

True Discipleship

by K.P. Yohannan

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the call to true discipleship through self-denial, sacrifice, and commitment to Christ's mission amidst worldly challenges.

Duration: 25:04

Scripture: Matthew 10:38, Matthew 16:24, Matthew 26:39, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23, Luke 22:42, John 18:11

Topics: "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, Brother K.P. Johannett emphasizes the importance of following God's will for our lives, even if it means sacrificing comfort and facing persecution. He urges listeners to consider the brevity of life and make decisions in light of eternity. Brother K.P. shares the story of a missionary who faced brutal persecution for his faith, highlighting the reality of the call to authentic Christianity. He concludes by expressing his desire for listeners to fall in love with Jesus and prioritize Him above all else. The sermon is based on John 18:11 and encourages a renewed passion for following Christ.

Transcript

Consider your call today on The Road to Reality. Gain a renewed passion to follow the Lord's will for your life as you join us today for The Road to Reality. Welcome to our program.

We come to you each week from Gospel for Asia and in a moment we'll turn things over to Brother K.P. Yohannan, founder and director of Gospel for Asia. You know, God has a plan and purpose for your life, but it's not centered around comfort, luxury and self as so many would suggest. The New Testament constantly and consistently urges us to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Christ.

For much needed encouragement in that direction, let's join K.P. now in John chapter 18, verse 11. Here on The Road to Reality. I'm sure you heard this before.

The road less traveled. Well, if you use the New Testament language, we will say things like the narrow road, the road of sacrifice and commitment, discipline, discipleship. The truth of the matter is this, you and I will agree that honestly, yeah, I mean, they all sound great, but our flesh absolutely hate that narrow road.

The word sacrifice, it's not even in our language. As a matter of fact, someone said the missing jewel from the modern church is the cross. How true it is.

I remember some years ago I was in Nagpur, northern India. We had a pastor's conference and then I met this young man. I mean, he must be what, I don't know, 24 years old, something like that.

But I saw him before, I mean, a few years prior to that. And this time when I saw him on his forehead, there was a deep scar, like he was in some kind of a major accident and went to the hospital and the doctors had to stitch things up. But the problem was it is kind of Mickey Mouse job, everything bulged out.

So I asked him, hey, what happened to you? Of course, in Hindi language. Before he could answer, his senior leader who was standing next to him said, well, let me tell you the story. I was curious.

He said, well, he's one of our graduates from our Bible college in Nagpur. And when the graduation took place and he came to the leaders and said he wanted to go to a certain mission field to plant a church. And we told him, we don't know if this is the place you want to go because this is kind of a hard, difficult place.

But then he said, you know what, I've been praying that the Lord would send me to this particular place to plant a church. Please allow me to go to this mission field. And the leader said, well, you know, we prayed and agreed and sent him to the mission field.

He served the Lord there and he was able to lead a few dozen people to Christ and things were going so well. But then one Sunday morning, as the worship was taking place, this dear brother teaching his new converts, a jeep came and then they put the brake on, they could hear the screeching sound and a group of men came out, some with iron rod and chain and weapons. And they marched into this little church, a makeshift building.

And they simply began to beat up this brother and they left him in a pool of blood saying that you better leave this place or we are going to come back to kill you. This will be your grave. Can you just imagine these new believers watching their pastor, their shepherd being abused, beaten up, they left him in a pool of blood.

Of course, these men left and the believers carried him to the hospital and whatever treatment he could receive, he received it. And the stitching they did on his forehead where he was bruised and abused and the wound, well, I call it a Mickey Mouse job. And now the wounds healed, but the scars remain.

Now I didn't know any of the stories. I was simply asking, what happened to you? He didn't answer, but his elder, his senior pastor, the regional leader explained to me what happened to him. But that's not the end of the story.

Hearing about this abuse and threat to his life, the regional senior leaders on our mission field approached this young brother and said, you know what, maybe this is not the place for you to continue the mission work. Why don't we assign you to another place? It is more safer there. Responding to their encouragement, this dear brother said, you know what, I will do whatever you want me to do, but this is where the Lord sent me.

I know they beat me up. I know they want to kill me. I know they will come back saying that they will kill me and bury me here.

But if that would happen, it will be my privilege. Every drop of my blood will produce a charge. Please allow me to continue on this mission field.

Well, this is not a fairy tale and this is not a made up story. This is not an illusion. It's a real life event.

So the leaders decided we must honor his request and left him to continue the service on the mission field. Well, the good part of the story is that no one killed him yet. He continues to preach the gospel and lead even the worst enemies of the gospel to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, that brings me to the Bible verse that I really wanted to read. John's gospel chapter 18 verse 11. Listen to this.

Jesus commanded Peter, put your sword away. Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me? Well, the context of the scripture portion you will read in the gospel of John chapter 18 is when Christ was arrested and Peter, an enthusiastic disciple and follower of Christ who loved him so much, took up his sword and said, this guy, I'm going to kill him and cut the servant's ear off. And Jesus says, Peter, just leave it alone.

