

6 Blessings + 6 Barriers

by George Verwer

George Verwer discusses the dual themes of blessings and barriers in ministry, emphasizing the importance of forgiveness and spiritual balance.

Duration: 57:25

Scripture: Acts 23:12, 1 Corinthians 4:9-17, 2 Corinthians 4:9

Topics: "Blessings"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses six blessings and six barriers in the work of OM (Operation Mobilization). The first blessing is the power of the Holy Spirit, which enables believers to accomplish great things. The second blessing is the transformation of lives through the preaching of the word of God. The third blessing is the impact of OM's conferences and seminars in building deeper relationships among believers. The fourth blessing is the opportunity to reach new frontiers and expand the work of OM. The speaker also emphasizes the need for support and sending of workers, as well as the importance of maintaining strong relationships and overcoming barriers in the ministry.

Transcript

I have a burden on my heart and I didn't want to wander astray so I wrote it down. And I'd like to give you a title. Some people say you can't take notes when George Verwer speaks to me.

I hope you will take notes. Some of you forgot paper. You can write it on your hand, the old-fashioned way.

Six Blessings and Six Barriers. Some people have been getting upset with my sevens messages. I got about twenty sevens messages, including the seven blunders of the person who, when they return from OM.

That's one that some of you missed and that's you blew it all over the place when you got home. But this one is called Six Blessings and Six Barriers. There are many, many scriptures that pop into my mind as I think of the work God has called us to.

Believe it or not, seldom do I talk much about the ministry of OM at any length. Last weekend I was at Oxford University ministering. I may have mentioned OM, you know, a few minutes.

Sunday night was an evangelistic meeting. Saturday I was speaking on the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the crucified life. A couple of dozen students recommitted their lives to Christ.

You know, God has kept Oxford and Cambridge and so many of these other universities open to us in OM for twenty three years. And I will tell you, God is working in these places. The Saturday night meeting in a place twice, three times as large as this was completely packed, people sitting on the floor.

Nigel Lee had a mission there last year, over a hundred professed in Jesus Christ. And it's exciting what's happening in so many different ways here in Britain. We are not on the verge of blessing in Britain.

We are in the middle of it. God is blessing. God is answering prayer.

People are coming to Christ. New churches are being born. Whole new denominations are being born.

Some people of the older denominations, they get upset. You know, why do we get upset when the church is growing? And whenever the church grows, both the old and new will grow, usually. Some will be left out.

God doesn't always bless every part of the country in the same way at the same time. Maybe that's why the challenge is so great, because there's plenty yet to do here in Great Britain. I think of that passage in the book of Acts where forty men pledged they would not eat until Paul was dead.

I think of the many barriers the apostle Paul had in his ministry. I think of the many blessings the apostle Paul had in his ministry. Perhaps you could look with me at 1 Corinthians chapter 4, just as one of the many scriptures that I would like to read.

And I do believe God has something for each one of us here tonight that's very relevant. The last thing I want to do is minister irrelevancies. I believe what Brother Jonathan said is tremendously relevant and trust that you received it in a spirit of faith.

1 Corinthians chapter 4, Paul describes his ministry. It's called the apostolic example. He speaks about in verse 9, the reality of his life.

For I think that God has set us forth the apostles last, as it were, appointed to death. For we are made a spectacle out of the world and to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ.

We are weak, but ye are strong. Ye are honorable, but we are despised. Even under this present hour, we both hunger and thirst and are naked and buffeted, have no certain dwelling place.

Labor, working with our own hands, being reviled, we bless, being persecuted, we endure it. Being defamed, evil spoken of. That's what that means.

People just blasting you verbally. We entreat. We are made as a filth of the world and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons, I warn you, for though ye have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel, wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause I have sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved son and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you in remembrance of my ways, which are in Christ, as I teach every man in every church.

Paul's was a life of blessings and buffetings. Paul was a man who faced enormous barriers in his ministry, thrown in prison, misunderstood by the very churches he planted, spoken evil of in ways that are very hard to comprehend. And I think as we go forward in the work of God, we must be ready for the blessings as well as the buffetings, the barriers as well as the breakthroughs.

Many of you know that my favorite theme is spiritual balance. Balance for me is not compromise, it's the right blending of the extreme truths found in different parts of scripture. And one of the reasons OM is still going strong today, 25 years after its birth in Europe, down in Spain they just had a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the work in Spain.

That's the only place it existed 25 years ago. And I believe one of the reasons it's still going strong and growing and seeing so many people come to Christ is because we have discovered commitment with balance. It's nothing new, Paul knew about it, Hudson Taylor knew about it, many great men whose shoelaces were not worthy to tie knew about it, but it needs to be re-emphasized.

It needs to be re-emphasized. So let me just share six blessings, six breakthroughs, and then bring it into balance with six barriers, six buffets if you want to explain it that way. You can receive lots of ministry in your own church, and from books and from tapes.

And so I do want to focus tonight on what is happening in OM. This is a special kind of meeting, this isn't the Oxford Christian Union, this isn't a meeting where they give me a theme, 50% of the meetings I speak at they assign a subject. That's why I have become a specialist in subject bending, and I've known all over the world for that.

But here I am with my own family and the people that know and understand something of OM. Yes, OM is different. Why would God raise up something that would just be the same? God doesn't just do the same thing over again.

