

Testimony and Challenge

by Gladys Aylward

God calls us to give Him a completed time, our whole selves, in order to receive His blessings and promises.

Duration: 1:31:04

Scripture: Genesis 24:14, Malachi 3:8, Malachi 3:10-11, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 10:37, Matthew 22:39

Topics: "Testimony"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares their personal experience of being in China and looking after mules while others listened to a woman named Jeannie tell stories about Jesus. The speaker emphasizes the importance of giving everything to God, just as Gladys Aylward did when she was called to go to China. They explain that God is not asking for bits and pieces of ourselves, but for our complete selves. The speaker also shares how they longed to know the women in the village but were bound to a small courtyard, until they decided to surrender themselves to God and buy a child, which eventually led to them having 40 children.

Transcript

I want to read one verse. Now, the verse itself is quite long, but I feel that this is the verse which God has given to me for you. It's a verse which challenges me every time I read it, and makes me go back and wonder whether I have done all I should.

Have I given him all he asked? And I rededicate all over again from where I started. The verse is the tenth verse of the third chapter of the Old Testament book of Malachi. Now, you'll find that this will not be a sermon.

You've already been to your churches, I hope, and had your sermons. Shall we just listen as if God is speaking to us? Now, as I read this verse, I would like to remind you that my Bible is Chinese, and so, as it comes to you, it will come in a different wording, because I just turned it round from Chinese back into English. Chinese is very beautiful, you know.

There's much, much more of it. And so, sometimes the verses are quite long, where in your English Bible they're quite short. The tenth verse of the third of Malachi.

...uncompleted tithes, that my family may be sustained, then you can prove me. And see if I will not open wide windows in heaven, pouring out blessings so many, ye will never be able to use them all. The great,

over and above all.

This, in Chinese, is a very beautiful expression which we use to speak of our God. You just can't use the word God. A God, to a Chinese, is some idol sitting in a temple made of mud, or wood, or stone, or sticking on your kitchen wall on a piece of paper.

Our God is over and above not only all other gods, but over and above all. Everything. He is the greatest, the most powerful, the most wonderful, the great, over and above all, one.

Here, when you preach, or you talk about your God to, you have to, according to Chinese customs, give, as you would to anybody of any standing, his status, his name, his office. English is very bare, you know. And so here we have the great, over and above all one, Jehovah.

And what does he do? He controls the hosts. And I conclude that the hosts are those things which man cannot control. Man has gone to great lengths in the sun, but he still has to get to the moon, and then he hasn't controlled it.

The sun, the moon, the stars, the wind, the sea, he controls. You cannot rule the wind, you can try all you know, but it still blows the way it should. The sea still comes at that split second of the tide every time it rolls in.

He controls. And yet this great, over and above all one, Jehovah, who controls these hosts, leans. The lovely little Chinese word here.

I only wish you understood it, jiang, which means to lean out. And here he is, as it were, leaning out of heaven. And he's speaking, leans, saying, If you will bring into my storehouse your completed time, And you're going to find that this is something very definite, to be put in a very definite place, for a very definite purpose.

There are no perhaps with God, you know, no maybes, no later on. Those words are not in God's vocabulary. If you will bring into my storehouse, that is a definite place.

And a storehouse is somewhere where you store something. You put in those old days those jars of pickles on the shelf for such time as Mother wanted to use them, and she reached them out at the appointed time. If you will bring, says God, into my storehouse, your completed, and you will find, as I have found, that your completed time, as mine, is this.

This is, bloody hell, the completed time, master. All I possess, all I have, my head, my heart, my feet, my hands, that, that is me, my completed time. And when God asks us to do something, he doesn't ask for one hand, or one foot, or even one day.

He asks for the complete you. If you will bring into my storehouse your completed time, that my family may be sustained. And if you will look in the dictionary, where I found this explanation, it says, this means to uphold and to keep.

As a nurse, a dying patient, as a mother, her baby. So it isn't money, is it? A dying patient has no need of your pounds, no? A tiny baby has no need of your half crown. A dying patient needs the upholding care of the nurse.

A baby needs the comfort of the mother's arms. If you will bring into my storehouse your completed time, that my family may be sustained, then you can prove me. And do you see what I'll do? I will open windows in heaven, and I will pour out blessings.

And there'll be so many blessings, you'll never be able to use them all up. And the words here to describe this is an expression which in Chinese says wù qù kè yǐng which literally means the incoming tide of the sea. The ever-flowing of a fountain.

Now it doesn't matter what you do down at the seaside, the tide always comes. The water comes. You can put pipes and dry it off.

You can take buckets and bucket it out. You can build breakwaters. But the water is still coming, and the still of money.

This is what God promises in blessings to you and me when we have put in a completed time. And so friends, you and I have got to come down to realize that while we have not got a blessing either in our own lives, in our family, in our community, or in our nation, is simply because we have not fulfilled the condition that God made. Now you can say, well that's all right, Mrs. Aylward, but remember this is law.

Yes, it is law. Jesus said, I came not to do away with the law, but to finish it. And if you go back to the dictionary, you will find that to finish something is to add to it.

The definition in the dictionary says, to finish a cake, you ice it. To finish a hat, you trim it. To finish a garment, you put on the buttons.

So, if you will bring into my storehouse your completed time that my family may be fed and sustained and upheld and kept, I will open the windows of heaven for you. It won't cost you anything. I'm doing the blessings.

I'm opening the windows of heaven. And you're going to say, well I just don't know how to do that because I can't give out this, or I can't do that. God isn't asking you to fulfill a law.

He's asking you to find the love of Jesus Christ and pass it on to someone else. Tonight, in this testimony, I pray that you will realize that it is said for one purpose only, that it may help you in some way, it will comfort where you need it, it will challenge where you need it, it will urge where it is very needed, but most of all, we shall be willing to go away and give to God what we maybe have never given to Him before, our completed selves. We have most of us given just one part of ourselves, one piece of ourselves, or just a little bit of ourselves.

