

# Lord, Give Me Your Heart - 2

by Jackie Pullinger

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of giving without a grudging heart, knowing where we come from, and being rescued from slavery, and calls us to a life of service and gratitude.*

**Duration:** 24:57

**Scripture:** Exodus 22:25-27, Numbers 11:1-6, Deuteronomy 15:7-8, Deuteronomy 15:10, Matthew 14:13-21, John 12:4-8, Acts 4:32-35

**Topics:** "Burden"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of caring for the least fortunate in society. He uses the analogy of the long-haired and short-haired groups to represent those who neglect and those who help the needy. The speaker quotes Jesus, who says that when we neglect the least of these, we neglect Him. He urges listeners to give generously to the poor without hesitation, as God is more concerned with our giving than how the money is used. The speaker also encourages believers to remember their own past struggles and to be willing to help others find their inheritance in Christ.

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## Transcript

He may then appeal to the Lord against you, and you will be found guilty of sin. Give generously to him, and do so without a grudging heart. Apparently, if one did not lend to the poor, we might be found guilty of sin.

And listen, not who we think are the deserving poor. God's a whole lot richer than that. You see, God's more interested in our giving than whether the money is used well.

We've got it the other way around. Well, I'm not going to give until I know it's going to be used properly. It's the other way around.

Give generously because it keeps your heart right. That's what it's for. And he goes on in this chapter to say, remember, verse 15, you were slaves in Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you.

That's why I give you this command today. If you have ever been in slavery, remember it. Because if you know you were, if you know that you were dead in your sins and he bought you with his blood, you can waste your life gladly.

Of course, if you don't know that, you'd be a bit stingy about what we give away. How much tithe, how much time, how much love are they deserving? Will it last? Has he changed? Is this the best way? And so on. If we know we've been indiscriminately and unfairly loved and bought with the blood of a son of God, well, we could waste our lives then on him.

And that's the whole thing. Do you know, if you don't know he's rescued you from sin, if you don't know he bought your life with his blood, if you don't know it was done surely out of love, because he could not bear not to have you. If you don't know that, you must run to him quick.

He's paid for all, free. Now that's the message. And we have to go back to where did you come from before we can go on.

And most people have never said thank you, never said thank you that we're rescued from a life and an eternal death, a death which goes on in a place where there is no light or freedom or love or friends. Some of us tasted some of it on this earth and would taste forever had he not laid his life down upon a cross. So if you've not yet run to a savior who died on the cross that you could be in the arms of the almighty forever, run to him quick.

So let me ask you again, do you know where you've come from? And where are you now? If you know he bought you, where are you now? Are you in eternal life or are you in the middle bit? Are you in Egypt? Well you shouldn't be if you know he's rescued you. But a whole lot of us live as if we're in Egypt. You know that wonderful C.S. Lewis story about all those dwarves that were in heaven and were having a simply horrible time because they never looked at the door and they were just fighting amongst themselves as if they weren't there.

And so many of us have forgotten, this is what one Peter says, 2 Peter 1, we've forgotten we've been cleansed from our past sins and so we spend our Christian lives grumbling and we are therefore unproductive. If anyone lacks goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness or love, if anyone lacks them he's nearsighted and and has forgotten that he's been cleansed from his past sins. If you've forgotten we'll say thank you in a minute.

This thank you would make a big difference to going on. Are you in the desert? Well the Israelites were not supposed to get stuck for 40 years but they did. And they went round and round in circles mainly because they were grumbling about their leaders.

Okay now if you are in a church which isn't moving please don't grumble about your leaders. And by the way they can't stop you doing God's work either so don't use that as an excuse. Okay they can stop you doing what they called ministry in their church.

Okay and they're allowed to do that but they can't stop you doing the will of God where he wants. That's not possible. No man can stop you doing the will of God so you're not allowed to grumble against your leaders and say we don't have a ministry with the poor in our village.

You can all pray for the neighbor on the bus. You can all go to the old man at the end of the street. Nobody has to ask your leader to do that.

You can all be kind to the child that's being ill-treated at home. We can all do that. We need no permission from a leader.

All we need to know is they are there and just offer them a little bit of God's love. That's if you've had any yourself. You won't be able to do it otherwise.

But don't go around in circles and grumble against the church or the leaders. That's what the people of Israel did for 40 years and they said we're really fed up with this rotten diet and all we ever eat is manna, manna, manna, manna, manna, manna, manna. Really boring.

