

# Touch of Love

by K.P. Yohannan

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of Jesus' love for children and the need for Christians to show love and compassion to children in need.*

**Duration:** 31:09

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Matthew 18:5, Mark 9:36, Mark 10:13, Luke 9:48, Luke 10:21, Luke 18:16

**Topics:** "Love"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a story about a little boy who grew up in poverty and desperation. The boy's mother would sell sticks in the forest to make a living, while his father worked as a laborer. The speaker encounters a young girl who is begging for food and is deeply moved by her desperate situation. This encounter leads the speaker to have a dream where he sees a bridge filled with children in need. The sermon emphasizes the importance of helping and caring for these vulnerable children, as they are precious in the eyes of God.

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## Transcript

I want to share a few Bible verses with you from the Gospel of Mark, chapter 9, verse 36. It's talking about Jesus. He took a little child and had him stand among them, taking him in his arms.

He said to them, whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name, welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me does not welcome me, but the one who sends me. And then in chapter 10, verse 13, on that passage where they were bringing little children to Jesus for him to touch them and bless them.

And the disciples thought, it's a real bummer, you know, what a headache. Jesus is too busy, too important to deal with kids. And so they tried to, you know, get this whole thing, you know, to stop.

And Jesus said, just leave them alone. Let them come to me, for they are very precious. And the Kingdom of God is very much linked with the children and their heart and attitude.

Now, three Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, all these three Gospels, we have this story mentioned. That means the Holy Spirit is trying to say something very significant and important. That if you read it, if I read it one time and I forget it, then I will read it again.

If I forget it, then I will read it again. And I think it's very, very significant. And my journey in understanding the ways of God regarding this matter, it took little time for me to understand what the Lord is saying.

For you see, some of you who read my writings from the early days, all I cared about, in all that I do, is somehow preach the Gospel, get people repent and baptize them and plant churches. Children, well, I didn't think much about it. You know some churches, not this church, but there are some churches that look at children and say it's a necessary evil.

Let's do something for the kids so we can get the adults come and get their money. I know it's not about you. But you know, it's so amazing how Jesus think about this thing.

And in my world of missions and serving God, this was not very important. And the Lord began to change my heart by knocking continually upon my heart and leading me on a road to encounter even such events where he had changed my heart. And one of those times I remember, some time ago, in the streets of Bombay, 5 million live in the slums of Bombay, the largest slum of the world.

If you walk into those slums, if you simply walk among these people, you have to pinch your nose, otherwise you'll throw up. You'll find hundreds of little kids, naked little kids, playing in the murky, dirty sewage waters in the open. The suffering, the pain, the anguish, unimaginable.

Something that I encountered that stayed with me. You know, when tourists go to India, they are told, when you are on the streets of Bangladesh or India or Kathmandu, wherever, do not give money to the beggars on the streets. If you do, they will mob you.

You cannot get away because too many of them. So this was one of my experiences on the Bombay street right there. You know, dozens and dozens of little children, beggar children on the streets with their hands out.

Then mothers carrying little babies, naked little kids with a bloated stomach asking for money. I mean, what do you do? So I didn't want to do anything, but then as I was waiting for the light to turn green so I can cross the street, I hear this voice from behind me in Hindi language. Saab, sir, my father died.

And my mother is too ill, she can't beg anymore. I have a little baby brother. He's crying.

He's hungry. Would you please give me a few pennies so I can buy some bread and take it to him? The light turned green and all those people, hundreds of them just walked away, but I couldn't move. I turned around and I looked at this young girl, maybe eight, nine-year-old, a little girl, wearing rags, holes all over, dirty fingernails, dust mingled with the sweat running down from her hair, long thick black hair, no shoes, no sandals, nothing, just like that.

And I was so gripped by that, I put my hand in my pocket and took all the money I could find and gave it to her. I began to walk. It was strange.

It was as though Christ himself joined me on the walk and simply asked me a question. So, what do you think about that beggar girl you just met? Is her life as precious and valuable as your daughter? It so happened I have two children born in the United States. My daughter at that time, around the same age, her German mother takes care of her so well.

Every week, bed sheet, pillow covers changed, her own table, furniture, air-conditioned room and carpeted room and go to school. And I never, ever, ever heard my children saying, I am so hungry, I am dying, give me some food, I am going to die, give me food. No, I never saw them hungry.

