

Lord, Give Me Your Heart - 1

by Jackie Pullinger

Jackie Pullinger shares her journey from addiction to faith and the transformative power of compassion in serving others.

Duration: 37:09

Scripture: Deuteronomy 5:15, Matthew 6:33, John 13:2-3

Topics: "Burden"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding our past and future in order to effectively minister to others. He highlights the story of Moses being sent as a deliverer by God and the Israelites painting blood above their doorposts for protection. The speaker also mentions how the Israelites wandered in the desert and received daily provision of manna from God. He shares a personal story about his fussy cat and relates it to the Israelites' dependence on fresh food. The sermon concludes with a reference to 1 John 3:16, emphasizing the need to show love through actions and not just words.

Transcript

I just want to tell you a little bit about my experiences. I used to be a drug addict. When I first thought about finding this God, this Jesus, I just wanted to get off drugs.

And I thought if I could just get rid of my drug addiction, I'd go back out in the world and get a job and earn a lot of money. And in the beginning I didn't really want or didn't think that I would believe in Jesus for a long time and stick around. Because I thought believing in Jesus was for nutters and it was boring.

But I've stayed around and I'm continuing to learn. I've learned fun things too, I've learned how to play football, I've learned how to play the guitar. And after I'd been with Jesus for a while, I started to do new things too.

I started to help other drug addicts. And in the beginning I thought, I can't do this, this is not for me. Because I thought working with these people, they've got no life and I'd be very bored.

But I used to be a drug addict and I still thought like that. I tried to sort of get myself going and try and do it in my own strength and help these people but I couldn't do it. And then I prayed for myself about this.

And God started to change my attitude towards drug addicts. And I started to look at them and think, well actually these people need Jesus too. And I started to do this.

But I still couldn't quite get myself excited about it. But I kept praying and I kept doing it. And in the last one or two months, God's actually touched my heart about these drug addicts.

And I've just recently, I've started to see why God went to find me when I was a drug addict. Because he prepared things for me to do. And not only has God begun to give me a heart and a good attitude towards helping other drug addicts, I've also surprised myself by giving out food to street sleepers.

In the beginning I couldn't hack it because they were so dirty. But now I find myself, I'm going to give them food and I'm praying for them. And I know that if it wasn't for God, I wouldn't be doing these things.

Because if it wasn't for God, I think if I'd continued in my other life, my parents would have kicked me out of home and I'd be on the streets somewhere. So I'm so grateful to God that he's using me but that he saved me. That's it.

I have a friend who lives not too far from here now. And he said to me one day, could you please pray for me? Because I don't have a heart for the poor. Please could you pray that I get compassion? And I said, well actually I'm not sure I can.

Because you don't get it when somebody prays for you. You get it when you go. However, you could look at 1 John 3 and we'll see what it says.

This is 1 John 3, verse 16. This is how we know what love is. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need, but has no compassion on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth. The Old Bible says it better. The Old Bible says, if anyone has material possessions.

By the way, it doesn't say if anyone has many. If anyone has material possessions. So that's all of us.

And sees his brother in need, but shuts up the bowels of his compassion. Compassion is what the Old Bible said. So, I said to him, he was a doctor.

Okay, I'll lay my hands on you. This might hurt a bit. And I laid my hands on him and said, Dear Lord, open the bowels of his compassion.

And he had diarrhoea for three days. Quite right. Quite right.

After all, so many of us who believe in Jesus have taken in such a lot, we're completely constipated. No wonder the church has been sick. It needs unblocking.

The bowels need opening. And, excuse me starting on this subject, but if you've ever been in hospital, it's the first question they ask you in the morning. Have you opened your bowels? It seems to be something that would keep us healthy.

And I'm a great believer in breathing in and breathing out. I'm a great believer in eating and passing it on somehow. And so many of us have got stuck.

I think a seminar, this is supposed to be a seminar, is supposed to answer some questions. How do you do something? Well, I can't do that kind of seminar. I'll never tell anyone how to do anything.

We have no manual that says one, two, three. But I'm a great believer in getting the heart right. We have some people who live with us for two years and never get it.

And it's interesting, they miss the whole thing. And they're interested in their days off and their rests and the treatment of helpers and so on. And other people get it in day one.

You see, it's to do with the heart, not the method. And a couple of days ago somebody asked me if I ever got discouraged or wanted to turn back. I don't think either of those words are appropriate.