I'm going to another church down the road because they've got good worship down there. I've heard there's good teaching in the next town. Well you rubbish.

You don't church hunt for a diet. You go to the Lord for your sustenance. Got it? No, you probably haven't.

Anyway, anyway, manna wasn't supposed to be that boring. If you look in the Old Testament, there are manna recipe books. There's how to cook it.

There's how to eat it. Lots of different ways and the flavors are described. So it was supposed to be interesting enough.

They grumbled about the diet. They grumbled about the leaders and they never got to freedom even though they had been rescued for it. Do you live as if you're in the promised land? Well I guess a number of you do.

And there are some people that say, hallelujah, I know I have eternal life. I know I have eternal life. The Bible promises it.

I believe it. I'm there. Good, fine, hallelujah.

There were some of the tribes of Israel who got their inheritance early, two and a half tribes of them. They were the tribes of the Gadites, the Reubenites and Manasseh. And they got their inheritance early and they said, okay, we've got our bit.

We've settled down. And Joshua and God say to them, excuse me, we're really pleased you've got your bit. We've really pleased you found your inheritance, but would you mind getting up? Because the rest haven't found theirs yet and they have to go over theirs to find.

So for the sake of them, would you mind? And they said, we will gladly do that. We will get up, armed, and we will go with them until they find their inheritance. If you already believe that you have eternal life, that Jesus has set you free and you're actually enjoying it, and I suppose some of you are because there was some good clapping and sort of jumping up and down last night.

Are you ready to get up, armed, for the sake of those who've not yet come into their inheritance? Now, they introduced a really interesting book last night, which was called Upwardly Mobile. I'd like to introduce mine. It's called Downwardly Mobile.

And I'm really serious about mine. That's what I'm longing for, downwardly mobile Christians. I'm longing for those who've been rescued out of slavery to go back to those who are still in slavery.

Did you know in church history, this is true, that where people have come out of drought, out of hunger, out of famine, and out of poor conditions, where the gospel has been preached and they become believers, the standard of living goes up. Did you know that? The land becomes fertile. They know how to

use the land.

They work. The standard of living gets better. Did you know what then happens? They get stuck.

It's called middle class. And the middle class gets stuck because they're afraid to go back. They're on their way up.

Well, we're not on our way up. We are seated with Christ in glory now, and we can go down because we don't go back into slavery. We're free.

And I'm looking for people who are so free they will go back, not out of duty, not in fear. This is not a sentence. This is not a punishment.

It's, I'm so free, I gladly go. I'm not a slave. I don't have to chase after the living that everyone else does.

I don't have to. It doesn't mean to say I don't have to work. It just means to say I don't have to work for my living.

My living is assured by the Lord. So I'm not a slave to earning it. I'm free to do what he says.

Now you have to be free, otherwise who's going to serve him? Only the rich. And they're the most afraid. Are you free enough to go back to the poor? You see, you won't be poor.

You know the most generous people I know? I had an old grandfather once. His name was Chau Pak. He was a heroin addict.

Actually, he was an opium addict for many years. And here's a long story. I don't have time to tell you, but he used to get paid by the opium dens to be arrested.

He was paid to get arrested. So the police were happy. They got their arrest.

The opium den was happy because they left him there to get arrested. And after he got arrested, they opened again. And he was happy because he got paid opium money to be arrested.

So this was his career until opium became too easily detectable. So he had to change to heroin and then it was lost. And I make friends with him over the year.

He's a wonderful old face. Anyway, it's a long, long story. But God healed his leg miraculously when I took him to hospital one day.

And at the same time, he came off heroin without anyone praying for him. I mean, I just said to him, call on Jesus, and he did. And the next time I saw him in hospital, he was better.

And then he came to live with us, of course, because he'd found a family. And he used to come nearly every day with all these things I didn't want to eat. But, you know, you have to take them.

The poor will always do this because they're so grateful. My leg is better and I don't have to take drugs anymore. And I've got a family and I've got a daughter and I've got pineapple buns and I can give away pineapple buns to my daughter.

And he got a small allowance. By this time, the government was giving a small old age allowance. He used to give it all to us.

All the old people do. We never take collections in our place, never. Never have to teach the poor to give, never.

They just can't help it. They're so pleased to be free. They give, they give, they give, they give.

And if they give you their whole week's food, you must eat it because they're so grateful to be free and to be able to share. I used to teach music in a very good girls' school in Hong Kong. And the teachers, they were very funny.