Friend, God does not want your bits and pieces. God is not hard up. The silver and the gold is mine, the kettle and the house and hills.

He produced them. He made them. He created them.

He's not hard up. And so if you think that God is waiting for you to put your sixpence in, dear friend, He isn't. If you will bring your pen, I will open the windows of faith and may God speak to us for our blessing on us so that we can go out and bless someone else.

I went to China exactly 36 years ago. I went as a girl in my twenties and I rarely and truly believed that God told me to go. I was saved, not in my home, I'm terribly sorry to have to say, but after I'd left my home

and gone up to work in London and I was pulled in to a church one night by a group of young people who were standing outside that church door who had been saved during the previous weeks in some revival and they were so happy, they thought they'd got everything in Jesus Christ that they were determined everybody else was going to find Him too.

And I that night sat in that church and for the first time in my life realized that Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, had died for Gladys' sake. It shook me. It moved me.

And it was going to alter my whole life. I went out, not realizing of course what had happened inside me, to rush home to the little place where I was living and throw myself on the bed and I said, God if you're real, oh please prove yourself to me. And if you prove yourself to me tonight, I promise I will do anything you ask.

I had no idea what he was going to ask but all I can say is this, if I was to be put there tonight to that very moment I would do the same all over again in that it has been just wonderful. We have a very wonderful God and a very marvelous Savior. That next year I floated around and before I had joined a church which really knew how to read the Bible or understand very much of prayer in any what I call concrete way, he called me to chat.

Why he called me I don't know. I only know he did. I was reading one day a periodical and in it was an article on China that somebody had written because they had come into the news just a few weeks or days previous the fact that the first airplane had flown over China.

And the article pointed out that western civilization was going in at a great rate to this great land and yet there must be thousands it may even go into millions of people in China who had never heard the gospel. Well this shook me as much as the fact that Jesus was real. And I thought well how dreadful.

Can't see having to go all through your life without praying. Oh, but how dreadful to come and have to die and not know where you were going. Well then somebody ought to be doing something.

I had not been brought up in the circles that talked about missionaries and mission fields and all this kind of thing. I didn't know anything about that. And so I felt that somebody ought to be doing something.

Well, I went to the churches, went to the Bibles, couldn't read them. When I discovered there weren't well then somebody ought to be going and telling. And I now believe that this is my job to see that at least one person went to China for Jesus Christ.

And so for that next year and two months every time I went out I called on somebody, either a relation or a friend or somebody I knew and later on people who I didn't know but whose names I saw in the paper with this one idea that I could persuade them that they were the very person who should be going to China for Christ. They were all very clever and educated and they had good positions. They were doctors, they were nurses.

Oh, they were wonderful and to me they were just the very people who should be going. Well, I'm terribly sorry. Not one of them even took me in.

They all thought I was a bit funny in my head and asked me such peculiar questions that I came out very disappointed. And then at the end of that time I stood in a sitting room at home while my sister was sending off an aunt of mine who had been to visit and I heard her say Aunt Nell, be very careful. If our

blood knocks at your door don't open it because you might find yourself on the way to China for a long time.

And I decided that even my sister thought that I was a little bit funny up here. And, well perhaps I was. I thought it was a queer idea, wasn't it? Running around trying to push somebody off to a place you didn't know anything about to do something you didn't know anything about to a people who you also didn't know anything about.

Yes, it was. Well, all right. Well, I know.

I'll have one last try and then I'll throw the whole thing up and I'll go back and enjoy myself. My last try was my own drunk. I went home.

I caught him in the kitchen and I proceeded to tell him all that was in my mouth. I promised to pay his fare. I promised to keep him if he'd go.

All he got to do when he got there was to send me a letter with what he needed and I would send it to him. I would work. I could earn money.

And this is where it would go. And he laughed and he laughed and he thought it was the biggest joke he'd ever heard. And he said, I don't know what you're worrying about them Chinese for.

Do you know anything about them? No. Do you know where China is? No. Well, you didn't read in any books about China? No.

Well, that's a queer thing, isn't it? What are you worrying about them for? Because they do not know, Jesus Christ, and I feel they should. You wouldn't go? What, me? Oh. Oh, no.

I'm not interested. And he made a run from the kitchen where we were standing. He had already gone out from the door when he turned back and very boy-like put his head round the door and this is what he said, If you really believe somebody ought to be going, why don't you go yourself? Bang went the door and away he'd gone.

I stood, I don't know how long, and there went on inside me that vessel that goes on inside and as many of us know this, Shall I? Is it me? Isn't it me? All this all, all the again, you know, it couldn't be me. Why, I've never done anything really sensible and, well, I wasn't educated, I didn't have any money and I wouldn't know how to begin. I couldn't, I didn't know any sermons, I don't know any about church.

Oh, no. Oh, no. And then, why don't you go yourself? If you really believe somebody ought to go.

And it, eventually, I just made God's two promises. The first, Dear Lord Jesus, if you will open the way and show me how, I will go myself. The second, I will never again ask anyone to do something that I believe you are asking me, the person, Gladys Aylward, to do.

The first promise I kept within the next year and a half, by buying for myself a third class ticket on the Trans-Siberian Railway, packing a suitcase and going. The second promise I am still seeking with his help to keep. And I praise God that even although I didn't understand all it was going to mean and all it was going to cost, I still went.

I wonder tonight, if God asked you, would you go? Oh, not to China. This isn't a call to China. This is a call to give to God a completed house.

Only just a few years ago, I realized that to pay my own fare was something that was rather wonderful. I didn't think it was wonderful in those days. To me, it was just the ordinary conclusion.

