

No Regrets

by K.P. Yohannan

K.P. Yohannan's sermon challenges Christians to reflect on their lives, act on their convictions, and make a meaningful difference for God's glory.

Duration: 24:56

Scripture: Matthew 6:19, Matthew 7:15, Matthew 16:24, Luke 19:10

Topics: "Regrets"

Description

In this sermon, K.P. Yohannan encourages Christians to make their lives count for the glory of God. He emphasizes the importance of investing our lives in something that truly matters and not wasting our time on selfish pursuits. Yohannan challenges listeners to be informed about the needs of others and to take action through prayer and giving. He highlights the stark contrast between the luxuries and excesses of our lives and the desperate poverty and suffering experienced by many around the world.

Transcript

Making our lives count for the glory of God, next on The Road to Reality. Would you like to be able to look back on your life and have little to no regrets? As Christians, we want to make a difference and not fritter away the life we've been given. The question is, are we? While we can't change our past, we can make life-altering decisions in the present and have a glorious future.

We're just entering into a new year, and with that in mind, K.P. Yohanan has a special word for us today. On The Road to Reality, we're going to see how to invest our lives in something that really matters. From our Gospel for Asia headquarters in Texas, here's K.P. Hi, my good friend.

It's good to talk to you again. Of course, I'm so grateful for every opportunity the Lord gave, so I can talk to you and share those thoughts God placed upon my heart. And I do appreciate the hundreds and hundreds of friends that are calling and emailing and letting us know how the Lord uses these broadcasts to touch their lives, and it's quite encouraging.

You know, we just had a year slip by, 2010, and now we are in the new year. And all of us, I don't think there's any question about this, we all always want our life to count. That is, making a difference through our life.

And of course, pleasing the Lord, as a follower of Christ, this is all we want. Often you hear things like, you know what, you do really want to leave a legacy, a story behind you, a life that really became significant for the glory of God and for the blessing of other people. But you know, God uses failures in our lives and setbacks to help us learn and to become.

Life actually is a continuous change, transformation. And that's the reason why the Bible instructs us to follow Him continually, daily, and becoming like Jesus in our nature, in our character. It is a continuous transformation.

And of course, you know, we look back over the year 2010, I'm sure if you are like me, we do have some regrets. And I personally do have some regrets, although not that many. But as I look back over the years of my life, I wish that I didn't do some things.

And I wish I did some things. And I say to myself, if only, but those years or incidents or times or opportunities are no more now, they are behind me. And I need to press forward.

But as I look back over the years of my life, of the few regrets I have in my life that, of course, became significant incidents for me to learn in my walk with God. One of those incidents happened to be the story I heard of a little girl called Mina. I remember first time when I heard this, it kind of made me kind of hurt so deep inside.

A tiny five-year-old girl with big brown eyes, so innocent looking. And the photograph actually was a picture where she was standing in a sewage in Mumbai, India. And all of a sudden, I remembered the times I walked into the slums of Bombay.

Some 5 million people live in the city, I mean in the slums. Of course, Bombay happened to be a city with 80, 90 million people. But it is said the largest slum of the world is in Bombay.

Can you imagine 5 million people live in those slums? And I remember the times I walked in there in the years past. I had to pinch my nose because of the stench. I couldn't handle it.

I would throw up. Because people lived in such horrible conditions. You know, when you talk about living conditions, you are talking about dirt floor and four bamboo sticks and plastic hanging over there.

And a wife and husband and kids living in there. And the monsoon season, can you just imagine in your mind what happens? Then right there, through the middle of the slum, you have this huge canal, open sewage just running through there. And I remember watching kids playing in that sewage.

But the photograph of little Meena just gripped my heart. And I remember hearing the story from the social worker, how they tried their best seeking to rescue this girl. Of course, you know, they did not know if her parents died or they abandoned her.

And she happened to be one of the hundred thousand plus children that are roaming on the streets not knowing who their parents are. And finally, they found a place where this family would take care and do what they can to help her. And they too happened to be very poor family in a slum.

But later, the story that hurt me the most when I learned that somehow she ended up on the streets again. Eating dirt and drinking sewage water, she got sick and fell in a coma. And she died.

The reason that bothered me so much is that I said to myself, Oh man, how I wish we started a Bridge of Hope Center in that slum. Of course, today by the grace of God, we have several Bridge of Hope Centers. Hundreds and hundreds of children like Meena will not have to die eating dirt and drinking sewage water and hungry and begging on the streets.

But then we didn't have the opportunity to do something like that. And I wonder how many little Meenas died on the street without hope and help. When I say regret, yeah.

But then too, I know there are opportunities God gave me to do something. And then I say, this is too much of a price and maybe I will do it later or think about it later. And kind of putting it off.

And I think all of us as followers of Christ, we face the same problem. You know, the statement from C.S. Lewis is quite significant here. He said, I quote, we have a tendency to think and not act.

We may even write a book and not act. The more we feel without acting, the less we will ever be able to act. And in the long run, the less we will ever be able to feel.