When God brought into being Operation Mobilization, for a while I tried to fight it, I tried to stop it. It's like trying to stop, you buy fire, and I hope some of that's burning in your heart tonight. One of my favorite books is down here, you can get it free tonight if you're quick, called Personal Revival.

I was just talking to the author of that book on the phone, a man who's lived for Christ for many decades, who's amalgamated the message of renewal and the message of revival that came out of East Africa, Stanley Volk. Many people paid two pounds for that same book. We changed the title and produced a magazine edition, 50,000 copies were flooded out across Asia and Africa.

I believe it is the privilege of every believer to live in personal revival, and I hope you'll read that book. What are six blessings? There are many more, but we don't want to be here all night. What are six blessings we're experiencing in OM right now? I had a man write me this way, he more or less felt Ichabod should be written across OM.

He has some very interesting letters from prayer partners. He feels we're infiltrated, he thinks it might be the Freemasons. He mainly thinks it's because he found a book about evolution on the doulos.

It's amazing because doulos was criticized for showing anti-evolution films. You can't win. What was the other thing? Oh, he heard that we didn't have enough money, so surely God must have, you know, we must be infiltrated.

If you study spiritual ministry, you'll discover through history most of them never had enough money. George Whitfield, probably the most anointed man that's ever walked across Britain next to Wesley and Moody and a few others, he died in debt. Only through his debt money came in to pay his bills.

Now, of course, we don't want to go down that road in OM. We believe in owing no man anything. We're a pack of idealists that have almost beat each other on the head, striving for perfection.

But anyway, that's not my main subject this evening. Six blessings. What's the first blessing? You, you, the ex-OMer.

We're wrestling for a better term, graduate. The Americans are now into the OM alumni. Ex-OMer will probably hold for many decades.

It doesn't mean you're excluded. It means you're included. It just means that technically you're not in the OM budget.

This is the big thing in the 80s for OM. This is budgets. Glorified guesswork has never been engaged in with such discipline as when OM went into budgeting.

But really the great blessing for many of us, and I know it's true of Jonathan, is the ex-OMer. There are ex-OMers serving Jesus Christ with almost every single major mission in the world, in almost every single nation in the world, even many closed countries. There are 37,000 of you, so you belong to quite a large club, though we don't usually call it a club.

And you know one of the reasons this is such a blessing is because it drives forward a non-sectarian challenge. The main thing is not what organization you belong to. The main thing is that you're walking with Jesus.

Many people get depressed, even in the local church scene, because they get their eyes on the local church or on the pastor. Or if they join another organization, they get their eyes on that organization. We know people, of course, leave Operation Mobilization disappointed.

I've interviewed people for 29 years working with almost every organization you could think of. There's no organization that doesn't produce disappointed people. That's what life is about.

Two people can have the same experience on OM. One goes out absolutely blessed, filled with the spirit, convinced OM is the most powerful, loving New Testament thing he ever fellowshiped with. Another person on the same team, in the same circumstances, go out bitter, feeling OM has been the greatest disappointment of his entire Christian life, in hopes he can never see them again.

Of course, such people don't show up at reunions. But when we find out about them, we chase them and we repent and we apologize. And I just want to say this.

OM is a story of much failure and sometimes even sin. And if through sin or failure or anything we have hurt any of you, I want to beg you to please forgive us. To please forgive us.

And you'll do well to do that, because if you don't forgive and you allow a root of bitterness to fester and a critical spirit or a cynical spirit, which is so easy to get into today, I know because I've been there and back, you only harm yourself. In fact, doctors tell us that bitterness and cynicism and lack of forgiveness is no less than 50 different illnesses you can bring upon your own physical body. Forgiveness is a beautiful

thing.

And some of the people who have the most difficult experiences in OM are today some of our closest friends and strongest prayer partners. In fact, I just did a radio interview two nights ago. They phoned me from Chicago.

There's a young Indian in the States in a very difficult time on OM. When he left, we weren't even sort of linked very much for a while. And we got it all sorted out.

Today, he is the leader of a movement that's probably doing more for reaching India than most movements that I can think of. And he and I, he was in Dallas, Texas, though he's an Indian, married to a German girl. I was in London.

We had a radio interview in Chicago live over a number of stations just a couple of nights ago. And we're locked together to reach India with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness is one of the most significant factors in the whole Christian message.

And we thank the Lord for ex-OMers who have forgiven us. Maybe some never felt they had anything to forgive. And that together we can work for world evangelism.

Don't think we just want to lift up the ex-OMer who is in foreign missionary work. For every man on the field, we need 10 senders. We need 10 faithful prayer warriors back at home.

It's not the privilege of every believer to go to the mission field. And it is a privilege, the overseas field, or to be a full-time paid Christian worker. And we are convinced that the ex-OMer in a secular job is as much a strategic part of God's great program as the man who's overseas giving out tracts in the streets of Calcutta, or planting churches in outer Mongolia, or opening a Bible school in Mauritania.

The second blessing that we're experiencing in OM right now is seeing so many people come to Christ. Perhaps this is because OM is no longer mainly just in non-responsive and closed countries. Through the ships, we branched out to some of the more responsive countries.

And so we hear of hundreds sometimes making professions of faith in Christ. We know they're not all conversions. It's good to be in a few countries where people are really responding.

