

# Living as Christ Am Service - Peoples Church

by K.P. Yohannan

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*The sermon challenges listeners to live as Christ lived, prioritizing their lives for eternity and overcoming self-centeredness through radical commitment.*

**Duration:** 33:18

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 4:4, John 4:34, 1 John 2:6

**Topics:** "Living As Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his personal journey of seeking to understand the humanity of Jesus by reading the four gospels. He emphasizes his desire to live like Jesus and be his disciple. The speaker shares a specific passage from the Gospel of John where Jesus, tired and weary, encounters a woman at a well. This encounter leads the speaker to a realization about his own self-centeredness and the need to repent. He concludes by highlighting the importance of knowing Jesus not just through doctrines, but by understanding his life and offering our own lives to him.

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## Transcript

Thank you, Gerard. And perhaps if there is a spare seat, a space next to you, just raise your hand so that people can see it. There are, as Gerard said, a number of people standing, and if we can seat those people, that will be great for them.

I am delighted that our guest speaker today is Dr. K.P. Yohannan. For a long time, I have wanted to meet this man. I've never met him until this morning.

I first heard of him when I read this book, *Revolution and World Missions*, a number of years ago. This is an unusual mission book in that it's sold over 2 million copies. Not many mission books get that widely distributed, but this one has been distributed all over the world.

K.P. is the founder and president of Gospel for Asia. And Gospel for Asia has currently 14,000 missionaries, Asian missionaries, working in 11 countries, primarily in the Asian subcontinent and east of there. Of those 14,000 missionaries, about 9,000 of them are church planters, that is their ministry.

And they have planted over 30,000 churches in the last 30 years. I have met a number of Gospel for Asia workers in different parts of the world. I'm always impressed by their zeal, by their passion for the gospel, and their commitment to spreading it and to establishing and planting churches.

They have, GFA have over 60 bible schools, over 7,000 students at the moment in those schools. And every year they graduate about 2,000 of them. It's primarily a three-year course that they do, which equips them to engage in church planting.

They also have an extensive media outreach. K.P. himself has a radio program that's heard every day by millions of folks throughout India. And also on 400 American stations, is that right? Yeah, 400 stations in the United States.

And so his ministry is widespread in many parts of the world. He and his wife, Gazella, live near Dallas currently, though he spends much of his time in India and Asia. And we're delighted to welcome you to the People's Church, along with David Carroll, who is your assistant with you today.

And also Pat Emmerich and Becky, his wife, who direct the Gospel for Asia office in Canada, which is located just near Hamilton. And I also believe a number of other GFA staff are here. If you're in the GFA staff, would you just indicate, because I think a number of you are going to come and join us today.

Or maybe they're coming at 2 o'clock, which is possibly what they're doing. By the way, there are also a number of missionaries here, or mission representatives, who are here in order to man the stalls, which are in the tent outside. We had 20 stalls last Sunday, we have 24 today.

After the barbecue, you can go and meet the folks there. Would the people who are manning those stalls just stand so we can greet you and welcome you here to the People's Church? Because there's altogether 24 different stalls. We're delighted you're here.

Many of you work on the field, many of you are home-based, but we're glad you're here to join with us today. KP, thank you so much for your busy life, coming and spending today with us at the People's Church. We welcome you, and we're delighted to have you.

God bless you. God bless you, KP. Thank you.

Good morning. I'm so happy that this time in Canada it is not snowing. I come to Canada several times a year because our office is here, and it's a terrible place to come to in wintertime.

The Lord answered my prayer and changed the weather. I want to talk to you briefly about a burden the Lord placed on my heart and hope it will be practical. The scripture I want to read for you is from 1 John 2, verse 6. Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did.

In the Living Bible, it reads like this. Anyone who says he's a Christian should live as Christ did. A lot of things we read in the Bible and hear preaching on these things, or read books about it, can remain some concepts, ideas.

