

A Christian Ethic From Daniel

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of balance in Christian living, avoiding perfectionism and human limitations, and promoting unity and a broader view in the Church.

Duration: 47:04

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Galatians 5:13-15

Topics: "Daniel"

Description

The sermon transcript discusses the story of Daniel and how he was thrown into the den of lions due to his faithfulness in praying to God. The speaker mentions the misuse of scripture and the need for sensitivity in ministry. The transcript also briefly mentions the life and ministry of a man named Tiny, who had a passion for perfection in his work. The speaker emphasizes the importance of willing workers in the ministry and the need for a balanced approach in serving God.

Transcript

It's two passages of Scripture I wanted to share and I asked Gary if I could share before we broke bread together. We used to break bread together years ago almost every week for a while and then we pendulum went the other way as often does and so I'm encouraged that Gary was led to organize this breaking of bread. The first passage is in the Old Testament.

The second is in the New. Well, let's look at the Old first. Daniel chapter 6. Daniel chapter 6, a book worth studying.

I'm sure I don't need to say that. It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes who should be over the whole kingdom. And over these three presidents.

My mind immediately goes over to France where the Conservatives won in the election and the Prime Minister or the President just appointed a right-wing Prime Minister. It's given me an itch to study French government and compare it with British government. The President appoints the Prime Minister.

That is not the way it happens here. And over these three presidents of whom Daniel was first. That's why some have referred to him as the Prime Minister.

And the princess might give account in different translations. They have it in different ways on to them that the king should have no damage. It's an ancient word.

What word do you have there for damage? Suffer loss. Yeah, he was quite concerned about finance and everything else. Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes because an excellent spirit was in him.

And the king thought to set him over the whole realm. Then the presidents and the princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom. But they could find no occasion nor fault for as much as he was faithful.

Neither was there any error or fault found in him. That is really strong. And I've wrestled with it for many years.

I'm sure some of you were around maybe eight years ago heard me share on this. I don't think I've shared on this text for about eight years. I always look at some of the oldies, you know, like Common.

And he's probably heard me speak on Daniel chapter 6. So if you meditate, memorize scripture while I'm sharing, no problem. Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king and said thus unto him, King Darius lived forever.

All the presidents of the kingdom and governors and the princes and the counselors and the captains have consulted together and established a royal statute. Man has this unbelievable desire to make laws. And to make a firm decree that whoever shall ask petition of any God, small g, or man for 30 days except of thee, O King, shall be cast into the den of lions.

You may be wondering how Daniel got into the den of lions. That's how it started. They passed a law.

Now, O King, establish the decree and sign the writing and it be not changed according to the law of the Medes and the Persians which altereth not. Wherefore, King Darius signed the writing and the decree. Now, look what Daniel does.

This is interesting. Chapter, same chapter, verse 10. Now, when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into the house and his window being opened in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God as he did previously.

Talk about holy boldness. Talk about challenging the highest authority of the nation. I mean, it's just really quite quite spectacular.

Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. Then they came near and spoke before the king concerning the king's decree. Hast thou not signed a decree? I think you know perhaps the rest of the story, how this led to Daniel being thrown in the den of lions, which led to his miraculous deliverance by God.

It's not time to give you a biography on Daniel. I think that this passage, like many passages, can be misused. I've been working for some time on a message in my mind on the misuse of Scripture.

Some of you may have heard or heard the tape on the message I gave to a large number of Christian leaders on the need to develop sensitivity in our ministry. And I know over the years one of the things that I have been sad about is when I have been insensitive to the ministry of God's Word. It's one thing to preach and see people convicted of sin.

It's another thing to say things that are lacking sensitivity and are hurtful to people who are sitting there in the audience. And someone was sharing with me, I appreciated it very much this week, I don't remember even where it came from, how sometimes in OM meetings certain kinds of people are intimidated. I may have touched on that in my message Friday about esteeming women.