It somehow helps charge the prayer partner's batteries when they're continuing to read about Turkey and some of the lands where we're not seeing huge response. And I tell you what Jonathan shared about a thousand believers possibly by, what was the date on that? 1990. You're praying for something greater than asking God for five million more believers in the United States.

That's right. I won't give a statistic out for England, but Turkey is certainly still one of the most neglected lands. Yet we've seen churches planted in Turkey.

You know, one of the things that hurts us the most is when people write OM off as just a short term missionary operation. Maybe you have contributed to that as many of you have only been with us short term. The people who are long term don't come to reunions.

They're out in India and the Middle East and Turkey. Many of us at OM was long term before it was ever short term. We didn't even know what short term was when we started in the early days to any great degree.

Uh, many men have been out 15, 20 years. I've been overseas 25 years and we have no intention, you know, of going back. OM is both a short term training program and a long-term missionary worship.

And if you can help us spread that word around, you might help us find some of those needed longer term recruits because you can only do so much with short term people. And OM is at a stage now where we've got to have an increase, even if it were just a 10% increase of longer term people, both behind the scenes in places like Quinta, which is a, I don't know, it was short staffed last year. I think this year you've seen a surge, but they'll be looking for people.

You can be sure by September. And down in Bromley, we are very short staffed, especially STL and another one left yesterday because his father may be dying. We have a January conference to bring new recruits into the work.

This year in Germany, the conference will take place. Pray that we'll have people there, but it's a joy. And this is one of the great blessings we're experiencing right now to see new churches being born directly or indirectly.

We don't always get directly involved in church planting in Turkey, in France, in a number of other countries, Bangladesh. We are in other places. We train church planters.

That's especially been one of our major goals in India because church planting in India is better done outside the international fellowship of Operation Mobilization. You know, the man who arranged for that interview on the radio two nights ago, David Maines, an outstanding Christian leader in America, was so impressed when he went to India, meeting people everywhere in the nation. And he said, most of them who were doing something were people trained on Operation Mobilization.

He's more convinced about it than I am. I know a lot more of the negative factors that you have to battle through before you get those church planters and before you get to the place where that Indian brother and sister are mature, spirit-controlled people. It's a long road.

The third blessing is greater maturity in OM in general. That doesn't mean there's no weakness or failure, but I've sensed in the last three years, OM has come into some maturity that we did not have five years ago. That doesn't mean we can't have lapses because each individual is walking with God and there's plenty of immaturity among individuals.

We went through a serious testing a couple of years ago. Heavy division almost came into OM in different ways, things that perhaps will never be written about publicly. But through that, relationships were tested and strengthened.

Through that, we developed a deeper understanding of the human factor in God's work. The strongest among us is weak. With the right amount of pressure and the right amount of satanic nonsense and trickery, that person can make serious mistakes and get into serious problems.

That's why forgiveness is so important. That's why God's grace is our hope as we go forward. A number of the changes we have made in OM recently, I believe, have demonstrated maturity that God has brought to us.

God has often brought this to us from other people. We don't get it all on our knees in the prayer closet. We get it through books.

We get it through men of God who disagreed with OM on a particular issue, listening to them, talking to them. It's not time to go into detail, but I believe God is taking us into greater maturity. There are a lot of false ideas, especially by the people who are really gung-ho pro-OM people.

They just think OM is great. Sometimes your friends can be the greatest enemy. Some have thought OM can do no wrong, especially the old days.

The good old days were all forsaking, all galloping down the road in cars that had no engines, seeing the impossible take place on every corner. Let me tell you, back in those days, there was sin in the camp. There were problems.

There were failures. There was extremism. It wasn't all one big, rosy, dynamic apostolic army.

If I had to choose OM back then and OM today, it would take me about four seconds to make the choice. It would be today. With God, you don't go back.

You go forward. We don't despise the past. We certainly don't despise the people who came and joined us when we were nothing.

We did attract some extreme peoples at times. I mean, how would a character like me ever attract extreme people? I mean, this is amazing, isn't it? God showed us some of the things that had to change. And God put something on my heart some time ago.

You know what he said to me? Don't shoot mice with cannons. Do any of you have a cannon in your house? Or a bazooka or a laser beam rifle or anything? I think you understand what I'm trying to say. And at times in OM, we shot mice.

We got so head up about little issues, little things. We had more convictions than you'd find in the New Testament. And little things in people's minds became big.

Like the girl who came back from the campaign in the early day and asked her mother, because she'd now become a disciple, to remove the bed from her bedroom because she was a floor girl. That doesn't sound right. But anyway, she wanted to sleep on the floor.

And the way in the early days some people described me, I mean, it was unbelievable. Even some of the press articles, most of it before your time, describing George Brewer when I first came to the British Isles. God used that.

God overruled. Within four months, we had 90 people ready to cross the English Channel. Just a couple of you who are here were from that 1962 division.

And we thank God for what he did. But we're growing. We're learning.

We're getting our priorities sorted out. We're not going to throw the baby away with the bathwater. You know that expression? We're not going to forsake those dynamic principles that God has given us about total commitment, about forsaking all, about a crucified life, the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

You know the leaflets, the seven major emphasis of OM. We're not moving an inch on those seven emphasis and many other emphasis. The fourth blessing in OM, as I see it today, is deeper and richer relationships, tested relationships.