I went to work and I earned the money and I could spend the money how I liked and so I paid my fare to China. So come home to very lazy England. Young man, young woman, are you a leaner? Your Great Britain is full of leaners.

You know, those people that lean on family. Well, you take care because the leaning post is going to fall one day. Do you want to do something? Go home and ask your father for the money.

Hope he doesn't give it to you. Stand on your own two feet. You're a man and you're a woman and you are answerable to God, not to a man.

Not even although that man be somebody you love like your son or somebody you love like your mother. I never asked my parents. I told them I was gay.

It was my money and it was my life. And I believed I was doing what God wanted me to do and I praised Him that although they did not understand all that it was going to mean, they accepted and let me go. I went across Europe, Poland, Russia, across Japan and into the north of China.

And here I joined an old lady, Jeanne Lawson. Jeanne Lawson was Scotch. She was 74.

She had spent most of her life in China. And now I had come along. I am positively sure that if we had met somewhere outside with the idea of joining up and working and living together we would have parted the next minute.

But God is a great God, you know, and He didn't allow that. He evidently intended we were to be together and so we did not meet until we were right in the middle of China and neither of us could run away. Jeanne Lawson had been born in a tiny little fishing village in the north of Scotland.

She had never been to a big city. She had never been to England. I had been born and brought up in London and had never been more than a few miles from my own home.

She was 74. I was 25. We knew nothing that the other one knew.

We'd done nothing that the other one had done. We couldn't. Age and youth, north and south, how could we? And yet God put us together.

I did not learn to love Jeanne Lawson as I have loved lots of other people in my life. But I have what I call a little compartment in there of what I call a proud love. 74, still going for Jesus Christ.

I come home to find most 74ers with their feet on sofas grumbling about all the good old days that aren't here anymore, that if they thought that is how they never were, all their operations, all their bad headaches, all the things that haven't been right. 74ers, I've met them, I know. If you will bring into my storehouse your completed time, God gives strength, courage, and everything that's necessary.

He says, I'll open the windows of heaven for you and pour out blessings on you. And friend, I pray that you will get down before God, as some of us have had to do, and just have it out with Him. I pray again and again for some good old townies still going, even though only for Jesus Christ.

We opened Jeanne Lawson and I in this small city hidden in the southern shanty hills in north China, a mule inn. Now this was not because we loved mules, because we neither knew anything about mules anyway, or because we wanted to go to business or make money or get important. Oh no.

But because sitting on the side of that mountain one day, watching those men going over those mountain trails with their animal trains, Jeanne looked up and she said, You know darling, wouldn't it be wonderful if those men got Jesus? They'd take Him and His love and salvation to places you and I would never be able to go to. Let's go home and ask God what we do about it. And home we went.

And down on our knees we went on this mud floor. And for the first time I heard somebody cry. Oh I'd been to prayer meetings, I'd been to church, but I had never heard anybody what I called that of the gates of heaven for the souls of men in the way Jeanne now battered for the souls of the men of young country.

I, I'm afraid, was a little concerned and I knelt rather tremblingly behind her. But I was to praise God that although Jeanne never taught me how to eat Chinese food with chopsticks or anything about Chinese customs or even gave me any hints on how to learn the Chinese language, I learnt how to pray and win the souls of men for my Lord. That's why she's got that little special compartment down there in my heart.

And I pray to those of you who are getting old that somebody may keep you in their heart, not because you have been beautiful or done some wonderful deed, but because you have taught them how to pray. Every night, these men with their animal trains came in to eat. They listened to a story from Jeanne who sat on a little stool in the middle of the courtyard while they finished their food or smoked their pipe.

I don't know the story. One, I did not understand Chinese. Even if I had, I wasn't there.

I was out in the yard looking after the mules. Somebody had to do this job and there was no other job I could do, so out we went. And again, there were times when I can honestly tell you I wished every mule was in the bottom of the sea.

Nasty, pasty, smelly, obstinate things. And then as I got irritated with the smell and the heat, my eyes would be drawn to that moon gate and I would forget all about them and all the smell would go. And look at Jeanne calmly sitting there and the men, the owners of the mules, she was leaning forward trying to catch every word of the story she was telling.

The story of Jesus. If you will bring into my storehouse your completed cup. Friend, when God asked Gladys Earworth to go to China, he didn't ask for one hand.

He didn't even ask for two hands. He didn't even ask for one hand. He asked for... And bit by bit, he got everything.

And all I can do is pray. Jeanne died when we had lived together in the inn for just one day. But the very men who had come into the inn were our first Christians.

They weren't even men of that city where we lived. They'd come down from the mountain trail with their packed mules. And then, when Jeanne died, I now believed that because I was a young and single girl

and alone, I should move.

Girls didn't live alone anywhere in those days. And certainly not in the middle of China. China anyway has been a land of great convention.

Women didn't go out alone, however old. They were always accompanied by some male servant, male member of the family. And if they hadn't got that, then they didn't go out.

And so the consequence was I couldn't go out. I found that I was bound to the courtyard simply because I had no chaperone and no one to accompany me. And I longed to know the women.

I longed to go into the village. And I wanted to see outside. I was young.

I was happy. I wanted to be free. And now I was bound into one small courtyard.

And every night that courtyard was filled with animals and men. Well, I didn't know quite what to do about this. I decided that I would have to move.

Where? Well, I didn't know. I didn't know anybody else. But I suppose God would tell me where to go.

And then two separate thoughts came into my mind. The first was that did God put a person for one year in a particular place, pour blessings upon them, and then, because it was uncomfortable, and yet knowing that they were the only real Christian there, expect them to move? Well, I didn't think so. God was a God of love.

And the second thought was that I knew the only bit of language I had learned while I was in this place was only understood just there. So that if I moved, I would have to start learning an entirely new Chinese in that I wouldn't understand anybody outside and they wouldn't understand me. I couldn't see it.