And at best sometimes we say, well, someday I hope I will understand it and experience this spiritual reality that I'm reading about or hearing about. Thus, we live on with some kind of illusion, never experiencing the reality that we read about in the scripture, especially words like this. The call of Christ for us is to live in this generation as He would right now.

The difference between the old covenant and the new covenant is this. The old covenant is, you do this, you do this, you do this, you don't do this, you don't do this. If you do this, I'm going to get you.

If you do this, this, blessings and all that. Unless you are careful, you can misunderstand the Christianity of the New Testament is not you read everything in the Bible and obey this, obey this, obey this, don't do this, don't do that. But rather the call is to be partakers of His nature.

It is no more I carry a burden for the lost world or don't do some immoral acts because of this reason, that reason. But rather His life is so infused into this earthen vessel. That is no more me trying to do things and give more money and be sacrificing and this and that.

Rather it's so natural because I am no more my own. I remember meeting one of our missionaries that was sent to a group of people called missing people. It's a people group, some 2 million people live in the extreme north eastern area of India between Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, it's a delta area.

Traveled 2000 miles, he reached the mission field, found out it was a tough place. Very difficult, totally unreached. Then too he learned the kind of food people eat is horrible.

The speciality they give, the drink they give you as an honored guest, it is they take this humongous worms and squish it and get the juice and offer it to you in a glass. Now I know you don't want to go there as a missionary, that tells you how unspiritual you are. In the early weeks and months he was terribly enthusiastic with the challenge and hope and dreams but things began to get tough.

Sickness and mosquitoes and difficult time to communicate and rejection. So he told me, he began to pray like this, Lord send me to somewhere else. I will do anything for you, I just don't want to be here, it's not going to work.

He would pray this many many days, all alone in his tiny room. And then he said, he heard nothing from God until few weeks into that kind of prayer, it was as though Christ himself walked into the room and said these words, I heard you, you can go, anywhere you want to go, but I must stay. These are my people and I love them.

And he said to me, he broke down weeping, saying Lord, you will stay and I must go. I will not, I will stay. My life is not my own.

All that I am, all that I dream about, now I lay it down. My life or death, I don't care. Peace settled upon his heart.

Today if you travel to the MRG among these people, you will run into 98 strong churches. A daily radio broadcast in their language, a small Bible school. And God took a life that will not anymore hold on to himself and only share his burden.

To do this for you Christ, now it is his own very life. You know what a neat statement that they may know you. That is that you and I may know him.

What does it mean? One time I took a pencil and read through the four gospels just to see the man Christ. Oh yeah, I worship him, I follow him, he is my God. But I just want to see the raw man that walked on earth.

Because I am told to live like him. So reading those gospels, I ran into the passage in the gospel of John chapter 4 where Jesus was tired and weary and exhausted. He sits there by the well, disciples goes off to buy hamburger and french fries.

And they come back and say, Master please, here eat. And he says, I lost my appetite. And they said, did someone bring him something to eat while we are gone? What a bummer.

That word bummer I learned from the United States. Don't copy. And Jesus said, my food is to do the will of him who sent me and finish his work.

And that confuses them the more. What happened, in simple terms he says, while you went off to buy food which we need so desperately. I need something to eat.

But while you were gone, I ran into this woman that did not know the Father's love and heading straight toward hell. And her face became a window for me to see multitudes like her that did not know him. And that realization consumed, eliminated, killed my very appetite.

I can't eat anymore. That is Christ of the New Testament. And I am called to be like him.

How can this be, unless I understand the reality of knowing him. Not by doctrines, but by understanding his life and offering my life to him. You know, when I was a youngster, 17, 18 years of age, I was with Operation Mobilization.

And that's where I learned about Old Swat J. Smith. Passion for Souls, the book. Some of you look like blank.

It's true. One of the greatest human beings lived that touched the lives of millions. And you have that history, that heritage.

Then, you have Dr. Charles Price. Anyone who lived at Caponary, he must be the best. Obviously, he is one of the finest godly teachers you can find anywhere.