Jonathan's relationship and mine, which goes back now 27 years, because Jonathan met me as a senior student when I arrived as a freshman at Moody Bible Institute. He was a big cheese around the institute and I was just a little mouse coming through the door. And I think I may have, well, we won't get into that, but we've been laboring together now 23 years and our relationship has been tested.

I remember years ago, the Italian campaign, shouting at him on the phone. You remember that? And I'm sure I was in Italy and you were in Paris. And I remember the Lord convicted me and me phoning back and repenting.

And I remember one of the most encouraging things Jonathan ever said to me. He said, what keeps me linked with you is not what you do. I forget how he expressed it, but it's the brokenness that God has brought into your life.

We're not going to live up to these principles we're preaching. We're aiming high. We're still aiming so high.

Sometimes I think we're crazy. Just the books we distribute create an idealism that many people can't live with. You see all these A.W. Tozer books? He couldn't even live with it himself.

His children, some of them didn't follow Jesus Christ. His wife found it extremely difficult. That doesn't put down A.W. Tozer, but it maybe helps you realize that he also is a human being.

In fact, Tozer said his greatest problem in his life was a lack of moderation. It was also one of my problems as I would get in the pulpit and say things that lacked moderation. Yet the word of God says, let your moderation be known to all men.

That wasn't my strongest point in the early days. So God is taking us deeper. Relationships are being tested and we're expecting less from human beings.

Does that sound like a backslider's testimony? You know one of the reasons our churches are torn apart? You know one of the reasons families are torn apart? Because we expect from Christians what Christians cannot produce. Because Christians are human beings and they fail and they don't have unlimited energy. Did you read that book *Love Within Limits*? Just the title brought a lot of freedom to me because I was on the road at times to becoming a neurotic with so many goals and so many convictions.

A redeeming the time neurotic. I wasn't trying to do two things at once. I was specializing in doing four things at once.

My wife said to me one day, just looking at you makes me tired. I sent her to bed early tonight. She's had more verbal messages than any human being could ever possibly want to handle.

Deeper relationships with our wives, with our children, with one another. Sure that includes heartache. Great relationships are not built in the absence of heartache and difficulties and struggles.

They're built as we battle through, as we keep forgiving, as we keep pressing on. And the emphasis on relationships has become one of the strongest messages of all of OM worldwide. Tens of thousands have been brought into new relationships because of what they've experienced in our conferences, in our seminars, in our fellowship meetings, our small group meetings, all the various things we do along that line.

And then the fifth blessing I title New Frontiers. OM is a movement on the march. New Frontiers.

A few years ago we added Sudan and exciting things are happening there. Pakistan is the, that was the fastest growing field within OM counting the work among Afghans, which takes place there. It still is the fastest growing field.

It ships pioneered South America, which has now been accepted as a field within OM under the leadership of Latin Americans and Frank Dietz, especially Brazil and Argentina. God has led us, of course, to pioneer especially the Muslim world. And Tunisia has been a country much upon our hearts.

Egypt, Sudan, and through indirect contacts, the STL sales force, almost every nation in Africa is distributing and receiving literature from Operation Mobilization. We're trying to focus on unreached people. The Baluch people, the Patan people, the Kurdish people, many unreached people's groups in Nepal have been reached through our teams hiking into the Himalayan mountains, often with the literature on their backs, always trying to penetrate a new frontier.

Church planting in Bangladesh, exclusively among Muslims, where all the converts are from one homogeneous unit, a Muslim background. An ex-OMer, Phil Parshall, has written a whole book on this subject, which is available here on the book table. Phil, who went with OM in Mexico in those early days, is now considered one of the leading scholars on Islam and reaching the Muslims, goes all over the world lecturing on that subject.

Often we don't see what God is doing through an ex-OMer until 10 or 15 years down the line, because people come on OM very young. And you know it takes time, and I hope some of you will be more patient. It takes time to prepare a person for his life ministry.

And God has been teaching us more about that kind of patience. Through the ships, of course, we've been able to pioneer in areas that we never dreamed, especially in reaching the very upper level of society and getting Christian books into places that without those two ships surely would never have had those books. I'd love to talk for a long time about the two ships, because I can frankly tell you I'm as excited about that ministry as I was when it was first being born.

And I believe God wants to meet that 10% shortfall of personnel we have right now on the ships, especially in the lineup department. And if you want to find out back doors and windows and chimneys into operation mobilization, you just talk to Rex Workin about the possibility of being a lineup man. And if you have any trouble with him, phone me immediately.

He was the chief engineer of both ships, not at the same time. The sixth blessing is the blessing of greater wisdom. You know, at OM in the early days, we were strong on zeal and weak on wisdom.

We had some. The thing would have come apart from the beginning because we were reading, we were learning. We're an L plate movement.

I'm still listening to cassette tape by dozens of men of God, gleaming, learning. And I believe God has increased our wisdom. This is why a number of us as speakers have more invitations to speak at conferences, pastors' meetings, conventions than we can accept, because men of God have acknowledged that the Lord has given us wisdom through 30 years of spiritual combat.

Some of us have learned something, even those of us who are slow and stubborn like me. Praise God for the wisdom from his word. Praise God for what we learn through experience.

And I believe God is commanding us in OM to share this wisdom through literature, through memos, through leaflets, through the whole body of Christ. Much of the OM truth that we preached 20 years ago is disseminated through the whole body of Christ throughout England. No one would even know that OM had anything to do with it.