Let me ask you, how often, like it happened to me, you were gripped with something you saw on television. You read in the Bible, some story that you heard. Like the broadcast that you are now listening to.

Something that you encountered, the Lord used that to grip your heart. Your heart was broken, you cried. That message you heard in the church or the song or whatever.

But the question I want to ask you, did you act on it? Often people are satisfied with the feelings of remorse or the feelings of conviction. But they will not change. Why? Because it will cost us something if we must change.

And that is the reason why Jesus said, you want to come after me? He said, good idea. But if you really want to come after me, he said, you must deny yourself and pick up his cross daily and come after me. Christianity and following Christ, my dear brother, my sister, is not a one-time decision, a one-time incident.

It is a daily process. Every single day, you have to make a choice. I'm going to get up early enough so I can spend my time on my knees before God.

Today, I'm going to choose the road of inconvenience and difficulties. Today, I'm going to make this choice to spend my time caring for the poor and the needy. Today, I make the choice to forego this meal, this luxury, so I can use this money to help a missionary or print a Bible.

Or care for someone who don't have anything. You see, nothing is easy. So you make a decision.

Okay, this year my dream is to spend this \$3,000 to go to Holy Land or some whatever vacation. Okay, this year we are going to make the plan to spend that money to go to an unholy land. Make the trip to Mexico.

And spend those two weeks on the streets with my children ministering to people. Or I take this money and send it off to help some work of God. To help the poor children like in Mumbai or slum or bridge of hope or whatever.

And I'm going to spend those two weeks to study and pray and meditate. Now, you are saying, I never thought about that. Well, good.

That's the reason I'm talking about it. You see, God is not in the business of putting us on a guilt trip and condemning us and making us feel dumb and stupid. No.

The invitation is always before us. The Lord saying, come and follow me and I will make you. But as we follow him, believe it or not, his footsteps takes us not to the world of comfort and ease.

No, often it takes us to the world of difficulties and suffering and pain. And this is kind of the world I have to live with. When I think about the Dalit community.

Well, I don't know if you ever heard that word Dalit. Other day I was talking to someone, you know, there's another word for the people of Dalit called Harijan. If you ever watch the movie Slumdog Millionaire, if you listen close, you will find the word Harijan mentioned.

Well, Dalits, in other words, are the untouchables. You're talking about some 285 million people of India. People that lived under such abject poverty and illiteracy and abuse and tens of thousands of their children are bonded child laborers.

And every year it is estimated thousands and thousands of these people's daughters, young girls are bought and sold into prostitution. They're abused. They're hurt.

Other day I was reading the statistics that baffled me of the Dalit community. Only two to three percent of the women can read and write. Can you just imagine the agony, the suffering of these people? Making our lives count.

That's our focus this week here on the road to reality. A timely encouragement from KP O'Hannon as we've recently turned the calendar and entered into a new year. KP will be back here in just a moment.

If God is stirring your heart to be genuinely concerned for others and let go of self-centered living, might I suggest visiting our website. We've just created what we're referring to as the Greatest Need Bundle. We're often asked, what are the greatest ministry needs? Well, this lays it all out for you.

We've bundled a few needs together to hopefully make giving to those important areas easy for you. And remember, 100% of your donation goes to the field. Check out the Greatest Need Bundle at winasia.org. That's winasia.org. If you're in Canada, go online to gospelforasia.ca. Once again, as promised now, here's Brother KP.

One of the sad incidents in my life was a time when I was reading the newspaper where they talked about young mothers selling their newborn babies for 20 pounds of rice. Yeah, you heard me right. In the state of Bihar in northwest of India, here comes all the cameras and lights and reporters.

They're all coming to this particular village because the news got out that these poor people are selling their babies for a few pounds of rice. And I remember the reporter asking this young woman, I mean, fragile, skinny, but beautiful-looking young tribal girl, a Dalit girl, must be in their mid-twenties. And the reporter asked, why on earth you will want to sell your baby for a few pounds of rice? And she kept crying, I want my baby, I want my baby.

The reporter keep asking, but why did you do it? And then she responds, what else can I do? What else we do? We are all dying. We have no food. We are starving.

I thought at least my baby will live. Then she paused. She started again.

Even this few pounds of rice that I got will not help me survive anyway. And she was crying again. You see, please listen to me.

You can't even imagine the luxury, the life that you have. Just look at the toys and the trinkets you have purchased for your kids. We keep on buying and buying and buying things, not recognizing that half of the world go to bed with empty stomach and naked bodies.

And tens of thousands of millions of children in the slums in many of these nations have never seen one piece of a toy. And I say what right do we have as followers of Christ to be so blind, so dumb, so stupid, so selfish that we can't hear and we don't care. You know what bothers me more? That none of these words create any pain.

There's no sense of hurt. There's no sense of remorse. I'm in the middle of writing a book.

Another day I was talking to this girl who is working with me on this project. And I have an illustration in the book about what Jesus said. There lived a rich man and he had all the luxury in the world.