Certainly not discouragement. Because discouragement means you were expecting something that didn't happen. And if you're a Christian, you know it will.

You don't need to see it. You have the promise, don't you? That whatever you do in Jesus' name is not in vain, so it doesn't matter if you don't see results. But I want to... So you can't be discouraged when you don't see any.

So why would you turn back? And I believe that many of us lose our way because we don't know where we've come from and we don't know where we're going. Therefore we find that there are very, very many Christians who are constantly checking their directions. God, nothing's happening, am I in the right place? It would probably be more appropriate to say I'm having a lot of persecution, I must be on track.

Because that was promised. So what I want to do is to look at some scriptures to do with direction. In John 13, Jesus... This was at the Last Supper.

It says, I think it's verse 2, that Jesus knew where he had come from and where he was going to. This is in verse 3. He knew he had come from God and was returning to God. So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, wrapped a towel around his waist.

Of course, if we know where we've come from and where we're going to, we could spend the rest of our life on earth with a towel around our waist and it wouldn't matter if anyone ever put our photo in a Christian newspaper or counted our converts. It wouldn't matter. Not if we knew where we'd come from and where we were going.

We could live happily in obscurity, just washing some hopeless old man's feet. Not the gangster chief who was going to go around the world giving testimonies. No, the hopeless old man who might die within a week of washing his feet.

What I mean is, in order to understand how to minister, we need to know where we've come from, where we're going to, and then it matters not the tiniest bit, whether our ministry looks successful or not. Neither do we mind. Except, of course, a part of us will always mind because we want people to be touched by Jesus and we want people to be healed and we want people to be changed.

But never, never, never find our satisfaction in that. Our satisfaction is in Jesus' heart, not the fact that 20 people responded. That's just wonderful and extra.

And if we can get this sense of direction, we're not going to be discouraged when things go wrong or don't happen right. Neither are we going to be proud when thousands swarm into the kingdom, for it was not because of us. We were just somehow picked to be there and allowed, in God's great mercy, to put a hand on.

Where did you come from? Deuteronomy 5.15 Remember, you were slaves in Egypt. The Lord your God brought you out with a mighty hand and outstretched arm. Therefore, observe the Sabbath.

Now, I really like this. You may be a bit surprised that we're bringing the Sabbath into this, but I think it's very important if you're ever to minister with the poor. Now, if you know Jesus and you're going to go into some paid Christian ministry, I'm not talking to you.

I'm now talking to those who are going to use your own houses, your own nothings, your own clothes, your own time, your own everything, unpaid, to minister to people with less. Understand the Sabbath. Okay, let's go back.

The people of Israel that he's talking to here were in slavery. They were cruelly treated by a slave master. They were in Egypt.

They had no freedom. The enemy, if you could ever remember your past life, always imprisons, steals, takes away, controls. But, Moses was sent as a deliverer by the Lord.

They painted blood above their door posts, one lamb for each family, and the whole family walked, I think the phrase is, under the blood, and into, well, not the promised land, but the bit in between. The desert. They should have got to the promised land very quickly.

But what happened in the desert was, they wandered around for quite a time, and they got hungry, and God provided magic food called manna. And, this manna came down fresh every day, and I always tell the story of my pussycat, who is extremely fussy. We live in a humid country, and his name is James, and he dislikes unfresh food.

He is addicted to a cat brand called Crave. And it goes soggy very quickly, so he has to have fresh Crave every day. And he will not eat yesterday's.

Actually, he won't eat this morning's. Well, manna, you got just enough for today. And it was no use picking too much, because it went off.

So what you were supposed to do, if you got too much for your family of six, was to go next door, and see if the family of twelve had got enough. And thereby, and you're supposed to do this every day. This wasn't at the end of the month.

This was every day, because it went off. But, on the sixth day, it didn't go off. On the sixth day, you got double manna, and it was fresh enough for the seventh day, which was the Sabbath.

And on the Sabbath, they were not allowed to work. And, in fact, the punishment for working was death, even picking sticks up. And this is very, very serious.

This was not a hard God at all. It was the opposite. It was God saying, I absolutely insist you have a rest.

I absolutely insist, you know, that the world will keep turning, even though I'm having a rest. And I will take care of you, even though you're having a rest. So they got double manna.

Also, their shoes never wore out. Imagine, 40 years, the same shoes. Their clothes never wore out.