It doesn't matter. There's a sign on the president's desk in the United States, probably off by now, you know, you hear these things and then you find out later it's not, it's no longer happening. But I think it goes something like this.

It's unlimited what can be accomplished if we don't care who gets the credit. I think of Philippians, esteem your brother better than yourself. Put those two statements together and I tell you a lot can be accomplished for God.

And I hope you realize just how many opportunities there are right now for you. You may be unemployed, at this present time, you may be perhaps in a difficult period, but there are opportunities, but you've got to push, you've got to pray, you've got to refuse discouragement. I've done a little bit of mountain climbing and often when I thought I was to the top, to the summit, there was another whole section.

We tried to climb even little Snowdon over here once in bad weather. We thought we were just to the summit and there was another big chunk sticking up in front of us and the snow and the wind, you know, we had to turn back. Later on, on a nice day, Peter Maiden and I walked to the top of Snowdon and he had his suit on.

So the weather does make a difference in Wales. Here's a little quotation I've been giving on the opportunities that face each one of us. Opportunity not only knocks, but is playing an anvil chorus on every man's door.

The trouble is opportunity looks so much like hard work we often fail to recognize it. A professional is a man who can do his job when he doesn't feel like it. The amateur can't do his job even when he does feel like it.

People can be placed into three classes. The few who make things happen, the many who watch things happen, and the overwhelming majority who have no idea of what has happened. The man who is looking for magic or some mysterious shortcut to success will be disappointed because ability without agility doesn't win.

The worst bankrupt in the world is the man who has lost his enthusiasm. The many a man never fails because he never tries. Let me tell you, I believe it's a miracle of God that OM, with all of our zeal, with all that we had built into us, is still running the race hard 30 years almost after our birth.

I thank God for the gift of enthusiasm. I don't have it anymore in myself. I'm a man who battles with depression, discouragement, unbelief, you name it, I'm battling it.

And yet I discover every day God meets my need. I'm a natural backslider. Any one day that God doesn't meet my need and I start to grow cold.

If you think I have some built-in passion for souls that just oozes out when I have a Bible verse in the morning, then you're obviously a little naive. It's a battle, sometimes just to get out of bed. Blanket victory always been a problem in my life.

Now I've got an electric one and my wife and I often go to bed wondering if we might, you know, be roasted. Yes, God has blessed us and I could go on all night sharing the blessings and some of you are worried specifically about that. What are the six barriers? Six barriers and there are big barriers.

There's more misunderstanding about OM today perhaps than ever because it's bigger. It's bigger and so, you know, there's more understanding and more misunderstanding. What are some of the barriers? Number one, there's the manpower barrier.

Let's pray more fervently over Matthew 9. Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he'll send forth laborers. Let's just pray and pray and pray until we see laborers going out from our churches. There are so many needs and we need to see more people going through basic training in cross-cultural communication, learning foreign languages, learning how to survive overseas.

We need more people behind the scenes. Mechanics seem to be harder to get than astronauts and typists and people who are willing to work behind the scenes, behind the computers and the typewriters, I will tell you, they are hard to find because in the secular world there's probably 20,000 gaps just in London, Birmingham and Manchester. So how are we in Christian work going to find these kind of talented people? We even started a training course but almost no one signed up.

We find a lot of Christians taking on jobs, learning skills that are not needed. Maybe we need a little more research but I will tell you the manpower barrier is the greatest barrier in Christian work today, especially when it comes to overseas work. The second barrier I call the local church barrier.

The fact that most churches are not sending churches. Many churches haven't sent anyone to the mission field for a decade, some for a couple of years. I think we need to be very sympathetic about this.

This used to be one of my areas of lack of moderation. The more pastors I got to know, the more churches I preached in, the more I sympathized with the impossible situation many people face on a local scene. Let us face it, many of God's people are very, very small minded.

Their vision does not extend beyond their garden. Many men have told me, how can I talk to world evangelism in my congregation? Half of them are not yet saved. I need an evangelistic crusade here, not somebody to come in with giant maps and charts which will scare people right out of their shoes.

And so we are facing the need in OM for more input to the local church. We've always had this. It's always been a big part of OM.

Ministry to the local church, but we need more. That's why we have men like Peter Maiden, Nigel Lee, Tony Kirk, others taking meetings to be with the local church. Many of these meetings have nothing to do with OM, spiritual ministry, but we get the relationship.

Then the next time we go back, we take stage two and stage three. God has given us now across the world an in-depth relationship with about 1,000 churches and assemblies. Do you imagine how much energy it takes to maintain those relationships? Then you wonder why we need people on our traveling teams in ascending countries, in our headquarters, in places like Quinta.

Linked with a local church barrier is, of course, what we call the financial barrier. This is a new day in operation mobilization. I tell you, it is the greatest thing that has happened to OM in two decades, minus nothing.

I have taught, listen, because some of you are going to get shaken, listen. I have taught for years that every Christian movement has its blind spots and every Christian leader has his blind spots. Why? I've seen them.

They frighten me. Great men of God. They're so blind on certain areas.

It's just frightening. I'm talking about men who are considered some of the greatest Christian leaders in the world because I mix and meet these characters for some strange reason. More and more, I kept wrestling.

God, what's my blind spot? God, slowly, I tell you, is so patient. He's got somebody like me, so patient, because my blind spot was in the area of money. I tried to out Mueller George Mueller.