But let me ask you a simple question. Yes. That's true.

But I just want to ask you a question. Not to put you on a guilt trip or get something out of you. But are you now living with the shadow of the past? Or are you entering in the reality of this radical commitment, incarnating life of Christ for the people here our brother talked about.

And they are everywhere. And 2 billion people live in our generation that wait to hear that Jesus died for them. We just had a telephone call from one of the brothers who you support at Varanasi.

I've been there many times. And we have churches there. I remember one of our missionaries coming home one evening.

After all days of work. He looked and saw this woman sitting by the bank of the river. This holy river.

Pounding upon her chest. Just weeping uncontrollably. And he went to her and said, What happened to you? She didn't say anything at first.

Finally she said, You see, we are very poor. My husband is ill, sick. He can't work anymore.

And my sins are so many. To find forgiveness for my sins and solution to the problems of my home. I have given the best offering I can give to God as Ganges, the river God.

My only child. My six month old baby boy. I just threw him into the river.

In his letter the missionary writes, I sat beside her. And explained to her, but your sins are forgiven. All you have to do is to believe Jesus died for you.

And God didn't make you poor. He is not against you. And finally he writes, She wiped her tears.

Looked straight into my eyes. And simply said, But why didn't you come to me half hour sooner? I didn't have to kill my child. It is too late.

It is too late. I imagine you heard so many stories like this. But the question I must ask again and again and again.

What is it that holding us back? To spend an all night on our knees weeping over a world map. What is holding up from downsizing our life? To live among a community to touch them with the gospel. What is it holding us back from saying goodbye to whatever you have to say goodbye to.

Buy a one way ticket and go as a missionary to some country somewhere. Whatever way you get there to live the rest of your life. Knowing that heaven is a better place than being here in Canada or anywhere.

What is it holding us back? Are we satisfied with information and emotional high during meetings like this? Or is it going to drive us to the place of radical commitment to say goodbye to all and follow him. Without the cross you will never understand the life of Jesus Christ. And the cross always means death to self-centeredness.

I came to America in 1974 to go to seminary. After 8 years of my life on the mission field. And America does very strange things to aliens.

And I began to pastor a church, an American congregation. Having married to a girl from Germany with quite a bit of resources and financial security. Soon I found myself becoming like an American.

Nothing small was good enough. I began with Kmart, ended up with Neiman Marcus. And I won't describe in detail but I had 70 neckties.

Most all of them import from Europe. Most expensive suits. Nothing wrong with having nice clothes and house and cars.

I'm not against that. And I read a little book, Color Me Beautiful. That helped me with my skin.

It took me half hour sometimes to get figured out what color I must wear to look right. How far an Indian can go. And I remember after living like that for a couple of years.

One afternoon I was in my private study with thousands of books on the shelf that I may never read. But I impressed a lot of people. I was sitting down writing something with my most loved, beloved Mont Blanc fountain pen.

I'm not a spooky, weird human being. I don't look for signs and lights. I'm just normal disciple that read and follow the Lord.

But the strange thing happened that afternoon. It was as though Christ himself walked to my table and just stood beside me. I didn't see him but I almost could see him.

And he asked me a question. So you like that pen, don't you? I said, this one? This dude cost 600 dollars. This is my pen.

I love fountain pen. I always did. And he said, so, 100 years from now, who's going to use it? I said, what? He said, oh, I just asked.

100 years from now, who's going to use it? I was paralyzed. I looked at the pen, put it down. And I knew that was Christ asking me a question.

Materialism, house, cars, dreams, ambitions, my plans, my reputation, what others think about me. All of a sudden, with all my knowledge, preaching to my people four times a week, being a pastor in the seminary. I realized in my heart I was cold.

I couldn't cry anymore about the lost world. It was all information and status quo. And that's when I fell on my knees and repented of my sin of self-centeredness.