They found out that I was in the walled city and they thought that in the walled city I was conducting choirs. Well, no, not exactly. And they said, well, what a waste.

What a waste of your music talent. Now listen, if any of you have got talents that you think God can use, be prepared to waste them. He may or he may not.

He'll use them if he wants. He doesn't necessarily need them. But do be prepared to serve in any way.

That's what we look for. We look for people who are not trying to find a ministry or their place in our team. No.

Or even to be thanked. We're just looking for people who love people and do whatever there is to do today. That's all.

There was a woman like that. Her story is told in Mark 14 and she anointed Jesus with this expensive jar of perfume. And the disciples were very annoyed, especially Judas.

And they got out their calculators and they said, what a waste. You have blown all this expensive perfume on one man. You could have given the money to the poor.

It was worth a year's wages. Think how many people we could have fed. Ministry with the poor doesn't work like this.

It's nothing to do with numbers, nothing to do with how many can we feed. After all, five loaves, two fishes was enough for five thousand. People ask us about our budget.

We have none. We have no budget. We do not raise money.

We will not ask. Because we don't know who we're going to meet tomorrow. I mean, suddenly one month we had five thousand more refugees.

I mean, how could we have budgeted for that? If we'd had a budget, we'd have had to say no. So we can always say yes. You see, we can always say yes, because we're not under the constraint of our budget.

Or we just say to him, look, you promised that you're going to give us enough to give away. And that means that you can waste everything on one man. It just doesn't work quite like other people work it.

They want to divide it up. All the poor. This came from Judas, who was the keeper of the money bags.

But it says in scripture he used to help himself. And Jesus said, leave her alone about this woman. She did what she could.

That's all. All you have to do is what you can. And it might be just one man.

But you know, you know what scripture says, when she blew that perfume on him, it says the perfume filled the whole house. And I long for you to blow your life on one poor man. It doesn't matter if he turns out well, because the perfume will be so sweet.

A world will believe, a world will smell an aroma they've been longing for. It doesn't work like the world works it, for they'll divide it into graphs. And he counts the heart and the smell of a crushed rose.

The smell of a crushed sun. The smell of a crushed life, yours or his, meeting the world's need for love. It's all to do with attitude and whether we're grateful, and whether we know where we're going.

You're going to have to see him one day, and he will ask you, says Matthew 25, whether you have long hair or short. The word for sheep in Chinese, there are two. There's short haired sheep, and there's long haired sheep, they're goats.

The length of your hair is really important. Anyway, it goes a bit like this. Did you feed the ugly one that you saw in the street? Did you give a cup of water to the hopeless one round the corner? Did you visit the one in hospital? Did you visit the one in prison, the least, the ugliest, the most hopeless, the one least likely to change or succeed? Did you feed them? Did you clothe them? He says, if you did not for one, for one of these, you didn't do it for him.

That's the long haired lot. And he says to the short haired lot, the sheep, he says, thank you very much. When I was sick, you visited me.

When I was thirsty, you gave me a cup of cold water. That's all. It's not a fortune.

When I was in prison, you visited me. And if we'd known it was you, of course, we'd have fed you or visited you. But then you see, I think it really may be him.

I mean that. I think he's around the place. I really do.

I think he's planted himself. A man came to see me once and said, would you help me with a street sleeper at the bottom of my street? And I said, why? He's your street sleeper. He's your neighbor, not mine.

Maybe it's Jesus. I mean, it'd be awful to have missed him. Don't send me instead.

I mean, of course we'll go. But, you know, it really would be better if you went, because I think it might be Jesus. I mean, truly, I believe that.

Wouldn't it be awful to miss him? But you see, if you think you're going to heaven, we will answer him on that basis. Please don't. Will you answer him gladly? He is not calling you to serve the poor or to do ministry.

He is not calling you as a sentence. He is not calling you as a penance. He is not calling you as a punishment.

He is not calling you as a right. He is not calling you out of fear. I'd like to pray for some of you now.

First of all, do you know where you came from? Is there anyone here who's never known that he came to set us free from slavery? Is there anyone who's never said thank you? Let's pray together. If you've never said thank you, please say so now and tell one of us or your friend later, I said thank you to him today. He did not want us to be in prison.

He did not want us to be under control, under violence, under hatred, under fear. He sent his son to die upon the cross to buy us, to buy our lives from slavery and bring us into freedom. If you've never said thank you, Jesus, for buying my life with yours, just do that now.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

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