I tried to out leap Hudson Taylor. I thought OMF was compromising because they wrote all these books about their financial system. That was hinting.

Now, I backed down years ago from saying anything in public about OMF because I love them so much, but I would never allow any book to be written about OM that would mention money. Nobody knows how extreme at times I was in this area. One of the few movements in the world that doesn't even take offerings in its meetings, and we still don't have unity that we can do that so you can relax tonight.

And if you think OM is going to go into fundraising, you can also relax because that's not what I'm talking about. Though for many years, I have strongly spoke in favor of other groups, fundraising and of local churches taking offerings. So don't think everything we're talking about is new, but God just showed us that we have to be more honest and forthright about money.

And we have to teach the young people who come on OM the reality of what they are going to face when they leave and try to join a mission society. And young person, if you don't get your act together in the area of money, you're not going to be a missionary. Just forget it.

And we've got 28 years of proof because for everyone that ever made it to the mission field as a result of OM, there are 10 that never made it. And one of the reasons is because we didn't teach them how to communicate about finance and that it was not just prayer. We made the mistake of teaching that it was just prayer.

And one of the things that helped us change was the ugliness of the extreme healing movement who said it was just prayer, no doctors, no medicine, just prayer. And when the thing really dawned on me that I was teaching in money, what they were teaching in health, I will tell you, it wasn't long after that I made the most historic tape in OM's history called Financial Crisis that has gone to over 300 Christian leaders and full-time workers around the world and has brought almost completely positive feedback from every single person. The first major negative letter was this man who just wrote, believing we're infiltrated by the Freemasons and evolution teachers.

He completely missed the point of the tape. But there are people that when you don't have money, they immediately think it's because you're in sin. It's a great mistake, young people, to think that if you pray and that prayer is not answered, the only explanation is that you are in sin.

That's why many people who prayed for healing and haven't seen it, they were told it was only because of their unbelief. On top of that, we have many young people who have wanted to go to the mission field, they have prayed for money, it didn't come in, and so they accepted this as God's final will that they were not to go to the mission field. And I, I'm afraid I contributed to that deception.

Now God overruled. And if people listened to other things that I said, it was often brought into balance even 20 years ago. But people don't always listen to everything that you're saying.

And God has told us, and we've got unity right across our work, that we must be honest about finance and that the churches who are sending young people on the OM, they need to know at least what we believe and what we teach. People through rumors and misunderstandings actually thought in some countries that we were loaded with money. After all, any group that has two ships and these lovely bookshops and their leaders, look at their leaders, are flying around in airplanes.

Now they have computers. Certainly any group that flies in airplanes has computers and two ships is loaded. And you know what? Because of those lies, the average person on our mailing list doesn't even send the money in to pay for the postage.

Doesn't even send the money to pay for the postage. And OM at times has been the laughing stock of Christian work. But I will tell you, God has brought us into a new day.

I don't believe we're going to go into extreme because we're a conservative lot by nature. But we are going to teach young people what it's about. Because when you leave OM and you go into another mission society, the support they ask for is three times greater or more than what you have in OM.

Yet it's our program to prepare you for other mission societies. There are a few, of course, exceptions and some denominational societies that actually pay a salary. God has brought us into more balance in this area.

And the churches, one of my churches wrote me. They said, we are so thrilled with this tape. And the international coordinating team is the most in debt of the whole of OM.

The team that's supposed to be coordinating it worldwide because no one even knows it barely exists. And this church, one of my supporting churches in Philadelphia, wrote me a letter jumping up and down about that tape. And they said, we want you to know that we really believe this.

It's prayer and information. And they sent me four thousand dollars as feedback that I might get the point. I got the point.

They got a receipt. Listen, young people, many people want to give and they don't know where to give. They are confused.

And a man of God said to me once, you have one of the greatest missionary endeavors in the world going about going on and no one hardly knows what you're even doing. And so they're often giving their money to things that are completely ridiculous. And I tell you, it's seeing where some of the money goes in God's work that also has changed me because it breaks my heart to see people throwing money into things that I know from world, a lot of experience on the field is just a dead end street and some cases even straightforward and desolate.

Men of God who have the resources, they are under the constraint of the word of God to examine the facts before they give that money. And as someone who was a businessman before I was saved, I can't believe that I ever got into this thing so deep, into such confusion. And it was all because I wanted to be absolutely spiritual.

And so in wanting to be absolutely spiritual, I got into super spirituality. Any of you ever been down super spirituality highway where you also so easily judge other people, where you always feel your way is better and God has blessed you in a special way. You're not going to tell people about it, but you know deep down he's blessed you in a special way.

And why don't these people get with it? May God humble us and cause us to grow in that area. And the third barrier is what I call the organization barrier. And that as OM has become large, we don't have enough professional spirit filled administrators and organizers.

People like Tony Kirk miraculously left British Rail where he was designing supposedly some part of that 125 train that frightens people as it goes through their towns and went out to the ship. I thought he was going to the engine room and they put him in the kitchen. And then somehow in the mercy of God, because he's basically got a good wife, which is his best feature, he stays in OM and he returns to work in a place like Danzig Street with a kind of skilled, highly experienced administration personnel that we managed to recruit.

Like chief engineers who are so fed up with going to sea, they'd do anything to stay on land. Not exactly but God has brought men into this task and yet right now OM is hurting for lack of administrative help. And we ask you to pray and if you know people who are accountants or have management training, they have a gift in the area of organization, tell them about some of the needs.