But then, as a minister of the gospel, my answer to Christ was very fast. Oh Lord, you know, her life is as precious and valuable as my daughter. But, he didn't ask me one more question, left me to walk alone, weeping on the streets of Bombay.

That was one of the many experiences the Lord allowed me to encounter to help me think about what he is thinking about these precious children. I was speaking at a church in Southern California, and somebody came to me and gave me a CD and said, Brother KP, you may want to listen to this song called What Now? The CD was by Stephen Curtis Chapman. You know the guy? Neat brother.

I was with his wife Beth on a television show some time ago, very serious people. Anyway, he wrote this song, he sang this song, and I am not going to sing it for you. But I want to read the words of this song, please listen.

I saw the face of Jesus in a little orphan girl. She was standing in the corner on the other side of the world. And I heard the voice of Jesus gently whisper to my heart, Didn't you say you wanted to find me? Well, here I am.

Here you are. So what will you do now that you have found me? What now? What will you do with this treasure you have found? I know I may not look like what you expected. But if you will remember, this is right where I said I would be.

You found me. What now? When you look into the eyes of little children, what do we expect to find? Laughter, joy, they want to be hugged, and contentment, and peace. But when those things are replaced with hunger, molestation, fear, anxiety, and hopelessness, You know what? That must arrest me, stop me to say, Oh Lord, what are you thinking? What must I think? But I'm so self-centered, so consumed about my own children, my life, my work, and everything.

I just don't have time to think about those things. At least the way he would think about it. And I'm grateful to God for the brokenness he brought into my life over these years to understand this.

Listen to this. In South Asia, countries like India and these nations, 90 million children go hungry every day. When was the last time your grandchildren or your children screamed, weeping, Please give me something to eat.

And then you stand there, totally helpless, because you don't know what to do, you have nothing to give. 135 million between the ages of 7 and 8 have never been to school. But something more sad.

160 million child laborers in India, the largest number of working children in the world, they start their work as early as at the age of 4 and 5. From morning till night they work, making 8 or 9 cents for the whole day's work. In carpet-making factories, brick-making factories, firecracker-making factories, they are literally slaves to these rich, affluent factory owners and landlords. Little kids.

How many? 160 million. Who are these children, you ask? That's what I asked. I began to look and search and found out these are the children of the untouchables, the Dalits.

Have you ever heard that name, untouchables or Dalits? Raise your hand. Wow, you are educated. Many people don't know this.

India with 1.2 billion people today, nearly 300 million of those people are called the untouchables. The Hinduism has four castes. But then these people, they have no caste.

They are the lowest and the lowest and the downtrodden. Just recently this report was released. Thousands of untouchable female children between 6 and 8 years old are forced to become maidens of God.

Devadasis, a Hindu religious practice in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Orissa, to mention only a few. These are the names of the states in India. They are taken from their families, never to see them again.

They are later raped by temple priests and finally auctioned secretly into prostitution and ultimately die from AIDS. It is estimated by NGOs that 5,000 to 15,000 little girls are auctioned secretly every year. That makes me mad.

You know what is more serious? If it is my daughter, my son in the condition, what do I want from them? The Dalits, the untouchables, their life worth is less than animals and a dog. Mistreated, abused, brutalized, raped in poverty, in illiteracy, they suffer for 3,000 years. But something so amazing began to take place.

A few years ago when I was in India, I was invited to attend a very large gathering to speak to these Dalits on behalf of the church. And that's when I was shocked into reality that these leaders of these large numbers of people, they began to say, you know what, the only hope for our people to escape this slavery is to become Christians. Some of them become Buddhists or go to Islam religion.

But the priority number one they have is to follow Christ. And I said, wow, this is absolutely astounding what God is doing. The biggest reformation in the history of the world.

That possibly 100 million of these people could come into the kingdom of God. But then I said, we can talk to them. They said, you know what, would you please come and help our children? We are illiterate.

One man said, I have 61 million people under my jurisdiction. 90% illiteracy and poverty. Would you please come and teach our children about Jesus, teach the Bible.

Then you make all our people Christians, no problem. I could hardly believe that I was hearing this. Well, I was excited.

And I said, oh no, what a possibility to see all these people come to Christ. But then I have a problem. You say, brother KP, what is the problem? My problem, I've been saying for 20 to 23 years, don't worry about anything else except preaching the gospel and get people baptized and plant church.

I wrote about it. Now for me to go after children, what will people in Albuquerque say about me? What about the stuff I wrote in my books? I have a real problem. My reputation is at stake.