Shouldn't I drink the cup my father gave me to drink? Now, dear brothers and sisters, we are living in a time with the Christianity that tells us Christ, God, Holy Spirit and the Bible. It's all about our comfort, our luxury, forgiveness of sin, health and wealth and happiness, a good family and finally make it to heaven. I encourage you to go back and read the New Testament, you will find it, the American gospel, the watered down, self-centered, me-centered religion is far from the teaching of the New Testament.

Jesus is the one who said, if anyone want to follow me, if anybody, a man, a woman, a child, anyone who want to be a Christian, a disciple of mine, let him, let her deny himself and herself and pick up their cross and follow me daily. And if you love your father, your mother, your son, your daughter, I wish he stopped there. He said, and if you love your own life more than me, you cannot be my disciple.

Now, please don't turn the radio off. I want to ask you a simple question. When was the last time you heard someone from the pulpit saying the call of Christ is to deny yourself and forsake all, even your own life and follow him? Hardly.

You see, that's what I'm telling you. Now, before you make any conclusions about what I'm trying to say, please may I plead with you to understand. I'm not after anything from you.

I'm not trying to put you on a guilt trip or condemnation trip or get some money from you. No, none of those things. Now, for my accent, you know, I'm not a Texan or I'm not a Californian.

As a matter of fact, I just came back from India and a few days time, I'm once again traveling to Nepal and India and Bhutan and these places where I will run into brothers and sisters just like you that believe in Christ. Brothers, missionaries, a Nepali brother who will get up in the morning and have his family prayer with his family and study the Bible. Then he says, I'm going to the mission field.

It will be a two days walk and then I will spend two days there and teach the believers then I'll come back. But then he says, I don't know. Maybe I should say goodbye to you.

If I didn't see you here on earth again, I will see you in heaven. And he will embrace his wife and his three children saying goodbye before he'll take his journey to the mission field. Am I making up the story? No, I'm not.

Do I sound emotional? I am. Because I know these brothers who must say goodbye to their wives and children as they head out to the mission field. They do not know if they will ever come back.

Couple of them never came back. But good news, most of them did. No, I'm not trying to tell you to say goodbye to your wife and kids and go and kill yourself or go to some place and never come back.

No, that's not the issue here. The simple issue is here. Christ and living for him must mean more to us than our own very life itself.

Well, that bears repeating. Christ and living for him must mean more to us than our very own lives. Brother K.P. Yohanan, we'll be back with the second half of this message in just a moment here on The Road to Reality.

But K.P. has just come out with a new book. It's called *Destined to Soar*. K.P., what can you tell us about it? K.P. Yohanan If you've been touched by the Lord and you feel like you want to pursue this journey, may I encourage you to buy the book that is my latest book, *Destined to Soar*, *Destined to Soar*.

And you can go to our website and look for it. And as a matter of fact, just today the book was released and it's 176 pages long. And the many chapters, they are very brief chapters, but I can assure you it will help you in this journey of yours to follow the Lord close.

Again, the name of the book is *Destined to Soar*. Brother K.P. Yohanan Well, in *Destined to Soar*, K.P. will show you how to keep your true purpose in clear view. I think you'll find it relevant and very practical.

As K.P. said, you can order that right now through our website for just \$10. And while you're there at the site, take a look at our Christmas gift catalog and join us this Christmas season in bringing hope to needy families in Asia. And together we'll celebrate Christ and watch as He transforms lives.

Again, our catalog can be found at our website, winasia.org. Again, the address is winasia.org. Here's our toll-free number, 866-WIN-ASIA. That's 866-WIN-ASIA. Well, let's return to K.P. now.

K.P. Don't you agree with me if you go to the average Christian store? Don't you agree with me? If you will go to average Christian bookstore, what kind of books you will find there? Books on how to be wealthy and healthy and famous and to do the exercise to the beat of Christian songs and novels and romantic books that makes you feel good. No, none of those things I say are evil or bad in itself. Or books about how you must be so terribly concerned about your children, homeschool them, do this, do that, this curriculum, that curriculum.

No, they're all good. I'm not against it. I mean, here in Dallas, I have dozens of my staff members who are homeschooling.

No, I'm not against it. I'm not against it. But I'm telling you, is there any space, any time for us to remember and think about 160 million child laborers, young boys and girls, semi-naked, helpless, abused in the carpet-making factories in Kashmir, in the brick-making factories in Nepal and Bangladesh.

From morning till night, these nine-year-old, eight-year-old boys and girls work like slaves, making eight, nine cents for the whole day's labor. They too are precious in His sight. You don't believe that? Read the Gospel of Matthew chapter 18.

You'll find it. I'm telling you the truth. But what I'm getting at is, not that you should not homeschool your children, not that we should not care for our families, not that we should not provide for our kids.

No, I'm telling you, there's a world out there, some two billion people, that never heard the first Christmas story. Hundreds of millions of people go into bed with empty stomach and naked bodies. But much more crucial, a land like India, with 1.2 billion people, half of the nation never heard the name Jesus.