The greatest need on the ships right now, together with perhaps a financial mountain, is the need for lineup people. People who will go ahead of the ship. And if any of you know people you think may have some experience and could go out ahead of the ship, they'll give them a crash course after the January conference on the Doulos and they'll be off to some African port doing lineup before they know what has happened.

I got official permission from Dale Roton to make that kind of statement. Number four, the fourth barrier as we come to the end of this little talk, is what I call the gossip barrier. Bad news travels quicker than good news.

Some people think today OM has got so much credibility and so many people are speaking well of us. It depends completely what circle of friends you're with. I would dare to say there's as much bad going out against OM today as it was in the 60s, 62 and 63, when I mean we were really being viciously attacked and some of it was our own fault.

There are many churches today in Britain of the new churches that we so love and appreciate who are anti-parent church. They will not be involved in anything that is not a local church, which mainly they mean their local church or their circuit or stream of churches. We need an amalgamation of the outreach agencies, that's what I call them, not parent church, the outreach agencies that God has raised up and some of them have been the biggest church planting bodies in history.

Please understand that. So the separation between the two is completely ridiculous and unbiblical and very few scholars that I meet around the world and men who know the word of God follow this. But some people never get that far in their studies and so today there is a strong anti-parent church and therefore anti-OM wind blowing and many many fellowships, especially among the new ones, would never send anybody on operation mobilization.

And we've gone to some of these groups, we've talked, it gets more complicated than I have time to explain. But the gossip barrier probably is hindering mission work more than almost anything else. We're just about to get a breakthrough with a church or with an individual and then they pick up this bit of gospel, you know, if you go on OM you'll never eat properly again.

I mean that isn't the way to warm the heart of the average British person. Or, you know, OM is dominated by this, or OM is anti-charismatic, or OM is, or especially Verwer is a raving Pentecostal. We get hit from every side.

People don't understand something that is as broad as OM. We are not anti. Most of these things people claim us to be anti.

We're not anti. We're just trying to keep some balance because we have people from different churches. We believe in integrity.

Integrity means if we tell a church we're interdenominational, then we have to be interdenominational. Otherwise we've got to tell the church in advance. Why do so many churches send their young people on OM? You know why? One reason, they trust us.

They know when we say something we mean it. And they realize that when failure comes, often it's not because we teach that, but because of course sometimes things get out of control and we're dealing with the human factor. Pray with us in faith, with the shield of faith against the gossip barrier.

Let us know when you pick up innuendos, false stories, that we can try to combat them through information, through the truth, through love, through a necessary phone call, through a church visit. We have men committed to this job. Rex Worth and his staff, their work is people.

Director of personnel, that's of course includes churches. Our team down in the southern part of England, based in London, working under Manchester, tries to reach out in relationship to the churches in the South. And we now have a full-time man committed to that, Ray Anderson, who's finding he has a lot to do.

And then number five, the barrier of prayerlessness. Nothing is more significant than that. Nothing is more subtle in the enemy's tactics.

So many ex-OMers have told me that after they left OM, the hardest thing to maintain was their prayer life. You know, it's one thing to go to a night of prayer when it's organized in a room next to you, and everybody's expected to be there. It's another thing you go to a half night of prayer, and praise God, many other groups are starting them now.

I noticed Oxford Christian Union was organizing one for a couple of weeks. I was at Sussex University a day before that. They're organizing half nights of prayer.

This vision of extended prayer is spreading, but I tell you, it's not easy, is it? I wonder if you'd commit yourself to getting involved in extended prayer wherever you are, even if you have to help organize it yourself. It doesn't have to be all night, even a couple of hours, would enable us to really dig in and have something a little more than the average church prayer meeting with a total time of maybe 20 minutes in actual prayer. And I praise God even for that.

I wrote an article about it, and some of you know. Prayerlessness is the most subtle of the sins hindering world evangelism and OM today, and it comes within OM as well as outside. And then that sixth barrier is the barrier of unbelief.

A lot of other things I'd like to touch on, like how tradition can hinder the work of God. Things that were good and acceptable in one particular day in OM are no longer acceptable or good. There was a day in OM when we were absolutely almost adamant against purchasing any houses, as it became more and more difficult in certain countries to even rent a house, and the rents went out of sight.

God showed us that it was sensible for our families, not as a movement, but our families, if they could get a mortgage and it was in their own country, to get necessary accommodation after much prayer in that way. We are fighting a problem in accommodation that's amazing. We are here in Quinta largely because of accommodation problems.

Do not think we got some great dream in Manchester, you know, Quinta came down on a big plate. You know, OM, when it comes to guidance, OM is a very down-to-earth movement, and we believe in the many different ways of finding out God's will. Our backs were against the wall in Manchester.

We love Manchester. We love cities. OM is mainly in cities, and already negative things are going out against OM about our move here to Quinta, and it's linked with the thought that OM is no longer the old OM where they're all suffering for Christ on the floor.

They're moving to some mansions. They got this postcard picture of this one building up here, which we're not even involved in yet, as far as I know, and it belongs to a trust who owns Quinta. We are here on a rent-free, isn't it rent-free basis, a dollar or a pound we're paying.