As a mission leader, all of a sudden people read things from my books and my messages, and I really got scared. Then I had an interesting dream. I am not a spooky person.

I am not looking for lights and noise, nothing like that. I eat good hamburger, French fries and go to sleep. But I had this strange dream that I never expected to happen like this.

One early morning hours, I had the dream. In my dream, I was looking at a massive, humongous harvest field, wheat field, millions of acres, golden in color, just ready for harvest. And in my dream, I realized these are the endless millions of people that have come into the kingdom from India and from Nepal and from these nations.

And God is giving all this to us. And I was so excited. I began to run toward this harvest field, shouting and praising with excitement.

But then I couldn't go any further. I ran upon this huge river, so wide, so deep, that I couldn't figure out what to do to get across because the field that I was looking at is on the other side of the river. I was standing on this side.

I began to weep in my dreams. Oh, it's all gone. What am I going to do? No one to help me.

How am I going to get across? You see, I come from a family where we are rice farmers, my people. When the harvest time comes, my people are like in America, you say, chicken with the head cut off. You don't take a vacation.

You don't go to Grand Canyon. You don't go to Himalaya. You go nowhere.

You work 24 hours because two weeks the rain will come and everything will be destroyed. And it's a panic time, no rest. And as I was looking at this in desperation and crying, all of a sudden a bridge appeared gapping from this side of the river to the other side.

Not a tiny bridge, but a huge bridge. And the bridge began to be filled with little children of all kinds. And I woke up out of the dream and sat on a bed and said, What on earth is going on? And the Lord very gently spoke to me and said, Yes, all these people are yours.

They are mine. Go and embrace the children. And that is the way to get to them.

Finally, I said, Lord, I don't care about our reputation or what people think about me. I will do what you want to do. And that's when I began to read the passage like this.

I studied this in Greek and Hebrew and every language you can imagine, but it never ripped my heart like it did when I read this. This is the heart of Jesus. So I told my gang, start these schools for these Dalit untouchable children.

In one part of the nation, they started 50 within a few months' time. In the first year, they had 37 churches planted in that community. I said 37.

You know how it happened? I'll tell you the story of one. Naboon, a little boy, first grader from a poor Dalit family. Never in his life he'd been to school or nothing.

Many of these kids come naked. We had to provide them clothes and the whole thing. Anyway, this first grader, he learned about Jesus.

He learns all other things also. He learned about Jesus healing the sick and casting out demons and helping the poor and touching the lepers and all these things. And one day, he went home and told his father, Father, Jesus can heal mummy.

His mother was dying without any hope and help. The father thought we had a medical doctor named Jesus at our school. Really.

So this fellow comes next day and says, Would you please ask the medical doctor Jesus to come and help my wife? They said, He has no understanding what is going on. Two of the pastor's brothers went with him and explained the gospel and shared about Jesus and laid a hand on the sick woman and prayed. You know what Jesus did? Healed her on the spot.

Hallelujah. And that became the reason for that church to be planted there. I just heard last week in one part of the country, northwest of India, they baptized 800 people that came to Jesus through our children.

One nine-year-old girl became responsible for a whole bunch of her family to know about Jesus. This is what the Lord is doing. This is not a social program or giving the food.

We do all that. But the most amazing thing, Jesus now walks into a village, a home, a community through the little children. Did you know I came to Jesus at the age of eight? Did you know my mother who prayed three and a half years every Friday fasting, one of her sons to become a missionary.

She came to Jesus as a teenage girl. Did you know my two children, Danny and Sarah, they gave their life to Jesus at the age of six and seven. They both are working as missionaries in India today.

Now you can say the same thing to me. Brother KP, I gave my life to Jesus when I was two years old. Yeah, you did it.

And seven years old. I talked to an old Hindu man, 50 or a Brahmin. I can talk to him for days.

This fellow will not blink his eyes. But I catch a little boy and girl. I said, Jesus loves you.

Would you open your heart for him? He died. Yes, what can I do? Tell me how. Left and right, thousands of the children are giving their lives to Christ.

Today we have some 30,000 children in 280 centers. You must see their faces, the joy and their contentment. First time in their life, Jesus is everything.

And there's hope. But then there are some sad stories. I remember hearing about one of our centers when the kids were all, you know, leaving their center that evening.

The teacher came out and saw a young girl standing outside just weeping, just weeping. She was not part of our school. So the teacher asked, what's your name? Where did you come from? Why are you crying? She just kept crying.

