

# What Do I Get Out of It?

by K.P. Yohannan

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*The sermon challenges believers to move beyond self-interest in their service to God and to focus on the eternal impact of their actions.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 19:27, Matthew 25:40, Mark 1:17, Luke 9:62, 2 Corinthians 5:15, Philippians 2:3-4, Hebrews 6:10, Hebrews 12:2, James 4:3, 1 John 3:17

**Topics:** "Faith and Commitment", "Selflessness in Service"

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## Description

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the self-centered mindset that often accompanies our decisions, even in spiritual matters, as illustrated by Peter and Andrew's initial question to Jesus about their rewards for following Him. He challenges believers to move beyond asking 'What do I get out of it?' and instead focus on the eternal impact of their actions, particularly in missions and service to others. Yohannan highlights the importance of spiritual maturity and faith, urging Christians to prioritize the needs of the lost over personal gain. He shares examples of sacrificial giving and commitment from individuals who serve without seeking personal benefits, illustrating the joy that comes from serving God faithfully. Ultimately, he reassures that God remembers our efforts and will meet our needs as we labor for His kingdom.

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## Transcript

There is no doubt in my mind that Simon Peter and his brother Andrew became the talk of all the fishermen around the lake of Galilee when they suddenly left their nets to respond to Jesus' call: "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17). We are greatly challenged by the willingness of these men to forsake all at a moment's notice to join a new teacher whose ministry and future were unknown. But in one aspect, Peter and the other disciples were not so different from the rest of humanity.

Later on, they inquired, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" (Matthew 19:27). No matter what we do in life, it's second nature to ask the question: What do I get out of it? When we apply for a job, we want to know the benefits. If we send our children to an expensive school, we expect a certain quality of education in return. Even in spiritual things we often have this mindset. A large number of people come to Christ because they want to go to heaven instead of hell or because they want their messed-up lives restored.

And God is more than gracious to save and help them when they call upon His name. Many believers who invest their lives, time or resources for a godly cause want to make sure that what they give will bring them something in return--whether it's joy, satisfaction, earthly blessings, recognition, honor from men, position

or at least the guarantee of rewards in heaven. If we are honest with ourselves, so often self-centeredness is at the bottom of what we do. Sadly, this self-centeredness has prevented multitudes from hearing the Gospel.

Even though many countries are closed or severely restricted to outside missionaries, millions of people could still be reached and thousands of churches planted by sending and supporting national missionaries. However, for much of Christianity, the deciding factor in their involvement is still, "What can we get out of it?" At the root of their decision is this mindset: "Will the name of our denomination be on these churches? Can we initiate, execute and control the work by sending our own people?"

If not, we are not willing to get involved or share our resources. If the doors are closed to the traditional approach, we will be satisfied with sneaking in a few people to represent our group under the disguise of social work or tourism. Even if they get kicked out after a few months after having spent \$20,000 to train and get them there, we will not change our policy." We must recognize that we will lose this generation of unreached people if we don't have a significant commitment to share the love of Christ regardless of what we get out of it.

I am not saying there is no place for short-term missions. Especially for young people, such an exposure to the lost world will have a far-reaching and powerful effect on their own lives and on their home churches as well. But what we need is a crucial priority shift. You see, our desire for self-preservation--for securing our future and for making sure we personally get something out of what we do--whether secret or openly expressed, prevents us from thinking long or deeply enough to find godly answers.

Instead, we cling to the traditional missions approach, no matter how ineffective it might be. And in our personal lives we seek to exchange the uncertain "follow Me" by leaving His calling or replacing our service to the Lord with something that guarantees security. Elisha's servant Gehazi and Demas, the co-worker of the Apostle Paul, are both examples of this. Suddenly, it's our personal struggles and the question "What do I get out of it?" that take priority over millions of lost souls, eternity and our calling.

Immaturity is our problem--little squabbles, difficulties, discouragement and unfulfilled expectations. These are the major reasons why people get out of the battle. It takes godliness, spiritual maturity and faith to look past such things to the good ending that is still yet to be realized. Jesus saw beyond all His impending suffering on the cross to the joy of bringing multitudes into the kingdom, and He was willing to pay the price (see Hebrews 12:2). One family had such vision and gave money for a van for one of our Bible colleges in India.

They didn't ask what was in it for them. And God used this vehicle to become instrumental in seeing the church in that area grow from 85 to 227 people. Four of our national missionaries were severely persecuted and almost killed in an Indian village. Yet all of them requested to return to the same place. If you would ask these young brothers what they would get out of it by going back, they would answer, "We can see by faith a church and people worshiping the Living God." When we follow Jesus and serve Him, looking ahead by faith, we don't have to be anxious about what we will get out of it.

He has already promised to meet our needs, and He remembers our labors on behalf of His kingdom: "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name" (Hebrews 6:10). He even tells us that whatever we have done to the least of His brothers, we have done to Him. Keep your hand to the plow and don't look back. It is well worth it.

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