Oh, Heavenly Father, how could our hearts be cold? How could they be cold? Oh, Holy Spirit, come and renew our hearts so that we might find a holy passion around these things.

Oh, Heavenly Father, I pray that we would not leave this place the same. You have sent your servant here to speak to us the very heart of God. Oh, Lord God, speak then, for we hear.

In Jesus' name and for his glory, amen. Please remember the poor and the needy on the way out the door. The ushers are waiting for your benevolent offering.

God bless you.

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