

Is the Bible Really God's Word

by K.P. Yohannan

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the importance of recognizing the Bible as God's Word and the urgent call for Christians to engage in global evangelism empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 32:49

Scripture: Romans 10:14

Topics: "Biblical Authority", "Evangelism"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of believing in the Word of God and the reality of eternity, challenging listeners to live by the teachings of the Bible. It highlights the early church's dedication to spreading the gospel and the urgency of reaching those who have never heard about Jesus. The speaker encourages a radical commitment to sharing the love of Christ and living a life dedicated to God's mission, drawing inspiration from the Book of Acts and the sacrificial examples of missionaries.

Transcript

Alright, for our few minutes of sharing tonight, I'd like you to turn your Bibles to the Book of Acts. Again, what we do tonight is actually an extended time of prayer, so really it's not such a big preaching night. So, the fundamental question that we need to answer, which we don't ask nor we think about, do we really believe this is God's Word? When I was going through my seminary years, one of the crises of faith was dealing with the reality of hell.

And because of the amount of stuff I had to read, and all of a sudden, this became a crisis of faith. Really, there's a place called hell. Is Jesus actually the only way for man to be saved? There is eternity.

And finally, that six months of my personal agony came to the conclusion, when I knelt down, finally recognized and admitted that this is God's Word. And this is given to us to live by. And no more the Book of Acts was my professor teaching history and numbers and dates and facts.

I began to see this as something God himself wrote through human beings. And he breathed into it the 26 alphabets we have in English language that is used for multiplied billions and billions of books and literature, education, everything in the world. God takes those letters, not in English maybe, but Greek and other languages, and he put these things together and gave it to me and said, this is for you to live by.

And the five and a half years of my Greek and philosophy and research and study and all these things, finally, I had to face this one question. Am I honestly willing to read this and say, this is for me to live by? And that revolutionized my thinking and put me on a whole different journey that I never knew before. And as people of God, whether you are in India or China or Germany or America, Canada, wherever you may be, when we read the record in the Book of Acts, we read about a 30-year history of the people of God, the early church.

If history was reason for all this, there's millions of things we can read. But this is kind of the model, the church of the ancient. I am tired and weary of preachers who only explain things to say, well, that was a culture, that was there and all that.

You can actually take out 90% of this book if you listen to preachers and try to figure out how culturally we had to work out the faith. But when you read this, you'll find these people who came to the Lord and abandoned their life, being forsaken and driven out, they will not deny Christ. And as a matter of fact, they were willing to find opportunities to be martyred and lose all for their faith.

And the very fact that these kind of things should be said in a prayer meeting like this is another evidence that we know more than normal Christianity is not what it is here for us. I remember in the early days when the Lord called me to serve him, I was barely 17, I began to hear statistics such as half of the world never heard the gospel. And then, because of the last 30, 40 years of the printing materials, and Bibles, and Gospels, and radio, television, and of course now it's much more, somehow there began to be a change in the perception of Christians and the church.

Well, that was all days when they talked about half of the world, but today maybe 25% of the world never heard the name Christ or never heard the gospel. But what we forget, the world population doubled. And think about Afghanistan, 90 million people live in the country, he said, maybe in the entire nation, maybe less than 200 non-believers.

Not one church to be found there. Over the 1.2 billion in the land of India, it is estimated at least half of the nation, people living in the rural communities, never heard there is a thing called the name Jesus. And over 2 billion people, by every sober-minded missions estimation, people still wait to hear the first Christmas story.

And if that be the reality, are we any different from the time of the church that we find here? As a matter of fact, we are given such a great opportunity to pray and intercede and be in the warfare to rescue people like never before. And there, they didn't have the aeroplanes, they didn't have the internet, they didn't have the cars and the fast-going vehicles and trains, no, they didn't have the cell phones and telephones, no. As a matter of fact, they were absolutely faced with the impossible situation, such as Thomas, one of the apostles, would travel from Jerusalem all the way to China and India.

How did he do that? It was a little flight or American Airlines. And think about that kind of reality. Or then fast forward, or William Carey or Hudson or Judson, think about these people who said goodbye to everyone, actually knowing they never would come back to see them again.

True, that happened. But whatever happened to us? And that's the reason why I think it is critically important that we read a document like this. It moves us.

It should move us. With passion, desperation, beyond these, with one focus. Jesus died for the whole world.

There's a heaven, there's a hell, time is running out. We must move forward with everything we have to rescue the perishing. But here's the problem.