But usually if you're saying something or if there's a joke about a particular kind of person, be sure probably someone is sitting in the audience. And now the age of the tape recorder, I will tell you. Some of you know that Christian leader in America who lost, was it a quarter of a million through one misplaced sentence in a sermon referring to someone who committed suicide, who had not committed suicide.

And they sued him for a couple of million. And God's people had to pay the bill. They raised the money from God's people.

And I know we can take passages like this and we can push for perfectionism. We can we can we can try to do a lot of things. So I think we need to understand that Daniel was an unusual man.

I don't think he was a two-talent man or a five-talent man. I think he was a man of tremendous capacity and ability and talent and certainly he had worked into a position of leadership over a period of time. At the same time all of us can certainly receive some inspiration from this.

The desire to do the best we can in the work of God. And Daniel was not working for an evangelistic agency. I think you realize that.

He was not even in a Christian or a religious agency that day pre-Christian. He was working basically for an ungodly secular government. And yet he put everything he had into it.

He did the best he could. We don't understand everything about every detail. And it says that when they tried to find something wrong with his work they were after finding something wrong with his work that they couldn't find anything.

Then they decided to work on his religion. And this has been a great challenge to me. I guess I may have used this passage 20 years ago when I launched the famous Zero Defects program in Operation Mobilization.

Something that was started in industry and something we learned in OM was a lot easier to accomplish when it was a job that was the same. Every time you did it the job was the same and so you could get better and better and better. And often in industry factories were doing perfect jobs.

Turning out things perfect. I can always remember Frank Buss, one of the first OM mechanics that ever came on OM. Not Frank Buss, Tiny Schnell.

Frank came after him. Tiny Schnell, one of the first OM mechanics. And he was, he believed as Daniel.

He believed it should be done right. He would sit me down and he was a professional mechanic. Came around the same time Steve Hart did, who was a professional in the area of business management and law.

Those two guys were amazing. But anyway, Tiny would always have this illustration. You know, talking about a car factory.

When the machine that made the fenders, when it came down upon that molten steel, boom, he would bang his big hands. Every time it would come out perfect. And his goal in the garage and in the mechanics work in the early days was perfection.

You know, he suffered much in operation mobilization. And eventually launched to start his own ministry after many years. And that ministry continues to this day called Hands That Serve over in the Netherlands.

But one day, Tiny driving down the road, something happened and his car went out of control and he hit a tree and went to the glory. Quite an amazing story, perhaps should be written. How do you keep this all in balance? You know, the desire to do things right.

Certainly the goal of every typist present with us at this time is that the letter be a hundred percent correct, right? I mean, that's just without saying. You don't expect people to sit down and think, now as I type this letter, maybe I should plan on four mistakes. Probably the boss who's reading it, you know, he won't catch four.

They're not too bad. I don't think anybody does that except, you know, if you're in a really foul mood. And I'm sure when we're working on vehicles and when we're packing books, whatever we're doing, we desire to do the best we can.

We desire by God's grace to do a perfect job. I think the whole area is difficult because when it comes to living the Christian life and walking with God, fellowship, love, prayer, reality, we know it's going to take a lifetime to really continue to grow, right? The way God wants us to grow. But to repair an engine properly or type a letter or work on the computer, I don't think we want people who are going to sit down.

Well, this is a long-term program, folks, and I figure it's going to take a lifetime before I learn to do this this right. This is why in making comparisons, we have to always understand the tremendous variety of kinds of jobs we're doing and the great variety of challenge there is in our Christian life. There are areas where I'm not planning to do certain things ever.

Not once am I going to make the mistake. In the moral area, I don't plan by God's mercy and grace to make one mistake with prostitutes. I don't want to have to come back to my wife and say, you know, I went around the world on this last trip and tremendous victory, but I made one mistake in Sydney.

I saw this chick on the road. She really looked lonely and she looked like she needed a new dress and I went over to talk to her and give her a track and well, but it was the only mistake on the entire trip. You know, that really wouldn't go over too well, would it? With you.