Now the question, whose fault is this? You think God made a mistake? Christ made a mistake? Angels made mistakes? Or is it our self-centeredness, love for ourself and disobedience? Well, let's go back to John's Gospel chapter 18 verse 11. What did Jesus say? Haha, Peter was terribly concerned about Jesus going to the cross and going through all the suffering and being abused and maligned and misunderstood and be crucified. But Jesus said, Peter, you just don't understand.

This cup of suffering is given to me by my Father. You know, some years ago, I remember hearing the story about the crisis in Sri Lanka. Thousands of people have been brutally murdered, blood flowing on the streets, innocent children and people caught in the crossfire, the civil war.

And I remember the Lord speaking to my heart. He said, Son, you are so worried about your neckties, your jackets, your studies, your degrees. Don't you care? I weep and I hurt for these people.

And you know, I'm not a very good person to disclose my private life. But maybe I should tell you this. One of those days, I took my alarm clock.

And turn the needle to two in the morning. So it will wake me up. And so you ask, how come you want to wake up at two in the morning? What's wrong with you? It was for one reason.

I said, Lord, my days are so full. Telephone rings. My life is so busy.

Please give me the grace to spend a couple of hours, three hours or four hours in my living room on my knees, weeping and talking to you about the people that are in such suffering in Sri Lanka. Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not trying to paint a picture of an angel before you know, I'm a weak, struggling human being that sin all the time, repent all the time, run to the cross all the time.

But I remember the alarm going off. And I said, I hate this thing. But then I remembered this was a choice I made.

And I got up, went to the bathroom, washed my face in cold water. And I remember going to the living room and kneeling down, looking at the map of Sri Lanka. And I'm saying, Lord, my flesh hates this.

But I want to partake in your suffering for those in Sri Lanka. Give me grace to pray, to intercede, to talk to you. And my dear brothers and sisters, I say this to you not as an alien.

Please believe me. I traveled throughout the United States and Canada and Europe, some 300,000 miles per year and all over the world and talking to people. I'm not a stranger.

I'm not after you for anything. I'm not condemning you. But I'm simply saying this to you.

For Christ, the cross was not something the father imposed on him and demanded from him. But he saw this as a precious cup of suffering so that a world that's doomed in hell and forever can be rescued. Well, we are in the season of Christmas.

I'm certain you are looking through the catalogs in the bathroom, in the kitchen, in the car, looking for things to buy and give and whatever else. Hey, may I ask you one thing? What about you think about 5 million people live in the slums of Mumbai, India? Did you see the movie Slumdog Millionaire? Let me tell you. The beginning of the story, the suffering, the pain, the anguish, the abuse.

It is real. And that is the fate of multiplied millions. And today you and I are given the opportunity to pray, to enter into the suffering of Christ and say, Father, I choose this day of fasting.

I choose to say no to the material things that I want others give me. And I choose to say no to material things that I want to give to others to get their approval, their appreciation. Father, I want to write a Christmas card to someone and say, you know, honestly, I thought about giving you something very significant cost \$50, \$100 or \$20, whatever.

But I decided to give you a gift. My resources, my prayers and time to touch a lost world that never heard Christ's name. And that's what I'm doing for my life.

And I want to share this with you. Invite them to understand the sacrifice of Christ, the cross of Christ and the call to authentic Christianity. And reality in our Christian life.

Oh, by the way, I'm not whispering. Let me say it again. If you think about it, take your driver's license, look at your date of birth and add 100 years to that.

You got the point. Life is so very brief. Let us make every decision in the light of eternity.

Knowing that we are destined for the throne, not for the perishing things here on Earth and the call of Christ still remains real. Follow me. Follow me.

And he showed us the example. Well, time ran away again. Thank you so much for your kindness to listen to me.

And I have no agendas. My only agenda that you will fall in love with my Jesus over and over and over again. And Jesus will become more real to you, his concern and his passion than anything else on Earth.

That's all it matters. May the Lord bless you and may his peace fill your heart and guide you. Amen.

That's Brother K.P. Ohannon, founder and director of Gospel for Asia. And this is The Road to Reality. What a wonderful opportunity we have to celebrate Christ this Christmas and see the Lord transform lives.

If you'd like to extend the love of Jesus through a gift to a needy Asian family or missionary, drop by our website and take a look at our 2009 Christmas gift catalog. Select from a wide variety of gifts, which will be used to deliver the message of hope to those who desperately need to hear it. Also in the catalog, you'll notice KP has a new book that's just been released.

Does it feel like life is closing in on you? Well, Destined to Soar is a book in which KP will help you rise above the weight of the world and focus in on your true purpose. We're praying the Lord will use this hope-filled approach to critical issues to set people free to be all that he desires them to be. It's only \$10 through our website.

The address is winasia.org. That's winasia.org. Or drop us a line toll free 866-WIN-ASIA. The Road to Reality is brought to you by Gospel for Asia, where our desire is to spread the good news of Christ to

those who've never heard his name.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25662.mp3>
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