That is, how can a sick person run? I have not been sick that many times in my life, but I had a few occasions of flu. I tell you, I look normal, but basically I can't get up from my bed. And I say to myself, I wish I could do this, but my body, energy completely drained.

And the truth of the matter is that Christianity generally looks normal, but inside we basically are dead. And that's the reason I actively promote people to read books, certain books that would set us free from bondages and give us a new perspective. And I didn't have the privilege when I was young, like many of you, to have a lot of stuff that you are blessed with.

You can take one of these new phones and Google and whatever you do, you can get a million pages of information. But those early days of my life, it was books that became my mentors, people that changed my thinking. And so I just want to promote or talk about a few books like this.

Carver Road, when I was 17, somebody gave me a copy of this. And it actually revolutionized my life. What is Christianity? What is relationship? How do you walk with God? What do you mean by walking in openness and godliness and being real? This is now in 85, 90 languages.

But you know, Christian books usually don't sell this. That's the bad thing about it. Get a hold of this.

Let me drop that. Another book that may be quite radical and significant next to the Bible in the early days of my life is this book, True Discipleship. By the way, I'm showing it not just for you, my brothers and sisters here, but for you looking at us tonight from your home or wherever.

Get a hold of this book. I've been carrying a copy of this since I was 17, as a matter of fact. And every year, at least a couple of times, I browse through this and look through this and read it, speed read whatever I do once in a while.

It just keeps me alive. What actually is Christianity? What is God calling? Did the teachings of Christ actually change in the modern day? Or Jesus, the same person who said, Unless you love me more than father, mother, son, daughter. And if you stop there, even your own very life, you cannot be my disciple.

Who are we trying to deceive? And the call of Christ still remains the same. And I think if we can get hold of this and read this message, and I tell you, we realize that the modern day Christianity is far from the biblical standard or the people that we read about in the Word of God. That's the reason I promote that and say, please get a copy of it.

Of course, you know, must read, Revolutionary War Missions. The reason you should read that, by the way, is because I wrote this book. And there's a picture of me in the back.

But this kind of tells you the story of what God can do in our generation through your life and my life. So, by the way, this is free for you to get, I think, if you ask for it. My wife, Gisela, wrote this book, Broken for a Purpose.

Problems and trials and difficulties we face in our life. The American gospel, the Western gospel says, oh, that means you don't have faith. But basically, what is God trying to do? Changing us through struggles and then his purposes.

And I think this will make sense. And a couple of other books, again. You know, the book Jesus Tired by Gail Irwin.

Talks about being Christlike in our following the Lord. You know, this book I read, I think, in 1974. And I hardly could believe that somebody living on Earth who wrote a book like this.

And that's when I ran into him and found out it's a real thing. And I encourage you to get a copy of it. How we must live our life as followers of Christ.

Of course, there's another book, Touching Godliness, that I wrote. Talks about the practical reality of being godly. But there's a book that I would encourage everyone to get.

Erasing Hell by Francis Chan. And I talked about my struggle early days in my life. Especially when I was in seminary.

But this answers a question. And it's not arrogant. It's not on your face or such.

But in a way that you realize, really, the reality of eternity. And what actually the demands of us. The kind of life we must live.

Then if you want to hear some preaching. Christ God, follow my footsteps. Again, one of my messages.

But I hear lots of people about how the Lord is using that to speak to people. Alright. We are in the book of Acts.

You thought, oh my goodness. We thought he was going to say something about Acts. He forgot it.

No. Acts chapter 1 verse 8. It's a verse that we all may have read a thousand times. But you will see power when the Holy Spirit come upon you.

And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria. And to the ends of the earth. As a believer living in Alaska.

Or deep in some villages in India. Or Pakistan. Or somewhere in Germany.

Or a small community. Do we have a responsibility? A sense that following Christ. His giving his life and dying on the cross.

And then he said, I'm going to send you the Holy Spirit. And with my power, you are my edge and reconciliation. Not just in your local community.

Not in the neighboring state. Not in your nation alone. But the whole world.

Because when we get to heaven, it is not going to be all brown skin, black skin, white skin. Or one type of people. People from every nation, every community.

We as followers of Christ, we must think continually about the day. When we stand before the Lord. With people that no man can number from all generations.

And from our generation. And the whole world must be our focus. And our thinking for prayer, giving, sharing.

Our priorities be proportional in the light of the larger context of our generation. Did you know, this is kind of a rough estimate. One-fifth of the world Christianity is found in the United States.