And I did see those girls on the streets of Sydney. It's actually a very heartbreaking thing and we just drove on to where we were going. But there are other areas which are of concern to God where we make mistakes.

Wrong attitudes toward people. I had that sometimes on the trip. I'm sure Bob must have intended to have a wrong attitude toward me.

An impatient word, a lack of love, pride, impatience, my daily area of difficulty. And so, you know, sometimes it is difficult to understand God's ways and what areas can we really expect, you know, sort of a hundred percent and what areas is it going to be continual growth? And I tell you, if you get that mixed up, you can end up with a good, quick, nervous breakdown. And the same is true as we come into the

commercial world.

We come into warehousing. We're in the warehousing of books business. We're in the communications business.

We're in a, you know, some people lately have have used the word commercial operation as if it's some new term. Words are powerful things, especially among Christians. You know, whole churches are split in two, just on the basis of one word.

In fact, I think the whole church, didn't the Orthodox Church split with the Roman Church way back? Yeah, yeah, what matter? So, you know, at times some of our tensions and difficulties, you know, have come through the different use of words. And I think we ought to just, and I'm speaking to myself, sometimes just relax a little more about the word people are using and work toward balance, work toward definition, work toward compromise. Because lately there's been tension between some perhaps who have emphasized words like commercial, professional, expertise, things like that, with others who are saying, well, training, ministry, spiritual life.

You know, none of these words are new in operation mobilization. You think we launched a ship 16 years ago without an amalgamation of those two things? Our greatest prayer request in the ship ministry was that God would give us the right professionals. And if God hadn't given us the professional people in the merchant Navy, there would be no ship ministry.

Captain Graham Scott, first officer with P&O, left a big job years before we had the ship and brought his professional knowledge into OM. And I learned a lot from living and traveling and working with him. And I had to study, often, many, many books on merchant Navy terminology.

I remember when I actually had to send the Telex to buy the ship, which was called Yumanek. I called Tori Mosvold, the top shipper in Norway. I was just with him in Florida.

A man who originally was skeptical about the ship, now thinks it's one of the greatest miracles of the 20th century. Every time I meet him, he starts jumping. And I called him up in Norway to ask him, what is the terminology to use on a Telex? The whole merchant Navy world is a world in itself.

They have their own language. They have their own way of thinking. And you don't buy a ship, you know, like you're presenting prayer requests at the prayer meeting.

Danish government. God has led us to purchase the Yumanek. We don't have any money and we don't have a company yet.

But we're seeking the Lord and we're believing for God's provision and wonder if the ship is available. Now, maybe we should have sent that Telex. But instead, I did what Tori Mosvold told me to say in that Telex.

And I just believe that OM has, right from almost the beginning, been a tremendous amalgamation of different kinds of people. And the truth is that we do, if STL is going to continue, and ICT, we do need professional people. We need people who know their business and know their work.

Now, at the same time, God will continue to bring in people like Jerry Davey, who was an aeronautics engineer and started way back in the Bolton bookshop, that seems like a long time ago, to learn a whole

new profession. And so within, say, who knows how many years, five or ten years, was a professional in the area of Christian literature. And God will continue to bring in people, sometimes they're older people, not always, like Steve Hart from the very earliest days, like Tiny Schnell, and there are many others, who are professional people.

They bring with them their skills and their expertise and their training. Hopefully they come also with spirituality, so that they want to pray and they know something of humility and godliness. At the same time, there will be others trained up through the work, who after so many years, though we don't use the term a lot, necessarily, in OM, they are people who are professional.

And we've seen people learn professional skills in OM, all through these years, go out of OM and get quite good jobs. Do you realize we have trained a number of men to be professional lorry drivers, and they got their jobs after OM in professional driving? We have an army of women around the world, who got their first chance to learn secretarial skills on operationalization, and some of them got their bread and butter for many years, because they learned that. OM has been known as a movement that has given a lot of people their first chance in life, especially in places like India, where I tell you, it's a lot harder to get your first chance than here.