No, I just couldn't. God doesn't do things like that. God is a God of common sense as well as love.

And He knew I was the only Christian. So I did something that I wouldn't advise you to do unless you felt very definitely led. I decided that every day when I read my portion, if I came across in that particular portion the word go, I'd get up and go.

If I didn't find the word go, then I just wouldn't move. But I read day after day after day after day, but I didn't find the word go. So I stayed.

Rather puzzled, little concerned, but wondering, why is God keeping me right here? I'm lonely. All day long, all I could do was study the Chinese in a very sort of odd way in that I had no books and nobody to teach me, only the old cook. And then at night time get mixed up with the muleteers and the men.

And then the door opened. I discovered that because I had been born outside in a land that was Christian, I was the only woman with unbound feet. All our women had tiny little feet, just the size of my middle finger.

When the little girl is from two to four years old, and she could properly balance on those baby feet and walk those baby steps, her feet were bound up. By the time she was from eleven to fourteen, her feet were finished. They were.

They were crippled for life. Now down in the capital of China, Chiang Kai-shek had become Christian and seeking to put on reforms all over the land he was now head of, he made a law. The binding of women's feet was now to feet.

So that although I know other reforms went on, I don't know any more than that this one law was going to mean more to my sisters and to me than you in Great Britain will ever really realize. You do not know how much we owe to this man and his courage and his stand for the faith that is in Jesus Christ. And when you criticize, would you be very careful? If you bring him to my storehouse, your completed time, you find yourself in love with people you might not like, but whom you know are your brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

This meant that every headman of a district had got now to find somebody who he could organize and pay and send round that district to stamp this customer foot binding out. And the Mandarin of Yantang Xian had decided that this was me. But I had decided that it wasn't.

And so the day he came with the intention of getting me to accept this job, we stood on each side of the courtyard, getting no nearer to each other and refusing almost to listen to each other. I wished him anywhere. Into my heart was the thought that I had gone to China for Jesus Christ and I didn't want to be mixed up with governments and feats and politics and all these sorts of things.

I wasn't interested. I was interested in souls for the Lord of Glory. But you know, I couldn't get rid of this man.

He just stayed on and on and on and I didn't know what to do. And then I sent up a silent prayer to the Lord to send him out. And something most amazing happened.

It seemed as if away in the distance somewhere there was a little voice. It sounded just like my brother. It wasn't.

He was still here in England and I was in the middle of China but the very words that he had sung across the kitchen at me all those years before. If you really believe somebody ought to be going why don't you go yourself? Think. But feats are nothing to do with me.

Do you really believe they should bind their feet? Well, perhaps. Then why don't you do something about it? And I suddenly went and accepted the job. Something I had never dreamed or thought of and wouldn't have thought of in a million years.

I became an employee of the Chinese National Government. The official office. I didn't get the job because I spoke good Chinese which I didn't.

Or because I knew how to climb mountains which again I didn't. Or that I knew anything about the people of those mountains which of course I didn't. Simply because of the size of my business.

You see, friend, that's what you have to put all of yourself in. God at that moment didn't need my hands but he needed my feet. And he got them.

I cannot tell you that the job was wonderful that the pay was glorious. It wasn't. You've never seen our women sleep the rest of your day.

I only know that I was happy because I believed I was doing what God wanted me to do. And every village, every hamlet was mine. I was an official and I could just walk in.

I could knock on your door and just go in. My congregation were there. I had, when I went out, on long journeys, four men.

On shorter journeys, two men. They were from the local militia of our own city. They were just little fellows that were so proud to be following that woman who knew everything.

Oh, if only they knew how much I didn't know. But we would arrive in a village and I would stand on the middle of the threshing ground, which is also in the middle of every village, fetch them all out. Everybody out.

And I would wait and watch all the doors opening and the people streaming from the inside. Two men in the field, fetch them in. Bring those children and sit them at the bench.

And gradually we would get organized. They had to be all there. Doesn't take long to explain about this.

Growing and smoking open, does it? And so we start off. Shall we learn to sing? Sing? Government officials sing? Oh yes, we sing. Well anyway, you do the same as I'm doing.

And they learn to sing. And they listen to stories from this, the book. And they learn that God had created men and women as little babies and their feet were the same because he expected them to remain.

I learned very early that every two feet had a heart and a soul and lots of relations. As through the inn came the first Christians. So now through my job came the first Christians.

Whoever would have dreamed that God was going to use what was then a heathen government to open the mountains of South Shanty to the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ. There were no missionaries. There never has been.

There was just me. I wasn't a missionary. I'm an official of the government.

And then there came into my life something which I hadn't reckoned on, thought of, or knew anything about. Because although I was happy, earning my own living, holding my own, and God was blessing in a most amazing way, whole villages had come out for Jesus Christ. I've had bonfire after bonfire of their idols and their ancestral gods and literally sang in my heart as they knelt to take Jesus as their saviour.

But I was so lonely. I ached with loneliness. I lived one week's journey from the next white person.

They were the only people who knew anything about England. They were the only people who knew anything about the fact that I had a mother and father and I still loved them. The mountain people, they didn't know.

I was just the official, you know. I was just that one sent by the living God to tell them about Calvary. That I had a home and a mother and a father don't think it ever entered their heads.

And I longed. I longed to sing choruses. I longed to talk and be really happy.

And I didn't know how to. And then I came to problems not only in my own heart and my own life because we don't stay at being little boys we grow into men. We don't stay at being girls we grow into women.

And I had grown up. But because I was sort of facing problems I was also in the works. There should have been a man.

I couldn't go out alone without these two men who were my bodyguards or the four men who were my bodyguards. I would never have been allowed more than those few steps to my front door. I couldn't talk to men on my own.