But we have here in this one country, 95% of the wealth we hold. Four-fifth of the entire Christian funds we are blessed with. But then, what is more critical is to realize that more than 80% or 85% or more of the resources we spend on ourselves.

Almost every month we will have a new Bible translation in the English language. Over 1,000 commentaries on the book of Acts alone available in English language. Just in these two cities, Dallas and Fort Worth, there are now over 18 full-time, 24-hour Christian radio stations.

Whereas we are still struggling to find one license for one billion people in some other part of the world. They won't allow us to do it. Is it bad to have these blessings we have? No.

I think somehow we often miss the challenge that the world is God's concern. And tonight, as we pray, I have no doubt in my mind that God will answer these prayers. Just before our streaming started, we had those prayer meetings and 63,000 some children.

And I said to myself, I can't believe that we have this privilege to have a part in the lives of these communities. And I don't think I'll ever in my entire lifetime be able to go to all the places like Burma and Tibet and Bhutan and all these countries. And China and Laos, Cambodia.

I don't think I'll get there. But what a privilege we have being where we are in this air-conditioned facility and nice, soft carpet. And all these amazing privileges God gave us that we can be here plugging our life into the lives of communities and nations and people and change them.

And I tell you, our prayer, our commitment, our decisions about our life and how we spend it need to be interpreted in the light of, for God loved the world. And he loved the world. And that ought to be a passion on our hearts.

You know, I think about all our kids here. It is, again, one of the most amazing things for me when the little children come and I pray with them. And I say to myself, first time I ever saw there was India other than my community I grew up in.

First time I saw there was people living in other nations. I had no clue until I left home at the age of 17. Now think about many kids, five, six-year-old boys and girls here, and they talk about all these nations.

They're informed. They're made aware. They pray.

And that, I think, is authentic and real. And I'm amazed by that. So, when you move through the Book of Acts, it is like a storm.

It is a tsunami. It just moves continually, no stopping. And you read in chapter 2, you'll find the Holy Spirit came and they were empowered.

But the Holy Spirit came not to give us goosebumps and throw us around. You know, I tell you what, he said when he comes upon you, you will have the power to become my witnesses. Such burden, such passion.

It is not about me, but it is about Christ. And, you know, I have some concerns about people who say I'm filled with the Holy Spirit and so self-centered and have no concern about the lost world. I don't know what they got.

I never forget that day when I knelt down beside that church in Jammu and Kashmir in a tiny room, cried out to God to fill me with the Holy Spirit. And I remember how the Lord answered the prayer. And I tell you, I couldn't stop talking about Christ.

There's nothing more important than sharing his love with other people. And then, of course, as a result, you'll find the community is born. And you talk about church.

You talk about the way these people behaved. They were not consumed about mine, me, little thing. No, they were all together with one thing on their mind, one accord, praying.

And, of course, you know, anything that sounds like a community, or, you know, like the Moravians we talk about that changed the world in the generation, we talk about all of a sudden, you know, red flags goes up. Oh, this could be a cult. Oh, this is too radical.

This is strange. And on and on like that. But please, for kindness sake, read.

These are not monkeys and donkeys and snakes and rats and elephants. These are human beings. They ran into Christ.

Their lives are so revolutionized. They came together, birds of the same feather, flocked together with one passion. Say that no matter what, we will keep preaching the gospel.

And, of course, you know, chapter 3, you see about this crippled God, you know, the poor man, beggar God healed, and you think that's going to be a great blessing. No. All of a sudden, persecution breaks out.

And chapter 4, you'll find they were called before the priest and the officials and said, what on earth you people are doing? And said, don't you do this anymore. Stop talking about Jesus. And they said, go jump in the lake.

He said, we are sorry. No matter what you do to us, we can't stop. Follow in the Lord and talk about him.

Nothing will stop us. Because of time, I don't want to labor over it. But think about some of our brothers in the mission field.

Literally saying goodbye for the day to their wives and children. With this thinking, maybe they will not come back to see them again. That is not a fairytale.

We have no problem about our young people going to some other country and here they just got shot and dead. And that will happen within a few months for 5,000 young men. We have no problem about that.

We have no problem about somebody, you know, going to Saudi Arabia or some country with the oil company and spend next two years making money. We all the sudden think, oh, you are abandoning your

family. You don't care about it.

But these people are going around to make money. But what are we doing? Our lives are involved in rescuing people going straight toward hell and forever. And doing everything to rescue them.

And somehow the voice we are continually, don't do it. Slow down. Chapter 5. What happened there is a problem in the local church.