I mean, the opportunities for education, I think, today is budget day, as you know, they just throw a whole new load of money into this rescue program for the unemployed and teach people what they'll never learn, but they're pressing on. No, that wasn't fair. But, but I believe it's, it's, it's not either or, it's not one or the other, it's not OM is, is, is, you know, this or it's that.

It's somehow all these things. People of different abilities and different gifts. There's also those group of people who come on, come along, and who never perhaps develop a high area of expertise in some area where they're going to go out and make big money.

But they're willing workers. They're faithful people. They may only have one talent, they may make mistakes, and so the Daniel message, if not given in its balanced way, makes them very nervous.

But they're willing workers, and it, if it wasn't for the army of willing workers, some short-term, some long-term, OM would not exist. This has been one of our secrets. Because you're not going to get too many Oxford graduates that are going to pack books in his warehouse.

Now, perhaps we should start, like they have in France, the priest factory system. Priests who took off their collars, and they went into the factories when the Roman Church was so dissipated, and it still is, they're just struggling for survival in France. These priests, by the hundreds, moved in and took factory jobs, and were called working priests.

I remember, I guess about the second or third year that Jerry was in the leadership here, I asked a brother who was a leader, who was a good brother, to spend a year working in the warehouse. Some of you may remember that, Larry Oren. He was a seminary graduate.

I said, you go and work in the warehouse, just get among these young people, and just, just love them, and encourage them, and work with them. And he did it with great joy. And I just believe the great need of the hour, forgive me if I've played this record too much, I don't think, I haven't, I haven't even been around.

The great need of the hour, right here in Bromley, is more unity. You know, if we presume that unity is just something we have automatically, in OM, we'll make the greatest mistake in our life. It's probably the

strongest message in our orientation tapes, if you've been through those tapes.

I mean, in, in, in OM's early days, one of the greatest distinctives was our emphasis on unity. And many of us, for years, have again and again laid aside personal likes or dislikes for the sake of unity. Not sacrificing our major doctrines.

That's why we've always said to people, look, after one or two years in OM, if you're not really happy about it, you don't feel it's your thing, fine. Join another mission, join a group where maybe the doctrine, doctrinal line is, is narrower. We know that OM, doctrinally, is too broad for some people.

Especially some who come from certain kinds of churches. And we have never wanted to make those people feel second-class, because they wouldn't come along with OM's, you know, broader view. In fact, we all go to different churches on Sunday, and many times maintain a broader view.

Or a narrow view. And a lot of people, after training on OM, have gone back to their denomination, even started OM within their, their same denomination. But if we are going to go on with this forward thrust, the Hindu world, the communist world, the Muslim world, Europe, in both sending and target fields, many, many other things connected with that.

The ship ministry, which now is adding Africa to the target, South America, which is in there, I will tell you, we are going to have to re-emphasize that initial orientation tape number three or four. Unity. And we're going to have to see an amalgamation in OM that will have been and be just as great as what we saw in the birth.

OM must be born again every year, somebody once said. We get people making statements, and these things are not necessarily out of Brahman. People making statements like, you know, we, a lot of these older guys have been around for a while.

They need to, you know, they need to do something else. Let's get younger men in to take over the leadership. They, they, they usually get some interesting feedback from me when I hear that.

Who do you think is running the world today? Will you tell me? Who do you think is running the world? Teenagers? Guys in their 40s? How old's Reagan? How old's the guys in Moscow? How old's Margaret Thatcher? The people who are running the world, including the armed forces, most of them are older people. And I don't believe God's work. I never have believed it.

You can't find it on any tape I've ever given, that God's work is to be led by young and often immature people. And I will tell you, I'm not even near retirement. And when Val Grieve just spoke to me on the telephone, he is so, you know, he is so over the moon about his Pakistan trip, you know, I thought the phone call was going to go on all day, and I was paying.

And I said, I agreed to see him on the weekend, but he celebrated his 60th birthday up there in Peshawar. And he came back and 100% healthy. He had no health problem whatsoever.