Now, this all shows us that if God, with the blood of the Lamb, who is Jesus, bought our lives from slavery, He will take care of us. Along the way. And one of the reasons that we have so far found that people will not serve the Lord in serving the poor is that they're afraid there won't be enough for them.

After all, they say, we have a family. And that's why so many of us who look after the poor are single. Because the families are looking after the families.

I simply don't understand that. After all, if God can look after 300 single people, why can't He look after families? And there was enough for a family of 12, and there was enough for a family of 2. There was enough for a family of 6. It wasn't that it was harder for a big lot than a small lot. But I'm inviting you, if you're young, and see we've got some of the oldest teenagers always in my seminars.

Anyway, if you're young, I'm really inviting you to escape this whole get up in the world trip before you start. And you can, if you're completely sure that you're going to be provided for. Completely sure.

You can't be only half sure. You're going to be provided for, and the people that you look after are going to be provided for too. Now this is not logical, and I can only refer to scripture.

The whole tribe of Israel fed with magic food. A double magic on Saturdays. 1 Corinthians 6.20 You were bought with a price.

Therefore honour God with your body. 1 Corinthians 7.23 You were bought with a price. Therefore do not become the slaves of men.

If you're not a teenager, you may already be locked into something. Locked into a mortgage. Or locked into a pension plan, or a whatever.

Do not become slaves of men. Now I'm actually not talking about your mortgage. I'm not talking about your pension plan.

I'm talking about inside. Because this whole understanding of ministering to the poor and the lost is completely and only to do with your heart. Being free.

It's nothing to do with your circumstances. Some of our nothing at all to do with your circumstances. Some of our people get very bad jobs.

And then they say to me I'm sorry, there's no way I can feed my family. I have to work in a gambling den. And I say, well look, I've got 300 in my family.

What would you think if I went and worked in a bar? Oh, you're different. Well, you are too. If you know him.

Because for you and I, if we've been rescued from slavery, which is our sin, by the blood of God's own Son, do you not think also along with that He's going to provide for everything we need? Of course. This is not so we sit down and do nothing. It says that we're free to serve.

And you can't say it doesn't work until you've tried. Now Daniel and Joseph were slaves. Daniel and his three friends and Joseph, they were all slaves.

They were literally slaves. They were taken from their country to a heathen nation. But they were not slaves inside.

They did not become the slaves of men. They did not bow down themselves to the foreign gods. They were so free inside.

They worshipped their God and changed the nations that had caught them. And you need to be free inside. Free to serve God for one reason only.

Out of gratitude. For having been rescued from slavery. And it's strange, isn't it, that so many of us think it's the opposite way around.

In fact, some people go to meetings dreading that they're going to be called to full-time service. And, you see, I think we're all called to full-time service. So I simply don't agree with the words called to full-time service.

This is not summer called. The moment we're rescued, we're called to a service, but only, only, only, only out of gratitude. Not in order to pay back, but just because he bought us.

Some years ago I knew a little girl and she was sold when she was a baby. And she was sold to a prostitute. I met her mother later and her mother said, well, it was only \$100.

I didn't really sell her, but I couldn't afford to keep her because my, my husband had left me. So, she sold her to a prostitute in the walled city, an old one. And the old ones buy children, so that when they grow up they can live off them.

And she was kind to her. Yes, they are. And she loved her.

Yes, they do. But when this girl, her name was Maria, when she was 14, she decided she didn't want to sleep with the men that the old woman would introduce to her. She wanted to choose for herself.

So she ran away and I lost her. And I was very worried about how to find her. And, so one day, I went down to a main street in Kowloon and I began to pray.

And I said, God, would you show me where she is? Because there's two or three hundred bars she could be in. And, I thought God said, go straight on. So I walked straight on.

And then I came to a main road. And then I thought he said, don't turn left or right. Just so I crossed the road.

And I saw a building. And I looked up. And it was one of these buildings with, they blacked out the windows.

They black out the windows in the places called ballrooms or music halls. They're brothels. And at this point, I'm sorry to say, I said, well, I'm not playing spiritual detectives anymore.

And left. And later on, I had a dream. That she was in a room with many mirrors, mirrors on the ceiling and so on.

Some months later, she called me. And she said, please come and see me quickly. And I took a wall city boy with me.

And I found her in a room just like the one I'd dreamt of. And she had been in the building I'd not gone into. And she told me that she was working in this music hall.

And after work, she was so bored that she gambled. And that she owed a lot of money. And someone will always lend to these girls.

