

Take Up Your Cross and Follow Him (Part 2)

by K.P. Yohannan

The sermon emphasizes the importance of leaving worldly pleasures and serving others for the sake of Jesus, and storing up treasures in heaven.

Scripture: Matthew 6:19

Topics: "Purpose in Life", "Selfless Service"

Description

K.P. Yohannan shares the inspiring story of a doctor who left a lucrative career to serve the impoverished in slums, emphasizing the profound impact of witnessing suffering and the call to serve those in need. He draws parallels with Mother Teresa, who dedicated her life to helping the destitute in Kolkata, illustrating that true fulfillment comes from selfless service rather than worldly success. The sermon challenges listeners to reflect on their purpose in life and consider the eternal significance of their choices, urging them to take up their cross and follow Jesus by prioritizing love and service over personal gain.

Transcript

Doctor Drops Career to Move to the Slums Once I talked to a medical doctor who believes firmly in Christian values and I was touched by his experiences. His testimony is like this: he drew a salary of 20,000 rupees and extra allowances. But he resigned from his job. He, along with two other doctors who resigned with him, some nurses and some of his friends, went to a slum of outcasts. People lived in huts there. They didn't have money to go to a doctor. They didn't even have money for the bus fare to the nearest hospital.

If they had wounds in their body they would apply some herbs, cover them with old cloth and go to the fields for work. Most of the time puss and blood would come from their wounds. In such a place, which normal people don't even like to look at, this doctor and his friends stepped in. From dawn to dusk they serve the people. Whatever money they get as charity from others and from their personal accounts, they spend for these people selflessly. Why do these doctors do this? I think like this.

The doctor might have accidentally seen these people and their suffering. He might have heard their cries and seen their kids without proper clothes playing near the gutters, looking like they had only skin and bones. He might have witnessed all these things. They might have broken his heart. When he discussed these things with his friends, they sat together and decided, "Life in this world is limited. After some more years--at the most 40 or 50 years--it will be over. If we want, we can work in a super specialty hospital with a salary of 30,000 or 40,000 rupees.

We can spend our lives with upper class people. Otherwise, we could even start a super specialty hospital, serve the richest from the society, and acquire money and fame." But they saw the people who didn't have anyone to take care of them. They heard their cries, which were from the depths of the heart. "We all have to leave this world eventually," they thought. "So with the little time we get here in this world, instead of sitting back and talking about old adventures, we can go to the needy people and spend our lives in the middle of them.

The satisfaction we get from that does not exist there in the world's "prescription". The feeling we get when we wipe their tears is beyond words." The doctors discovered this, and they made a common decision. Mother Teresa: Giving Her Life for the Poor In the streets of Kolkata, for the unwanted orphans, for those with leprosy, for aged people who were ignored and half alive, for all these people Mother Teresa, the "mother of the poor" came. Not one or two people, but many thousands were relieved from their pain because of her.

Many lives were restored. Many orphans were able to lead a happy life. For many patients and aged parents, the house of Mother Teresa was like an oasis in the middle of a desert. Why did this precious woman sacrifice so much in India? When she came to India, whatever she experienced here influenced her heart. It changed her decisions about life. She could have lived within the walls of the convent. She could have participated in small things there, praying three times a day with her friends.

She could have led a more comfortable life, just going out for tours. But the narrow, dirty, dark streets of Kolkata and the heartfelt cries coming from there did not let her live like this. Like the seed falling on good soil, this burden started growing in her. She left the convent and became a great relief for many thousands. She fulfilled her duty till the end of her life. What was the feeling that caused her to undergo all these things? Love toward Jesus. What is Your Purpose in Life?

You might be a medical doctor or a business person; you have everything you need in this world, Will you let me ask you one thing? After some years what will happen to all these things? Some "prodigal son" could spend all your money. Otherwise, the same thing could happen in the second or third generation. Not a single sign of your existence will be here. Think deeply about this. Moses left the temporary happiness of sin and selected suffering. Nobody imposed that on him. This is the meaning of taking up the cross and following Jesus.

Jesus could have denied the cross. But he chose the cross on his own. The punishment you get after committing a sin is not a cross. The cross refers to complete surrender, even if we have freedom to choose something else. Can you take a decision like the medical doctors whom I mentioned in this article? In many places like Odisha, Assam, Rajasthan, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, you have to travel 50 to 100 kilometers to meet a doctor. Most of the places don't even have a hospital or medicine.

People die in their illness. There is not even a single person to console them. In light of these circumstances, what is the purpose of your life on this earth? Why did God send you? Have you ever thought for a minute about your duty in this world? Who is ready to spend their life for Jesus? Who will come forward to help the impoverished or the people in pain? Are you ready to leave these minute worldly pleasures and start "depositing" for eternity? "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal." (Mathew 6:19-20)

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