And he is now going part-time in his legal firm so he can give more time to the work of God. I dare to say not too many Christian organizations would say that Val Grieve at 60 was a little too old for them to want to take. In fact, this man could be grabbed up by many organizations if he ever wanted to go in that direction.

I believe the key for OM in the future is partnership. I personally find it easier now to relate to people in their 20s than I did when I was 20. Because when I was 20, I was immature in many ways, I was insensitive at times, I had more impatience, and though I turned some people on, I can tell you I turned many people off.

Especially if I couldn't get to them personally. And now I think with a little more wisdom and sensitivity and love, because that's what counts with God, not whether you're young or old or tall or short or whatever, that I can often relate and understand. I had so many open doors to speak among young people today, far more than I ever did when I was 25, I will tell you.

And I believe the way ahead is unity. It's an amalgamation of the man that's come up through OM, being trained year by year, with a man who maybe joined us last month with his professional skills, having left maybe \$50,000 a year job. I'll tell you one thing we decided back on the Lagos, those of us who were new in the area of merchant, merchant navy terms and all, we decided to just esteem these professional seniors.

And God just, you know, God blessed that. They in turn esteemed us. And we threw struggle and heartache and tear, and I'll tell you, even fistfights.

Near fistfights, I don't know if they actually landed. Peter says they landed. He's the historian on the list.

But God gave the unity. I remember when the ship Lagos went into a 24 degree list in the port of Rotterdam. The captain was off doing something, and the whole ship started to go over.

We thought the ship was going to go over. We had read in books that ships go over, even on the dockside. They flip right over.

And I tell you, everybody was off that ship in a few minutes. I remember somebody carrying Judy Seifert, who was a cripple girl, and now Judy Dance. And there we were all standing on the docks watching the ship.

And Bjorn Christensen comes driving up in his Volkswagen. I quickly ran down the road and called Graham Scott on the telephone. He was in England.

And of course, we later on sat in the captain's cabin, and we realized, because up to that time the engineers and the deck people, the captain and the chief engineer, were not getting on. There was a lot of tension. I was just feeling my way with very, very little authority.

I was giving the authority to these people, because it was a ship, and they were the professional people. I will tell you, in that captain's cabin, after that experience, we were all humbled. And we admitted that we had cooperated.

The engine room had cooperated well with the deck department to jeopardize the ship. And there was a new unity, not a total unity, but there was a new unity through that. And there was a humbling of ourselves before God, that without his help, that ship wasn't going to go out of Rotterdam.

And that meant the amateur and the professional. That meant, you know, the Pentecostal Norwegian captain with the PB, Australian Scottish Background Chief Engineer, and the long-nosed skinny Dutch mixed-up English director, and all the other people that were involved in that. And you know, there are

many comparisons between what we are doing in STL and ICT, right here, and the ship ministry.

There are many comparisons. There are other things that are totally different. But one of the things we know today, with computerization, with the competition we face in society in many, many ways, that society has gone, and this has been true for years, it's not really that new, but it escalates, it escalates.

We have got to have people like Daniel, who are committed to do the job right, and who will just believe that what they are doing is something that should be done, as we read in the New Testament, with all your heart, as unto the Lord. I have a lot of illustrations, not time to give them, but I think people in OM need to know that that quarter of a million dollar fire that hit us in Bombay was completely our own fault. And it was a devastating thing, I believe.

There are other factors that don't make us 100% our fault, because the way India is, the way the electrical system was, the huge chunks of metal that were in the fuse box, instead of fuses, they have ways of doing things in Bombay. But ultimately, that fire was our fault. Even if we had had a few decent fire extinguishers, a quarter of a million dollars, we had no insurance, a quarter of a million dollars of Christian books and everything, we would have never gone up.

I tell you, what a lesson for all of us. And when I think of this building, and all that God has committed to us, these vehicles, this building, the task, we are doing physical work here. And I tell you, in OM, our teaching has always been that the man doing physical work is absolutely equal to the man who is down here with the biggest brain in the place, pushing buttons or managing the whole operation.