I'd got to go and grab some old woman or something to stand by me. And you couldn't always find anybody who was willing or had time enough. And so I hustled.

Well, I came to the final conclusion I got the solution to all the problems in the works in my heart and in my life and in the need of the city. The whole thing would be solved if I had a husband. And it wouldn't be.

I didn't know how to settle this and so I took the matter to God. And I prayed, Lord Jesus, you saved me, called me, used amazing ways to pull me out and put me down here somewhere. Over this great wide earth there is a young man.

I don't know him. I don't want to know him. I only know that if you have chosen him he is the very person who will fit into this work and into me.

Would you pull him out? Would you do for him what you did for me? And here we will meet. We'll have the first Christian home by loving you and loving each other and we'll have the first quiet baby these people will ever see. I really believe, because God answers prayer, that one day I would see coming on a mule train or on a camel train a young man.

He wouldn't probably have ever heard of me. But that would matter. We'd meet and wouldn't it be wonderful? Oh, the joy of having somebody to climb the mountains with, somebody to discuss things with, somebody to sing with and to pray with.

But he didn't come. Do you think he should have come? Maybe you've never thought. Then tonight I further challenge Forica.

Do you believe that it was God's will to leave one woman all alone? Right in the middle of what to you appears to be nowhere? Do you? Did you do anything about it? You're doing anything about it now because there are people in the same position right today. Are you bothered? Then you should be. And I challenge you men and women to seek God's Holy Spirit and ask him to teach you how to pray.

Please turn your cassette over at this point. They're going to fail as I nearly did. Unless you do.

I waited and I waited and then decided that perhaps I was wrong. Maybe God didn't want me to have a husband. Well, if he didn't want me to then that was that.

But he wouldn't leave me alone. He was a God of love. And he knew that I longed for fellowship and companionship.

I'd pray for fellow workers. And so into the next year I did. And I waited and I prayed in the same way for that fine girl who, of course, as you know never came.

I wonder if she should have come. Young men young women in the name of Jesus Christ I challenge you everyone what are you doing for Jesus Christ? What are you doing for Jesus Christ? Not what are you

doing for your career or yourself or even your mother and father but for Jesus Christ. If you will bring into my storehouse your completed tithe says God then you can prove me and you see what I will do.

But you haven't got your completed tithe in so you haven't got any blessing. I do believe somebody should have come into that path of fellowship. Because you see it was I who watched the people who I couldn't get round to die without Jesus Christ.

Into that next year when I realised that probably no one was coming I'm afraid I just went lower and lower and lower. And tonight friend may I remind you that if you have a missionary or if you know of that native worker or if you don't then find one you should be praying every day. They are in the forefront of the battle and they need upholding and caring.

If you will bring into my storehouse your completed tithe for what purpose? That my family may be upheld and kept. They're not asking for your money. They're asking for your upholding care and your love.

And so one day they are walked up the city of Yanchang a grim hard-hearted woman is this Clarice Eowart? Yes. She's not preaching about a God of love because there isn't one. Love? You talk to me about love? That's the God who picks you up and pulls you out and puts you down in the middle of China and proceeds to forget all about you.

He doesn't care whether you're so lonely that you ache or what happens to you or anything. He only, well that's all it is to it and well here we are. Lord if you want a grumbly crotchety old maid well here she is.

I'll serve you but you wait and see what you get. My heart was filled with my own self pity my own self righteousness, my own pride my own ideas myself. Friend are you there? Are you there? I meet them every day in the London tube on the buses, in the trains the miserablest lot you could ever meet.

They don't care about anybody but me and mine and us and ours. Got the worst headache in the world haven't you? Well I'm telling you you haven't. God does not demand God does not push God does not pull He says if you will bring.

And when that tide goes in it is in God's hands and He will do with you as He so desires in such a wonderful and loving work that you will find you are usable wherever He puts you. I walked up the city street and sitting on the side of the road was an ordinary mountain woman leaning against her knee was a very dirty miserable looking little child. I discovered she was there to sell it.

I bought it. I didn't buy the child as you now know because I loved children because I didn't or because I pitied it because I didn't or because I wanted it because I didn't. I wanted my own baby and my heart at that moment was filled with my own self pity and my own ideas.

I bought it because I truly believed that Jesus Christ asked me to. As I stood on that busy city street it was as if somebody brushed past me and a voice somewhere behind me was saying buy it for me. I haven't any money.

Oh yes you have and I suddenly remembered that in my pocket there lay a few Chinese coppers. Do you mean to say that you want me to buy this with my own money? Because you see Glenn you can only buy a body but I can save it so. Do you know how I earned this money? Because this is my wages you know.

See that mountain? I climbed up that mountain almost on my hands and knees because it is too steep for an animal to climb up. When I got to the top of that mountain I called those village people together and I shouted myself hoarse. That's my job and I came down here to receive my wages.

Yes there's the voice. I know. I know exactly how you feel.

You see guys one day I too climbed the mountain and I too perspired all over climbing it. When I got to the top of the mountain I didn't shout in fact I never even opened my mouth. I allowed those men to do exactly what they liked with me and they nailed me to a cross.

Do you know what for? Because guys I hadn't any money but I hadn't anything else to give. So I gave myself my warm life's blood. I was thirty three and I woke.

I was thirty three. Friend have you ever been to Calvary? Oh not a place. Can you close your eyes and know that God through the power of his Holy Spirit will give you a vision of what Calvary cost the son of the living God.

Blood and sweat and tears. Murder. Our most horrible death and it was for you.

I did. I'm never going to Jerusalem or Bethlehem. I don't need to.

I know it all. All I know is he bought me. And I just realized that all I could do was to hand myself body, soul and spirit over to him.

I bought the child. It was the first act of what was going to be the complete submission of myself to him. I never dreamed that I was buying my first daughter a little girl who was going to come into my life and mean so much.