And the first statement she said was this. My brother also died. The story, like tens of thousands of poor people living on the railway tracks, railway stations, on the streets.

Her people were living on the streets. Her grandfather died and grandmother died. Her parents died.

And the only thing she had left was her brother. And he also died. And then she said this.

I had a friend who was playing with me, but he's no more playing with me. I heard he's at your school studying here. I came to ask, would you please take me also? I have nowhere to go.

Of course, you know what we did. Who knows, someday she may become another Amy Carmichael. Someday that little Naboon may become someone who will change the course of a nation, a society.

You heard this before. I was complaining and murmuring about not having shoes until I saw someone who didn't have any legs. Please, I ask of you, my dear sister and my dear brother.

Don't let the enemy take you into a world of being so concerned about our little problems that we think is so huge. What is it compared to the reality of a world and millions of children and the Dalits that we live with? And we now understand their fate. Reach out with your love and compassion, mercy, with your prayer, and God will take care of everything else.

That is his call. After looking at some of these pictures and listening to what I had to say, you may be wondering what am I supposed to do? Well, for my wife and I, of course with our children now being gone, it was an easy decision. We said, we got two children, we are going to take two more children to be ours so we can pray for them and help them so they will find life, that they will not die on the street.

It is said there are over 100,000 children that live on the streets of Bombay not knowing who their parents are, destined to perish. But we can embrace them, we can take them, we can help them. That's what Gospel Fashion began to do.

But what is 35,000 when you have millions out there that ask for help? I can't go after 10 million, 100 million, but I can go after 1 or 2 or 3 or 4. That's what I want to tell you about. If the Lord has spoken to your heart about doing something to touch the lives of these children, I want to recommend you to please look at this card that is in your bulletin. What it is, with about just \$28 a month, you can help one of these children to find hope.

This provides their clothes, their food, their medicine, their education and all that it takes month after month. And every penny you send, nobody takes nothing out of it, all goes to help those children on the field. That's our commitment, that's exactly what we do.

And you can take your children home with you. You will be the only individual or family that help that child or children that you take, no one else, you alone. This is your child.

And about the child, all the information, date of birth, everything and all the explanation, everything is in this package. Where they are, date of birth and all the stuff about them. Another thing, they write you letters and tell you about them, things you can pray for them.

You can write letters to them and find out how they are doing. You know, if you have 3 children, take 3 children. If you have 10 children, take 10 children.

If you are not married and hope to get married and have 25 children, take 25 children. You can ask many you want. We got thousands of children right now that we have taken in without anyone promising to help them.

By faith, we did that. And that's the reason I ask you on the behalf of our Lord and these precious children that you will want to do something about it. In closing, I want to tell you the story of a little boy who write his story who ended up in one of our Bridge of Hope centers.

Listen close. His mother was making a living for them by going to the forest and picking these dead woods and selling to the market. His father's job was a coolie carrying loads for other people.

And the story is this. He writes, dark, skinny body, this was my mother. Eyes sunken with pain, turns and look at us as she disappears into the woods.

It is late in the afternoon. All the children eat nothing all day, waiting and watching for mother after selling the sticks to come home with food. Our father left for nearby state looking for a coolie's job.

For untouchables here like us, there's no job except cleaning latrines. Poverty and hunger took its toll. My mother died without help.

My brothers and I didn't know what to do, wandering on streets all day long. Our father came home, a broken man, held us in arms, cried bitterly. He sits and gazes into the dark, mutters to himself, I don't know what.

The sun rose with bright hope. Some kind people took us to school. At first, I didn't know much at all.

Now I know we have hope. Often, my eyes seek my mother. I still cry and grieve.

When I see a dark, skinny vendor of wood, I wish I had money to buy her sticks. The good news is that little boy and his siblings are now in one of our centers, growing up with hope. And that's what I like to see happen for 500,000 kids.

A small dream, but it is possible. With our God, it is possible. Let me say this to you.

While we have this opportunity, I don't want you to think, Oh, I have so much money, I have to do something for the poor children. No, don't do it out of guilt or condemnation. I want to do it for one reason.

Jesus said to me, whatever you do for the least of these, Oh, don't forget, you are doing it for me. And in these children, I see Jesus, and I want to serve him. May the Lord draw each one of us close to himself, that we may become so preoccupied with him, not preoccupied with our own self and our little world.

May the Lord speak to us. Amen.

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