There is no and will never be, by God's grace, discrimination in OM between the so-called working class and the upper class. That all stinks with God. It always has.

It's just like slavery. You can defend it, but you'll never really find it in the Word of God. And we're living in a country where the problem of class has still caused some of the greatest heartaches in the nation.

And the caste system that we just... It's interesting we referred to that in the message. You just can't even believe how destructive that is. And yet we in the Western world, through our social life, we create the same thing.

Let's face it, how many nice pale-faced American or British or German or Swedish white people have ever had some black people into their home? I'm talking about family people with their own homes. You know, when you're a young person, you're a bit wild, you do this and that. But after people get married, they settle in to their little way.

And believe me, right now, the immigrants in this country, they are feeling a mighty big chill. And I believe all this literature we give out to them and all the books we sell to them, if there isn't more love among God's people, it's just sounding brass. Not that we should give up distributing it.

And as you know, our strategy is as mixed with love as it is with literature. And I just think it's a great testimony for God that 24 years or 23 years after, I haven't got the dates in my mind, 1962, STL was born in Britain. How many years ago was that? It was born that somehow we're still going.

We're now in a tremendous transition. And we need to unite. We're never all going to agree on this and that.

You know, even the things we've gone through with computers around O.M. to get the experts to agree on what computer. We set up a computer committee. That became, you know, we're dealing with things that are complicated.

What kind of vehicles we should use. We used to be Volkswagen, now we're Ford Transit. Of course, here it's just whatever goes.

Sometimes it doesn't go. But there's so many, so many things. Really, there's so many things we can argue about.

So many things we can differ on. The whole church is this way. This is not us.

We're not some kind of weirdos. The whole church is fighting over endless issues. And right now, because we're in transition, because we're computerizing, because we're in a change of leadership, and do not have yet the director for this work in the future, you know, there's going to be even more differences of opinion, and especially when there's problems.

And I would just ask of you, as we battle together in this, to try to be positive. Surely you've read some books on the subject of being positive. And negativism, as it goes out, it just spreads right across the whole world.

And we're not going to be able to get the people we need in this operation, which is God's work, not my work, if, of course, a lot of rumors are around and things that are being said. I remember the ship went through this for a while. The ship, of course, having tremendous support from the whole of OM, with a lot of major leaders continually speaking, has been able to stand against almost any gossip that could be released against it.

But let's understand, in STL, we don't have the kind of support those ships have. We're just a little... At times, Jerry has stood alone with a few others, battling to keep this thing going. And even India, people can get very excited about India in OM.

I'm tremendously excited about India. But I can also remember days when our teams here were devastated by people coming back from India, giving the idea everybody out there was a dedicated soldier of Jesus Christ who had deep reality and prayer, and everybody here was a spendthrift schnook who ought to really get right with God and put in for long-term service in Mongolia. And then we wondered why, you know, not everybody was popping around here looking like Harry Happy.

And most of us here, most of you are young. I can't say us anymore, unfortunately, that term. Most of you are young.

And look, if you can't do this work here as unto the Lord, with the joy we talked about last week, working in unity with your brothers and sisters, battling through the problems. You know, forget about these dreams you have about going to India and the Muslim world. We have seen so many people go out there and bounce back in the last 25 years.

We could write a book about it. You've got to develop stickability. And if the job here is something you don't like, you feel you're misunderstood, you feel you're walked on, or this is going wrong, or whatever, God can use that to train you more than if everything's going right.

Personally, I'm working for everything to go right. That's just built into my Anglo-Dutch whatever background. I want things to go right.

But I know it's often when things go wrong that the Spirit of God really gets to me. And I can get my emotions sorted out and my attitudes. And that's where often my greatest relationships have come.