From her there came one by one the others. All in different ways. All under different circumstances.

All so different in their temperaments and characteristics. But they came. And I praise God for them.

He kept us. He fed us. He clothed us.

We all lived in a higgledy-piggledy mess in the end. But we were very happy. And by the time the war came I had 40 children.

And so one day looking down and on this sort of all scrambling mess below I said, Oh Lord, I don't think I can bear anymore. I believe 40 are a good round number for one woman and please don't send any more. But you know God doesn't always answer your prayer as you expect.

That was the year the war began. And down being pushed in front of the ever advancing Japanese enemy came hundreds and thousands of lonely pathetic refugees. And when they had passed through our little place there were always a few children left behind.

So the family grew and grew until there were over 80. 80 of us during those years ran around the mountains. He protected us.

He kept us. He fed us. And then we made a final getaway.

Came over the Yellow River where he worked miracles for us to make a new life for ourselves in the province next door, Shenzhen. I watched the older ones go away to join the army, the navy, or the airport. I watched the girls go away to join Red Cross units and to be put into hospitals for wounded soldiers and for wounded refugees.

And each time I broke my heart I praised God for them and handed them over to him. He'd given to me to love and to bring up. And I prayed and longed that they should go out to be the testimony and the witness which I longed to be in the place where they were going.

I don't know what became of lots of them. War separates. War kills.

War hurts. War breaks your heart. But we kept the smaller ones of us together as long as possible.

And then, as you know, when the first enemy retreated, so a second, more wicked, more evil enemy swept in. And what we had not lost under the first enemy, we now lost under the second. The Japanese never took away our Bibles.

The Communists did. The Japanese did not do what the Communists did. And we watched with aching, breaking hearts this evil, horrible thing take bit by bit everything we possessed.

Then tonight I don't know you. I don't know your thoughts. I don't know that you love the Lord Jesus or that you know him as your Saviour.

But I challenge you if you have any idea that Communism has a good point. It came from hell and if there's any good in the devil then there's good in Communism because that's its master. I hate it with every breath I breathe because it is my Lord's greatest enemy.

It has killed. It has murdered. It has suppressed more love, more people than any other thought or religion has ever done since the world began.

And all that amazes me is that you can sit and listen and swallow the bait that they're throwing out on you. Great Britain I challenge you to give to God your completed tithe and get the blessings because if you don't you know what's going to land in? Something that you least expect. Now don't say nobody's ever warned you and don't go away and say it cannot come here.

That's what we said. I sat in a lovely little village on the side of the mountain and said oh no it couldn't come here but I watched that village disappear bit by bit, brick by brick man, woman and child. If you haven't got the blessings why? Because you have not given to God.

What are you? We met the family and I for the last time in a field outside the city of Chengdu the capital of Sichuan. I had decided it was time to go. I brought danger on everybody who looked on me or even spoke to me.

Because although I held a Chinese passport and was Chinese in my thought, in my love in my language, in my clothes and in everything but my face I still had a foreign face. I came out. I would willingly have died for China but God didn't ask death.

He asked that I live. I came to England and then I turned my face back. I knew that I could not go again to the place that had been my home in North China.

It was closed, it was behind an iron curtain and so I asked the Lord where he would have me go. I set off and I wandered around the east and into the far east. Had some of the most amazing experiences going into South Africa Ceylon, Malaya and all around those fields looking into every face there might be my son I might find my daughter.

I might find a lonely Chinese. I did in every place. I found them there, not my sons and daughters in every place but Chinese who were lonely, who were refugeeing, who were longing for freedom.

God gave us blessing but there was no witness in my heart for staying in any of these places until I arrived in Hong Kong and here the whole place was absolutely chock-a-block full of refugees. They literally were there in their hundreds. Every place where you could put a bus there was one.

Every shop doorway all the pavements down the sides of the roads, even down the middle of the road there were families living. And I who knew what it felt like to be a refugee felt this is what God has sent me for. I will work among refugees and so I took a little room and I sort of set my little house in it as it were and I prayed and expected that God would show me what to do.

Well he did because he does. I didn't know in those early days how to begin. I wandered among up and down the roads sitting beside those heart-breaking families nursing some of their dirty babies.

I wasn't really doing anything. I didn't know how to do it. And then a miracle happened.

I met one day in the street one of my own boys. I thought he was dead. He thought I was dead.

And now right there in the middle of all this great crowds of people we met. And we joined up. This has been a most wonderful partnership, my son Michael and I. I praise God for him for all he has done, all he means to me and all I know he means to God.

We opened right there in Kowloon what is now the Hope Mission. It was just then an empty shop. There was nothing in it.

And for the first couple of months everybody who came in just either leaned against the wall or stood up but they crowded in. God blessed us from the very moment that we stepped into the place. And I praise God for all he has done in that little place.

We have the usual activities that go on every night. Tonight there are these different groups and they come for their prayer meeting or their bible study or their band practice. They're terribly in a hurry.

Mostly they're young people who have come out leaving all their families behind. They're lonely. But here they find fellowship.

This is not only their spiritual home but they will tell you it's their home. So that although they don't actually sleep there they count it as their home. We now have in Hong Kong four rooftop schools.

If you have seen on television those great high resettlement buildings and you know what happens you rent a rooftop and you put around it a fence or what I call chicken wire and you build a little lean-to in the middle and you open your school. The children live in the building believe they just come up to the rooftop. Every resettlement building holds one thousand families.

We have four. The opportunity is wonderful. And if you see them your heart just sings with the fact that they are not only learning to read and write and understand the things of the world but they are learning of Jesus Christ.

We last year opened what we call a poor school which is for the children of beggars. These have no status, no name. They can't take jobs because they have no pass and so they are beggars.