So you think there is going to be a time that there will be a perfect situation that everything is going smooth and no problems. I tell you what, people fail. And some people fail miserably.

It is part of the battle that we live with. But then, chapter 6, by the way. If you think I am not reading the Bible, I am not doing it because I want you to read it.

Chapter 6, we come to the place of thousands of people coming to know the Lord. The church is growing, things are moving on, but there is a crisis. Who is going to manage all this? Now, here my brothers and sisters, here you are.

What are you doing? The question always is, all those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear unless somebody goes and tells them? But how can they go unless somebody says, I will be here to pray and send you? You know, of all the stories I heard about the Moravian movement, one that touched me the most, one of these stories, it is there in Germany, East Germany now, I was there to speak to a group of people there a few years ago. And those days, like ten families, normal believers, they would come together to pray.

And what is their prayer? Pray for Tibet and Bhutan and India and China and Mongolia. All these countries, they are pleading with God for the salvation of the world. And their heart is gripped and broken for the lost world.

But then they are dreaming about sending one of their people as a missionary. So what they do, they cast lots out of the ten families, which one will be picked to go, and nine families will stay back to pray and financially support them. But when they cast the lot and they pick the one family, the story is the rest of them are sad and they start crying.

The reason, all of them are hoping when they pull that name, it will be my name. So one family going to Ladakh, nine families back home, holding the rope, praying, living as though they are living on the mission field. They evaluate what they buy, where they go, what they read, everything in the light of a world out there that needs to come to know the Lord.

If I have a choice, just to do one thing, I wish to be somewhere in some village in one of these countries. The hardest place to live for God, it is not China. In some of these nations, I tell you, it is this culture.

If you don't believe me, please, I'll talk to you. Because we see often our life and work so divided, compartmentalized. Just like going to the office to work eight hours in IBM or some other company, okay, this is a few hours I work for God.

They don't realize this is a 24-hour call from everything in the world to be His. But then what are we doing? I say to myself, you know, because of what I am given to do behind the scene, 20 others, 100 others, they

are able to do the work. Yesterday, I was reading an email about one of the mission fields where our people work among the widows.

And the description of these thousands of women in such suffering, used, abused, and abandoned literally. And they found a village where much of the women happened to be of this kind and suffering. And then they immediately began to look into setting up a place to bring them and give them help and find a way to explain to them the gospel and care for them and talk about how things are changing all of a sudden in a short time.

But then those missionaries, those brothers and sisters are able to do that, just like in the book of Acts chapter 6, that we are able to do what we are doing. And I pray that tonight, as we spend our time here, although we are not in the villages of Afghanistan or Bhutan or China or some places, and I pray somehow we'll enter into the reality of the world and think to ourselves, I am a radical follower of Christ and I can't go fast enough to get the job done. And my time is just about to run out.

And I was reading this article by General William Booth. Somebody accused him and his people about going too fast. And he argues saying, no, we are going too slow.

People are going to hell a million times faster than we can ever be able to get to them with the good news. And we cannot slow down. And I pray that somehow tonight our time we spend together will be a time that the Lord will use us to somehow think about a Christianity that is not of this culture and other people's voices, but of God's word.

And especially the example we have from people from the book of Acts. All right. I must stop.

Believe it or not, I've got a machine that tells me time. Stop. Let's pray.

And Lord, we want to thank you for this evening and thank you for allowing us to gather here tonight. And I'm just blessed, Lord, by my brothers and sisters that are willing to take this evening and be here for this extended night of prayer. And I thank you for those, Lord, who joined us via streaming tonight.

And I just give you praise and honor and worship, Lord, for calling all of us together as one family, Lord, to journey with you. This brief life that we have, Lord, what is 60 or 70 or 80 or 90 years or 100 years, Lord, just even in a fraction of a millionth of a second compared to eternity. And, Lord, during this brief journey of ours, oh, Lord, by the power of the Holy Spirit, you energize us, give us the ability to, Lord, think about you and be so completely yours.

And, Lord, we will not do it in our own strength. We can't. I pray that the power, the energy of the Holy Spirit will be ours to do all that you call us to do.

Lord, tonight, as we pray for these nations and peoples and events and situations, and I pray, Lord, all of us here, and then my brothers and sisters, join us, Lord, from many, many nations, we pray. Together, we will look forward by faith as a result of our crying out to you, interceding and battling in prayer. Lord, let us know, give us that sense of that day when we see you face to face, that our night, the hours we spend is not in vain.

But, Lord, thank you that you are the God who answers prayer. And we come this evening to you with thanksgiving. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen. Amen.

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