When something's gone wrong and we've hurt each other and we've said things we shouldn't have said, we overreacted, and then we got back together, we talked it out, we went for a walk, we apologized, and we learned to understand people of different backgrounds. What a tremendous thing if people from very poor family backgrounds who maybe never learned very much in terms of manners or maybe never got a lot of education develop deep friendships with people who may have come from a wealthy background and been taught a lot of manners and are into art and ballet and other great cultural things. Great! This is why I married my wife.

We're all different. And let's by God's grace join hands in a greater way those who are professional people and let's believe God for more of them. Let's not be afraid of that term.

Those who glory in being called a dynamic amateur. I mean in the United States we have the professional league and we have the amateur league. And I don't think you can even go into the Olympics if you're a professional.

Isn't that right? There's a lot of big talk about that. So you know in God's work if you're somehow an amateur no problem you can even go all the way to the Olympics. God is going to give us the people we need.

I absolutely refuse the pessimism that we cannot get the people we need. This movement has been blessed for 25 years again and again with people. We have a hundred new men in leadership training across the world right now.

Now it's harder for us because we have been generous with the people we train. We don't manipulate them into staying. We challenge them to consider other missions and other groups.

So it's never going to be easy. But I believe that if we stay united and we stay on our knees and we know this kind of reality that we see in Daniel and there's both spiritual reality here as well as this kind of Daniel professionalism if you want to call that. Doing the job right.

Believe me people are going to come here. People are going to come here. And when I talked to that friend Gordon Moore in 20 minutes over lunch he agreed to come before you guys even agreed to have him.

Yeah. Now you know that may not turn out as well as some of us would dream. It's a risk.

It's a risk for him to leave everything he's got over there and come here. O.M. is risks from A to Z. And I tell you when God in eternity looked down at Madison Square Garden and saw the skinny little crybaby and saved me and then put me into the ministry he was taking big chances. I don't know about you.

Somehow, you know, it seems that maybe he made a right choice. And when he chose you maybe it was a risk. But I believe in that.

He made the right choice. And as people come to us let's somehow believe the best. Let's somehow believe that God is sovereign.

He's bringing these people. He's going to work it out. As people leave, we don't like to see anybody leave.

We know some have left here hurt. That's always happened all through the history of O.M. It's happened in every mission. It's happened in every agency.

That doesn't mean we make any excuse. But I believe that as we pull together and as we just find the balance in these different areas we're wrestling with which means listening to each other more that God is going to take us through this transition period and is going to make this ministry something sharper, something that even can perhaps accomplish more. We're not putting any heavy mandate on STL or ICT right now that you've got to double by next year or you've got to do this or do that.

You know, sometimes you've got to take one step back to take two steps forward. If we're taking a step back in STL right now, OK. I personally am not too worried about that because as we come together, as we pray, as we work, we'll be able to take another step forward.

And I just bring one or two other thoughts. When something has been going relatively well and STL has for many years, it takes an enormous amount of work and energy just to maintain that level. Much less jump ahead.

So right now our first goal isn't the quantum leap. Right now we are to some degree in a survival pattern. I know in ICT we're in survival.

There will be a day when ICT will be producing and doing probably double of what it is right now. It's got to. It's going to keep up with OM unless there's some whole kind of restructuring.

Then it will be done somewhere else. There's no way that OM can exist without the facilities and the ministry and the work that ICT has done. We can shuffle things around.

We've already done that. Carlisle, Mostock, Zobington, CAO. But ultimately that work has to be done.

But I believe right now with the financial pressure on us in ICT and we are in somewhat of a survival pattern and things will have to be cancelled, dreams will have to be postponed and we're going to have to dig in our heels and believe that God can take us through this period of time and then bring in the greater victories or the greater growth. The other passage I wanted to read which I don't need to comment much on but it's good in preparing us for the breaking of bread is in Galatians where it talks about the fruit of the Holy Spirit and it says very clearly in verse 13 For brethren, you have been called unto liberty only. Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

By love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one by another.

Let's be honest. Here in Bromley at times we have bitten each other. We have.

We're humans. Not justifying it. And you know, I always just hate to come to the Lord's table if I have anything against a brother or sister.