Their children will be beggars unless something is done. Well they are not going to be beggars if we can help it and so with others of like mind these poor schools have been opened. We have won.

It was wonderful to go out there just a little while ago and have their dirty little hands put on you and a little dirty face looking up and saying Grandma, oh Grandma, are you my Grandma? Yes dear, I am your Grandma. Oh how wonderful to have a Grandma. But isn't it wonderful to have a father? Oh yes but he is up above you know and they in their simple way are proving the love of Jesus Christ.

I did not remain in Hong Kong. I, because I again believed that I should go one step further went to the island of Formosa.

Now again I didn't know where I was going I only believed that that was what I should do and when I got on to the island I just didn't know again where to start but I arrived when the island was going through a wonderful time of shall I say not actually spiritual revivals but revivals of all kinds all sorts of reforms were going on they were unifying the language, land reform schools were being built and opened so that things that never could and I do not think ever will happen on the mainland of China are really happening in Formosa and I just as it were went down into the middle of it and had a most wonderful time and while I was having this time of student retreats revival meetings conferences conventions which I had sort of come into because when I had come out of Shanxi into Shanxi

and discovered that our mountain dialects would not be understood down there on the plains I had learnt Northern Mandarin and oh how grateful I am to God for letting me learn it while I was still anyway younger than I am now and it was all ready to go into in Formosa where it is now the official language and imagine I arrive speaking the official language to me it was just overwhelmingly wonderful and then right in the midst of all this busyness God as it were would have forced up I went home one night to the little room that I was living in to discover that somebody had already been in it they had not stolen anything but they had left right there in the wash bowl which was on a little chair inside the room a newborn baby and I picked up the bowl with the baby in it and I said oh no Lord

there's some mistake here now I do not want a newborn baby and you know that I have nothing to feed it of close it in or any time to look after it and also may I remind you that mothers are young I am well over 50 but there was no answer from heaven at all just as if God was there but as I was standing with the bowl with the baby in my hands it was just as if I could see myself all those years ago standing in the kitchen of my own home dear Lord Jesus I promise I will never again ask anyone to do something that I believe you are asking me the person that is able to do so I took the baby God worked more miracles for that baby in its first few days than he's worked for you and me and all our lives so it lived but before long there were other babies people got the idea that I loved babies

and so every time I came home well I knew what was going to happen and now somebody told me that outside in a very lovely place from our city Beto on the side of the mountain there was an old hotel I took it, rented it the Gladys Airwood Children's Home it has been filled up to last year with children of all kinds all

sorts and all conditions orphans of all sorts, lonely pathetic lost abandoned babies, God blessed in a very wonderful and mighty way and then four years ago I came to a very important time in my life, I had my 60th birthday very important in China and of course there were great celebrations and all the important people you see gave me honours and so forth but at the end of that week my family arrived now the family is rather large and they filled everywhere in fact they

swamped the hotel and they were in everybody's house and so forth because you see the family have grown up and married and then they have got children and so there are they go on and on you see and there they all were and on this night after all the grandchildren had paid their honours and everything are just the family my sons and my daughters and my eldest son gave a speech he is an officer in our Chinese air force and a very very fine Christian in that force and now our honourable mother has got to the honourable age of 60 and so we the family have decided that it is time that she had a rest she has spent all her life on looking after such as us who were just little bundles of nothing that she picked up on the side of the road and has loved and cared for and then of course you know the

usual all sorts of things that would go on and so now we have decided and we have got a little house and we have even sent outside and bought a bed we don't have beds in Formosa as you know and so we are expecting that our mother will now take her rest and sleep every night and all night on the honourable bed well I thought this was a very wonderful idea and I went and took up my residence in the little house quite small but it is very nice and I slept very comfortably on the honourable bed for one whole month at the end of that month one of those very boys had been doing accounts of the orphanage with me on his way out very late at night go back to the orphanage up the hill his foot kicked against what he thought was a bundle of rubbish just outside my door he picked it up he was on his

way up the street to put it in to the bin which is there for the purpose when he thought he felt it move he was very annoyed that somebody would tie up a little dog or a cat and leave it on our doorstep he brought it back but when it was opened it was neither a cat or a dog but a baby I believe the dirtiest baby we've ever had the sickest baby I've ever had anyway it just breathed I decided that to wash it would kill it so I took it to the kitchen I rubbed it all over with cooking oil wrapped it in a towel and took it to bed with me decided that in the night I would feel beside me a little cold lump all I would have to do would be put it out onto the floor and well it would have died I'd have done my best anyway but I slept all night and in the morning it was still alive it lived all that

week lived into the next week into the third week and now I woke up well wasn't it going to die? why didn't it die?

I didn't know because it didn't seem to move much it didn't cry or anything it just didn't die and so I just got ahold of two boys from the orphanage and I said now listen you go straight down to the police because everybody but the people who should know know about the baby the neighbours had all been in, the family had all been in even some important people from the government had been in but the police didn't know and they ought to know and so I said well go and report it to the police and on your way back you better drop into the registry place and just register you can think up a name on your way it's going to die anyway so why worry what name you give it imagine my amazement when they came back with the paper with the name of the baby on it to find they had christened it or shall I

say registered it as Aichi Gwon now Aichi Gwon literally means the first of a new A award family well Aichi Gwon was just a bundle in a bed for nearly one year didn't do anything just was there just breathing

whether he knew anything understood anything we didn't know there was no voice there was no nothing of what we would call sense at all and I nearly broke my heart and it came to Christmas and our babies were so lovely and we were going to have such a wonderful Christmas and I stood looking at them and they were all gurgling at the Christmas tree and the little silver paper things we'd saved to hang on you know and then I went home to my little house to Aichi Gwon who maybe would never know a Christmas tree, who'd never know that Jesus had ever come or that he'd ever die and I just