Once again understanding what it means to be his. Everything changed. I said, Gisela, just give away everything we got.

I just want to keep a couple of ties and a couple of jackets and a couple of pairs of shoes and whatever else. I still have two jackets and I had a tie. I took it off because your pastor don't wear a tie.

He is a spiritual man, I tell you that much. So I took it off. See, it's so beautiful when you come to the place.

You don't have to have all this stuff to make you look right. The most important thing is, what am I doing and living in the light of eternity? I got a clock looking at me, so I'm doing well with time, I think. When I was with Operation Mobilization, by the way, George Wuer was still my leader.

I'm scared of him. Great man of God. And after I joined with Operation Mobilization as a youngster, I went to North India.

One of the place we went where I got beaten up severely, several times I got beaten up. And one of the place is called Boondi in Rajasthan. Seven of us went there and all of us got beaten up, abused, Bibles burned.

And they said, dogs, get out of this place, we'll kill you, otherwise we left the place. Some years went by, one of our young people who went to the Bible school, decided he will go to Boondi to plant a church. And the leader said, what? You want to go to Boondi? They will kill you, you are so skinny and so small, you are barely 20.

And he said, for one year I prayed, Lord, I want to go to Boondi, I want to go there. So they sent him. Within a few weeks, he runs back to the mission station saying, last night they came.

He was sleeping in a tiny room, in the middle of the night, six men came, one tall Rajput with a turban on his head, busted into the room, and pulled this young brother by his leg like you hold up a chicken. And said, young fellow, why on earth you came here? We don't want your God, we got our Gods. Tomorrow morning you leave this place, if not we'll have to kill you.

And he got scared, I would too. So he ran back to the mission station and told the leaders what happened. So they said, we told you, we told you that's going to happen.

But he said, the Lord told me to go there, but I'm scared. The senior elder said, son, I want to ask you one question. Did Jesus ask you to go to Boondi? He said, I know he did.

He said, son, go back. Go back. Oh yeah, they will come back and give you some problem and beat you up, and there's a small chance they will kill you.

But, son, if that happens, remember, heaven is a much better place than Boondi. You wait in heaven for us and we will come and see you later. He knelt down, they laid hand on him, prayed for him, and he tells with tears, he got in the train going back to Boondi.

Sure enough, they came back to him again. Now you are going to make us murderers. Why on earth are you here? And he said, you know what? Jesus told me to come here.

I'm so happy if he can kill me the earliest possible. Heaven is a much better place than here anyway. There's no way I'm going to leave this place.

What do you do with a guy like that? His life, no more his own. Some years would go by. I get a telephone call here in the United States.

Hello, I said, yeah, it's me. We want you to come to Boondi. I said, what? I want to put the phone down.

He said, no, no, no, no. We just finished constructing our first church in Boondi. We want you to come and do the inauguration.

The story changed. I flew to Delhi, took a train and went on to Kota, then on to Boondi. And I taught some over 120 adults and sisters and children just worshipping Jesus.

You want to see heaven on the faces of people? Go there. And when I finished the teaching and everything, this brother said, this is the man who said to me, he will tear me like a chicken. This is his wife, his brother, and on and on like that.

What made the difference? Came to the place. It's not my money. It's not my health.

It is not my future. It is not what I want. It is his life.

Some people ask me, oh, tell me, where were you born? I said, southern part of India. Tell us more about it. You go and look at the oldest black and white Tarzan movie you can find.

Very primitive, tiny little village. But I grew up in a home with five other brothers. I'm the youngest.

My mother was a godly woman. My memory of her, early morning about four o'clock, she would wake up and spend a couple of hours on her knees, praying and reading a Bible. Wake up the whole family for family prayer.

And as a youngster growing up, little boy, I heard my mother quote this Bible verse a million times. Psalm 73 verse 25. Whom have I in heaven but you, and on earth I deserve no one and nothing beside you.