I always say that if you've bitten someone privately, you only need to privately repent of it. You don't need to make a big scene of it. It's not generally edifying.

If you've bitten someone publicly, sometimes you have to put it right in a public way. But I know one thing. It's not right to come around the Lord's table if we have things against people, if we're harboring wrong attitudes, if there's judgmentalism, if there's pride, if there's arrogance.

And I think it's just good to have a few moments in which we could just silently, quietly seek the Lord and just believe that as we break bread together and take up a cup together, we will be of one heart and one mind. And you know, this is for the whole body of O.M. I don't know whether this tape is going to go out of Bromley or not. But the things we are struggling with here in Bromley, O.M. is struggling with all over the world.

It changes from year to year. Because people are people, the enemy is subtle. What we are doing is so much on the heart of God.

Just as these men ganged up on Daniel and decided they would destroy him, whatever the cost, they would destroy him and they got even the king to sign a document against Daniel. And it looked, I mean I tell you, it looked like Daniel was finished. There he was in a lion's den.

And I don't think the lions had been fed for quite a while. That's my theory. But God delivered.

Maybe there's one of you, maybe there's someone here that really feels under pressure. Maybe you feel, getting in O.M., you got in a lion's den. Or maybe like me sometimes, I feel like I'm a lion in a den of Daniels.

But whatever it is, whatever it is, whatever it is, God, God can reach into your situation and deliver just as he delivered Daniel. And that's the kind of miraculous ministry we still believe that God can engage in. Let's pray.

Our God and Father, we thank you that you have in your mercy kept this fellowship, united these 25, 28 years, prayer partners, workers, professionals, amateurs, people with Ph.D.s, people with knocking knees, all kinds of people that have worked together in love and unity. And we believe, Father, that we're not facing an exception right now as we go through this period of change and growth, as we seek your face for the future of the work in many areas, as we are reaching perhaps more than before to the outside to bring in some people that we need fast. We've seen many come up through the ranks, but in giving to other groups, we don't have enough right through our own ranks.

We didn't have them back when we launched the ship. And we had to scoop out right across the merchant navy world. And we brought people in the back doors.

We snuck them down the funnel. And somehow you put it all together. And that first ship and that second ship sailed for your glory.

And, Father, we believe that if this work that needs that kind of wisdom and expertise to keep going in this generation, then you are going to bring in those extra people. But, Father, we don't believe they're going to come if there's a lot of negativism flowing out of this place, and if there's confusion and backbiting and gossip or whatever. And so, Lord, we pray, help us put our house in order that when men either from OM or outside of OM come in the door, they'll find that perfection.

And I don't think people expect that. They never found that on the ships. We know many have gone away from the ships, disgruntled.

Some of them even after the first week. But at least basically when people come, they will find your presence. They will find appraising people, and they will find people working together in love and unity and not being overcome by the problems, but using the problems as stepping stones for spiritual growth and reality and victory in their personal lives.

Father, we thank you for this great vision that burns in our hearts to reach the unreached, to get the Word of God to every nation, to get Bibles out to the ends of the earth, to see the church in Britain strengthened through powerful books and brought to her knees through revolutionary and dynamic teaching in print and on tape. And Father, we pray that this vision will be rekindled in our own hearts. And we may know why we're packing books.

We may know why we're battling with problems and computerizing. We may know why we're working extra hours to bring the accounts up to date and deal with the income tax people or the VAT people or whoever else is coming through the window. And God, we believe that this is not something distinct from worshipping around your table as we are going to do right now, breaking bread together, taking of the cup and experiencing and knowing we are a cleansed people.

We are renewed people. We are all equal before you, even though you've made us so different and you've given us different abilities and talents and all the rest. Minister, Lord, especially to anyone who's in special need.

Don't allow them to get, Lord, into the canyon of pride or into the puddle of self-pity. But may they refocus upon you, your forgiveness, your love, your cleansing and your grace that they may live 100%. They may be a Daniel or at least make that their aim.

For we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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