He had the cars, the affluence and everything else and, of course, in a fire of rising it. And he died and he went to hell, burning hell. And then Jesus said, there happened to be a poor man named Lazarus.

By the way, there happened to be a historical event. I think that's the reason why there's a name mentioned. Something that Christ, the God, knew that happened in history that man did not know maybe.

So this poor beggar Lazarus was laying at the gate of the rich man and he was so poor, so helpless. And his friends became the street dogs that came and licked his sores, his wounds. And he also died.

But the difference, angels came and escorts him to the bosom of Abraham to paradise. And I said to her, you realize that there's nothing in the scripture passage that says the rich man went to hell because he committed adultery or committed awful sins and he broke all the commandments. I said, there's nothing like that.

The only thing we have here, Abraham saying to the man, son, you while you lived on earth, you enjoyed all the luxuries and the poor Lazarus didn't have anything. And he lived in poverty and now he's enjoying paradise. And you on earth enjoyed everything and you are in hell.

So the conclusion you have to make, obviously, all the rich people go to hell and all the poor people go to heaven. No, that's not the implications. Because when you look at the entire scripture passage, the whole Bible, you realize it is not the riches or the affluence this man had made him go to hell, rather his lack of understanding and relationship with the living God.

In other words, you as a follower of Christ, you cannot have this intimate relationship with Christ and not to be consumed, concerned about the suffering and the broken and the hurting and the people that do not know Christ and go into hell. You can't have a life that is so self-centered. At the same time, you say you are a wonderful Christian, you're going to heaven.

You are making a mistake. Am I too harsh? Too hard? You know, you rather choose the narrow road and be hard on yourself and deny yourself and pick up the cross and embrace the inconveniences and not to be satisfied, never be satisfied with the phony preachers who tell you wonderful life for you, everything wonderful here on earth, in heaven. Claim and name it and get it.

You know, these fellows are false prophets, you believe me. Read the New Testament again. Read about Jesus.

Son of man came to seek and save that which was lost. And I say, oh Lord, don't let me read another story like Mina. Please Lord, don't let me read another story like the young woman in Bihar selling a little baby for a few pounds of rice.

But then what is the answer? The answer is, just like a businessman seeking to invest his money to get a lot more money, his investment very carefully he plans not to lose but to gain. The same way, I challenge you, my brother, my sister. Why don't you seek out opportunities to go, to give, to pray, to share, to invest your life.

Don't waste your sorrows, your pain, your difficulties. They are precious in the light of eternity. And that's the only way we can make a difference.

So, my brief talk is all about making your life count. Well, for me, I'm grateful. Some forty years ago, the Lord called me to leave my home, travel 2,000 miles to North, that is in India, and invest my life for Him.

And all these years of my pilgrimage, I have a few regrets as I mentioned earlier, but not that many. And I'm so grateful for the opportunities the Lord gave me when I had to say to myself, No, this is not what Christ want, and embrace the cross, and choose the narrow road. And I plead with you today, you as a dear friend, a pilgrim in this journey with me, please look at the ways in which you can invest your life to make a difference, making your life count.

If that be the case, I would encourage you to please sometime take time to go to our website. You can get a copy of my book, Road to Reality, or the book Revolutionary World Missions, and I mean, lots of, even free materials. This is how you get informed.

Unless you and I know what is going on, how can we do something about it? If you don't know what to pray for, how can you pray? If you don't know where to give, how can we give effectively? So you see, godliness, spirituality, making your life count never happens in the vacuum. You have to do something. You and I have to act.

And this is how we will make our life count. Well, my prayer, may the lord give you grace, and give you understanding, and give you strength, the power of the holy spirit, to be hard on yourself. No, no, no, not to live in guilt and punish yourself.

No, but live in grace, which means our ability to say no to sin and to self, and all for the glory of god. Go, give, pray, share, and invest your life for the glory of god. In doing so, your life will make an important difference for eternity.

It sure is easy to waste our lives and get caught up in ourselves, isn't it? And that's why we need encouragement like this. And as K.P. O'Hannon said, let's not just nod in agreement, but actually put shoe leather to what god is telling us to do. You're listening to The Road to Reality, the Ministry of Gospel for

Asia.

And as we leave you, I'd like to point out our website. We've recently created a Greatest Needs Bundle. It's here that you'll find a few suggestions as to where you can invest in god's kingdom work.

From helping widows and abandoned children, to investing in women's literacy programs, or meeting the needs of an unsponsored missionary. It's bundled together to make giving the greatest needs easier than ever. You can even create your own bundle if you'd like.

Allow the Lord to lead you as you stop by winasia.org today. Look for the Greatest Needs Bundle. And have you also had a chance to get in on one of our Gospel for Asia prayer meetings? You can watch our next webcast and pray with us every Tuesday evening, the first Friday of every month.

That's at winasia.org. Friends in Canada can go to gospelforasia.ca and remember, invest your life in what matters most. And watch what God will do. We'll catch you back here next week when we'll bring you another road to reality with K.P. Yohannan.

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