I used to think, what went wrong with my mother? That's all she would repeat constantly. After two years of my life in north India, serving God with all I am, when I came home, mother told me a story that I never heard before. She said, son, you remember when you finished your high school, you came and asked if you could go and serve God? Mom, I remember.

As a matter of fact, I remember that day so well. I said, father and mother, if you let me, I'd like to go to north India to serve God. Before I could finish my statement, my mother jumped up from the bench she was sitting on.

Go! I thought I was in an accident. She was like me. But she said, son, for all my six sons, I prayed, oh God, before I die, let one of them go and serve you full time as a missionary.

But one by one, all your brothers went off to all kinds of things, farming and business and all that. And when we were growing up skinny, timid, withdrawn, I lost all my hope. And that's when I decided to pray, fasting.

Every Friday she fasted for three and a half years, saying, Lord, please call one of my sons for full time service. And you are the answer. And none of us boys knew about this prayer.

In 1980, I was on the way to Seoul, Korea from the United States when I heard my mother was ill at the age of 84, taken to the hospital, and I canceled my trip. And that weekend, my mother passed away. The saddest day of my life for three days, I couldn't even think straight.

Funeral took place, and my brothers and I, we met in a room. My father passed away earlier. He was a believer.

So we talked about our mother. One of my brothers who was a businessman said, so what kind of money did our mother leave in the bank? He's a greedy guy. Answering the question, we, all the sons, we give our mother whatever money she wanted or didn't want, but we never saw her spending any money.

As a matter of fact, one time, when I came back from the United States to visit my parents, and I saw my mother wearing her clothes, it's called blouse, from here to there, torn and hand-stitched. It's a Mickey Mouse job, terrible job. I was so angry.

I said, mother, what madness got into your head? Don't you care about your sons? The whole world will think we don't care about you, mother. Why don't you dress properly? Don't bring dishonor upon your sons. And I was so mad.

Preachers can get mad. And I never forget. She smiled.

This incredible smile said, my son, my little boy, you don't understand. Someday, you'll understand. Here, I sit in the room with my brothers to the question, what kind of money is in the bank that she left? One of my brothers pulled out a notebook, an old, worn-out thing, and he said, this I found under the pillow of our mother's bed.

And we were curious. Turning the pages, he said, the names of dozens of people she wrote with her own hand and the money she was sending to these people every month, and nobody knew about it. And then, in the end, he said, As far as I know, there's nothing in the bank.

And I broke down weeping. No, no, not because there was no money in the bank. All of a sudden, it's a mystery to me.

It was as though I hear again those gentle words, my son, you don't understand. Someday, you'll understand. And the last thing, her will she left with her sons, when I'm dead and gone, the only thing I'm leaving behind is my wedding ring, my earrings, and the gold chain my husband gave me when he married

me at the age of 19.

I want you to sell these items and give the money to preach the gospel among people that never heard Jesus' name. I want to meet them also in heaven. We are called to be His and live as He would.

Where are you? Church is not made up of 10,000 people. Gathering like this, it's wonderful, but it's you, individual. You think somebody else is living for Christ and praying.

What about you? One, why don't you take a day or the week for fasting and prayer? Put a world map in your home. Get the book Operation World. If you fast a few days more for the lost world and if you die, please let me know.

You will not die. Second, why don't you ask the Lord to give you understanding, simplify your life. I'm not telling you only have two jackets and don't have a car.

That's not the issue here. Make your life in the light of eternity, 100 years from now. What does it matter? Half of the world go to bed with empty stomach and naked bodies.

Be sober about the way you live. Number three, God, I'm sure talking to some of you leave this country, leave your community and go somewhere to serve God. I'm sure Dr. Price coming here from England, it was not just a small matter.

God talked to him. What about you? Are you looking for a place to go and serve God somewhere? Pray for your children that one of them at least will go and serve God somewhere. Number four, as an application, as an end, may the Lord speak to us and change us as we wait upon him and hunger after him.

Amen.

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