They're called loan sharks. But they lend expecting 200 percent interest every other day, you know, so that the girls cannot pay back. It's impossible.

They easily get the loan. And then they're in prison to this loan. They own thousands of dollars so quick.

And she said, please will you lend me a thousand dollars? Because if I have a thousand dollars, I can pay it back to this loan shark. His name is Michael. I don't have to go and be a snake.

And a snake is an involuntary prostitute. That means she's owned by Michael for a year. And she sleeps with all the men he introduced.

And he gets all the money. So she said, please will you lend me a thousand dollars? And I said, I don't have 100. We're talking about Hong Kong dollars.

That's much less than American dollars. I don't have a hundred. And then I said, well, let's pray.

So me and the other brother who was with me, we prayed. And I was thinking while we were praying, I only have one thing of any value. And that's my musical instrument, which is called an oboe.

And if you know anything about oboes, they're very unique. You know, your own instrument is your own instrument. And there's not one like it.

That was the only thing I had of value. And while I was thinking about this, the brother I brought with me had a prophecy. By the way, what the Chinese brothers from Hong Kong were speaking just now were prophecies, words from God.

And the prophecy went something like this. If Jesus Christ laid down his life for you, what's an oboe? I said, OK, OK, packs, packs. And so I said to her, OK, I give you the money on two conditions.

One, you let me hand it over myself. Two, I would like you to consider a new life. If you would like a new life, I'll find a place for you to stay.

Just you consider this. Anyway, I got the money and the next day we sat at a restaurant waiting for Michael to appear, but he didn't appear. He sent two men in a car and they came over to the table, picked up the brown envelope and walked off.

And I was very disappointed this all went so quick. So I called them back and I said, no, wait a minute. And they said, what do you want? And I said, I want to speak to your leader.

And they said, well, what about? And I said, well, I have a very important message for him. And they said, well, you can tell us. And I said, no, I can't.

I have to tell him in person. So they went to telephone him and they came back and they looked very surprised. They said, he'll see you.

And they took me to a nightclub on the 21st floor of a building, which you have to open with a two or three feet gold key. And when we got inside, the carpets were all, all nearly a foot thick. And the whole place was decorated with teddy bears.

It was not nice. Upstairs there were cages, gold cages, where the girls who had been sold were kept. And the men looked at them and then rang from the bar downstairs for whichever one they wanted.

And this was where Maria would go. And eventually Michael came over to me. And he's this big guy and he's full of self-confidence.

And he said, I suppose you think you've been very noble. Well, I help poor people too. I help mothers find their missing children.

Well, of course he knew where they were. And he said, I expect you think you're very noble paying the money for this girl. But you're a fool because she won't change.

She'll just do the same thing again. She'll waste it. And I said to him, it doesn't matter if she wastes it or not.

It doesn't matter if she changes or not. You see, Jesus paid for my life with his life. He died for me and he didn't wait until I changed before he did that.

He loved me so much he would have done that anyway. I would rather pay for her and give her the opportunity of freedom. I would rather do that than shut up my heart and see her die.

And he opened his mouth to reply. And he was struck dumb. I mean literally struck dumb.

Nothing would come out. And the tears rolled down his cheeks. He was dumb for about ten minutes.

And then he said, I have nothing more to say. Did she change? You want to know the end of the story? No, she didn't. That's the point of the story.

She was worth it. We don't pay for those who we think are worth it. He thought I was worth it when he died on a cross.

That's the point of the story. In Deuteronomy chapter 15 it's an extraordinary chapter this chapter 15. If you want to understand how to keep going in ministry, some of these Deuteronomy chapters are good stuff.

In chapter 15 he says in one place actually there shouldn't be any poor where you're going on your way to the promised land. There shouldn't be any. That's because he knew there was enough if they shared it out.

And then he said if there's a poor one, because he knew men wouldn't share it out. Anyway, how it went was this. If somebody was poor and they came to you for a loan and you gave them a loan, you were supposed to pay back every year a certain amount.

But in the seventh year, which is the Sabbath, we got the Sabbath again, everyone went free. You didn't have to pay back the loan. So he says in verse seven, if there's a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the Lord your God has given you, don't be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward

your poor brother.

Rather be open-handed and freely lend him whatever he needs. Be careful not to harbor this wicked thought. The seventh year, the year for cancelling debts is near, so that you do not show ill will towards your needy brother and give him nothing.

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