picked him up and I said oh Lord I do not believe that this is your will surely you can't just expect a little breath to go on in a body like this please will you answer my prayer I will never ask you for anything again if you don't want me to but would you take him back to heaven or would you heal him and God healed him here tonight is Aichi Gwon who's been naughty who's even taken his clothes off in the book and to you who have anything to do with him or seen him you know very well that when God heals he really heals because here he is there are no spots on him let me tell you we have been here just over four months and he's learned enough English to carry on quite comfortably without me and get lots of things that I don't know anything about we come back to the beginning if you will

bring into my storehouse your completed tie that my family may be sustained then you can prove me and you see what I'll do I'll open windows of heaven for you I'll pour out blessings and friend he has we have in this new family 26 and then to climax the whole thing just two years ago God sent to me my fellow worker and my heart was filled with a tremendous joy and I thought of all the lonely years in Shanxi when I had longed and pleaded first for the husband and then for the fellow worker and neither of them can and I felt what this is worth waiting for here was somebody who was going to fit in in a most wonderful way and I praise God for keeping me waiting and then sending to me dear Kathleen who although she had never nursed a baby knew nothing about orphanages and didn't know anything

about the mission field but who certainly loves the Lord and has fitted in in a way which to me has been literally amazing I've left her there with those babies and my heart is absolutely at peace about them and her and all that is connected with the work that doesn't belong to me but to God and so tonight friend as we have thought of all these various things that I in a very simple way have tried to fit together to not just prove how wonderful God is but to prove what you can get for yourself if only you would give him your completed time I wonder why people don't tonight would you let God speak to you would you allow him to come right up close and in your ear challenge your heart because I truly believe that there are many of us here whom God wants to teach how to pray I also believe

that there are many who should be doing at least something for him maybe there are those who should be giving and there are certainly those who should be giving what you give I don't know, nothing to do with me but it just isn't none it's yourself if you will bring into my storehouse your completed time that my family may be sustained and then says the great over and above all one Jehovah who controls the house, I will open the windows of heaven for you and you all get so many blessings you can't use them up because I will just keep on pouring them out oh aren't we miserable tonight as we bow our heads in a word of prayer shall we ask God what he is going to ask of us, would you be willing mothers if God asked you for your son or your daughter would you be willing young man young woman if

God asks you to go would you go or have you some reserve have you a particular place where you can't you have to go where he puts you, that jar of pickles in your pantry is put where mothers hand wants it to be put and in the same way you in God's storehouse are in the hand of God to be put down in the place that he knows and only he knows you are going to be useful in God did not send me to Africa he knew I

wouldn't be any good in Africa, he didn't send me into the slums of London he knew I wouldn't be any good he sent me into the middle of China because he knew I'd sit in there and I believe that in this way he does say with each one of us if we are not in the way of his blessings then would you like to go home and see why and how you can get back and get those blessings friend you live

in the miserablest place on earth Great Britain, you're the biggest lot of grumblers there is and you've got nothing to grumble about may God challenge you do you realise how many hungry people there are in India tonight, have you ever been hungry, do you realise how many people still live in refugee camps, have you ever lived in a refugee camp do you know how many people live under the iron hand of communism, have you ever lived under the iron hand of communism, have you ever lived through an earthquake like Turkey is right now do you know anything about a typhoon do you know anything about an enemy soldier standing in front of you when you're a woman do you of course you don't do you think you know anything no you don't know sorrow you don't know suffering may God break your hearts and

through those breaking hearts pour his love friend tonight there is one way to get into Russia shall I tell it to you prayer God sent Holy Spirit prayer there is one way to save a child in China tonight on your knees with believing Holy Spirit prayer, may God teach it to you there is going to come a day friend when you stand before God's judgement throne and he's going to say what have you got must I go and empty handed just to meet my saviour's hand you got anything he doesn't want your hat or your pie or your car or your land he wants you and the souls which you should be catching for him if you were brave can you hear the sobbing God's voice leaning out of that wonderful glorious heaven oh if only they would give to me something to use that my family that is dying without me might know

of my love God has given to you the privilege of living in freedom of being able to read this book when and where and how you like of praying anywhere how and when you like he hasn't given this privilege to millions no man in Russia tonight or China tonight can pray where and how he likes he lives under the hand of the devil as we pray would you let God deal with you as he's had to deal with me friend I have not done what I wanted to I have not eaten what I wanted or worn what I would have chosen I have not lived in a house that I would have ever looked at twice I longed as I've told you for a husband and baby and security and love and he didn't give it he left me alone for 17 years with one book a Chinese that's how I know and know I don't know anything about your latest novels pictures

theaters I live in a rather out of dated world and I suppose you say well it's awful miserable isn't it friend I've been one of the happiest women that have ever stepped inside I've had a great family of someone else's children who I've loved with a great love because Jesus Christ loved me and who I'm now receiving love back from I've a wonderful family and they are now going into the places that I will never go to they are doing things that I can never do because that's what God promised the heavens opening and the blessings tumbling out shall we pray dear dear father accept what we are now going to give to thee something that is precious something that we've kept that we are now going to hand over our pride our jealousy our self centeredness our prayerlessness our silly little empty

nothing all the things we've got ourselves tied up in oh lord give us freedom freedom in thee that you might be able to pick us up and put us down and use us when and where and how you like that someone might know how much you love them we pray right now not only for ourselves but for those whom we should be upholding and keeping those lonely missionaries sick frazzled tired of the heat or the cold surrounded by heathenism, superstition cruelty and sin oh god be very near to us we ask thee that you would teach us how to pray for the men in Russia the children in China people behind iron curtains behind war oh god

give us visions make us to dream dreams that we may know something of Calgary what it cost and a lost soul that we may learn not only how to pray but how to do how to be, how to go and how to give

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