And so, you know, in a sense God pushed us here, because we don't want to put a lot of money into huge rents. We want to channel that money for another million tracks in India, more vehicles in the Sudan. Most of our workers here that came actually wanted, or a number of them, wanted to stay where they were.

It took them years to build up those in-depth relationships. This is no retreat, brothers and sisters, to a country mansion. This is a practical down-to-earth economy move so that OM India doesn't have to cut back another 100 people as we did three years ago.

And in God's work, it isn't always all forward. If your life, it's all forward, you're doing a lot better than me. Maybe you could autograph my Bible.

And in God's work, there are times when it's a practical retreat. Initially, coming out here to some seemed like a practical retreat. The more we moved, we realized God was in it, and when God is in it, even if it's plan B, it's going to be a blessing.

And we've already seen what the Lord wants to do out here in this part of the country. Praise his name for the flexibility and the adaptability, the extra-mile mentality that still exists within OM, and yet the

willingness to throw some of the traditions into the air that we may get on with the job. But the greater barrier really is that barrier of unbelief.

It's linked with fear, it's linked with worry, and I have fought it, you know, sometimes spiritually speaking with my bare fists. And I wonder if there's any tonight, if you're really honest, unbelief has been dominating your life in these past months. Maybe in the area of a job, maybe in the area of missions, maybe in the area of giving, maybe in the area of prayer, maybe in relationships, maybe just life in general.

With me, just life in general at times just frightens me. The whole thing just frightens me. And I just fall before God and say, Lord, I don't think I can keep on going.

I wish I could preach on 1 Kings 18 and 19. What a divine message from God. Elijah in the 18th chapter, the fire falling.

Miracles! The 19th chapter, he's under the jennifer tree and saying, God, I've had enough. And I've been under that tree. Because, you know, when a work gets this big and you're up against these barriers and you're up against every kind of hassle Satan can give, because Satan knows that O.M. is one of the largest forces in the Muslim world.

Over 200 people in O.M. committed to reaching the Muslim world out on the field. And it's one of the larger forces moving into the communist world. It's one of the larger forces moving into the Hindu world.

And with the two ships and a lot of other things, one of the larger forces moving into the whole world. You think Satan sits back and says, well, isn't that nice? 1600 people that want to blow my dominions right off the map. I will tell you, Satan is going to resist with every inch of hellish fiber he has.

C.S. Lewis' book was not a comic book. And we need your help, your support, your prayers, your one hour of voluntary labor more than ever in our history. Because especially something that's based in Britain and becomes big is easily misunderstood.

The Americans understand big things, but God led us to base this work in Europe with a hub as Britain. It's extended all over the world and Americans, of course, are welcome, but our roots are here and we need your prayers, your support, your love, your understanding. And if X.O.M.ers can't give us this, who can? Not because you had a perfect time with us, but you know something of what this is about and you've got vision and many of you are actually headed out to the regions beyond.

Well, there are six blessings and six barriers, lots to do, lots of opportunities. Will you join hands with us in 1986, which is almost upon us? And we may again see four or five hundred workers go out for the summer. How many do we have British on the year program right now? 428.

That must count the children, I believe. Counting the children who are very important, 478 British people. Seldom heard of in missionary history in connection with this country.

So we need your help because sometimes it's easier to find people to go than it is to find people who will give, who will send. Romans 10, how shall they go unless they be sent? Will you be a sender? It may only be the widow's might. It may only be an extra hour of prayer, but believe me, that's what makes a difference.

Thank you very much. Let's pray. Our God, we thank you for the privilege of being together here tonight, the freedom we had and sort of the family meeting too.

Forget about the clock a little bit. We know many a pub around Britain, things are just getting warmed up. The wine is flowing, the song and the dance.

And it is our prayer that the new wine may flow around this place tonight. That we would make deeper commitments of our lives to you and determine to go, to give, to send, to recruit others, to stand against gossip, misunderstandings, subtle intimidations, and to be part of this great army for world evangelism. We thank you for bringing us here to Western Rim.

We thank you for bringing us here to the Quinta, in your providence, in your sovereignty. And we commit again, all that is happening here and all that must happen in the coming months, that we may see another army of workers raised up for next summer, raised up for next year. That many may graduate and move on to OMF and WEC and other mission societies who we sense a high degree of like-mindedness with in the battle.

We thank you, Lord, for showing us some of our blind spots and for the adaptations and clarifications you're helping us to make. We thank you for men and women that have searched the scriptures to see what the truth is. We believe, Lord, that we're going in to a tremendous new period in OM's history.

And we thank you for those two ships. We thank you for the 300 workers in India, and the subcontinent, 400. We thank you for the 200 or so in the Muslim countries.

We thank you for, I don't know how many, in the communist lands. We thank you for what you're doing in Southern Europe, Northern Europe, in places like Germany, Sweden, Norway. We thank you for the expansion and the breakthroughs in South America.

We pray for the Duluth's coming thrust into all of Africa. We thank you, Lord Jesus, for what's happening in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Korea, for the total internationalization of missions, as people are joining from third world countries, hand to hand with people from places like Britain and the States to accomplish the task. We thank you especially for the national church in each land.

Help us to continue to submit to them and work with them for the accomplishment of the job in their country. Lord, we've covered a lot of territory in this message. Bring back to our minds the things that we need to remember at the right time, in the right circumstances, that we may stand with a shield of faith and stop the fiery darts of Satan.

For we pray in Jesus name. Amen.

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