

A Counselling Ministry

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the importance of spiritual balance and active faith in counseling ministry to address the needs of individuals in a complex world.

Duration: 1:07:53

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 2:41-45, Acts 4:31

Topics: "Counseling"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of the four ships: relationship, discipleship, worship, and fellowship. He emphasizes the need for people to get involved in these ships and mentions the lack of participation from Florida. The preacher then reads from Ephesians 6, encouraging believers to be strong in the Lord and put on the whole armor of God to stand against the devil's schemes. He also mentions the importance of selling possessions and living a lifestyle aligned with Jesus Christ, despite it being an unpopular message. The sermon concludes with recommendations for books on spiritual growth and the need to find balance between discipline and liberty in the Christian life.

Transcript

I don't know if you've met all of our team members, but perhaps they could just stand up. Craig Shugart from Canada. And John Wright from Iowa.

Jim Rogers from Winter Haven, Florida. Luke Baldwin, he's out by the books. And also, thank you.

It's a very special privilege this evening to have with me two people that I hardly ever see since I've been living overseas for 20 years. And they live over here, and they live in New Jersey, but just come to Florida during this time of the year. And that's my own parents, who came to know the Lord Jesus Christ some years ago as well.

They're here with me tonight. I wonder if you'd stand. Mom and Dad Brewer.

Thank you. So it's a special opportunity. Let's just pray again.

Father, we do commit now the ministry from Your Word to our own hearts. Oh, God, may we be willing to go one more mile. Deliver us, Lord, from any spiritual myopia.

Deliver us from any spiritual schizophrenia that we may be men and women, doers of the Word and not hearers only. We thank You. You've heard our prayers tonight.

So many needy people. We live in such a sick world. And we yearn to be ministering and giving, and yet we so often see even Your people just playing games.

Oh, Father, minister tonight, we pray. We thank You for these dynamic books that can work in our lives. And we look to You in Jesus' name.

In many ways, I find it difficult to come to a campus just for a day. And a lot of my work, like when I'm at an OM conference, I'm there for many, many days. And a lot of the real ministry is involved in counseling.

You know, C.S. Lewis, a man converted from agnosticism to Christ, said we have the tendency to think but not to act. And we have the tendency to feel but not to act. He went on to say that if we go on thinking and feeling without acting, someday we will be unable to act.

This is the theme of a little book that I have written called Hunger for Reality. I don't have a copy up here. Yes, I do, but I didn't have one.

But if some of you are interested in following up on that theme of how Christians get into this spiritual schizophrenia, you can get a copy of that book. And I want to mention some other books that I have used in my ministry of counseling people. And I believe these are books you may not want to get tonight, but eventually you will be interested in if you're interested in counseling people, in seeing them come into a real walk with the Lord.

I remember even last year when I was here, just a few people I counseled. Incredible things they were into. And some of them not feeling too able to share it.

And a lot of Christians I talk to and write to me, I've had about 11,000 letters as a result of this book. Many of them say, I've never shared this with anybody before. So these are some books that I have been using in the ministry of counseling.

After you spend an hour with someone, to be able to give them a book that will pinpoint their problem. And so I recommend these books to you, not just for yourself. You will be blessed and helped through these books.

But to use in your counseling ministry. For example, in counseling people, you'll often find they don't know how to study their Bible. And you yearn, what can I give them? So many of God's people do not know how to study their Bible.

And Tim LaHaye has come out with this book, How to Study the Bible for Yourself. An excellent book that some of you may be interested in. A lot of people you deal with are facing terrific problems in the area of guilt.

Now my theme tonight is spiritual balance. And you're going to discover that in a lot of areas, I'm sure we are very like-minded. For example, I believe that God can wonderfully deliver through the power of His Holy Spirit.

I believe that. I believe that can happen in an instant. And in some of my meetings, I often give an invitation to go into a separate room and just pray for people.

Specifically counseling and pray for God's deliverance. But I want to tell you sometimes as ministers, we would prefer to see people delivered than have to be involved in loving them for the next two years. Someday you're going to have some of your own children and I can tell you, they're not going to become mature Christians through just being delivered.

They're going to become mature Christians as you love them. So we need both. And I find a lot of people have been through a lot of deliverance meetings.

They've had a lot of people lay hands on them. They have rededicated their lives. They have had all kinds of experiences and they're still hung up, really hung up.

And sometimes it's guilt. They don't know how to handle guilt. I was speaking at one of the biggest Christian schools in our country a few days ago, sharing some of my own struggles, sharing victory over guilt and this whole thing of self-acceptance and the Holy Spirit's power.

And a woman came up to me and she said, every speaker in the last three years has laid a guilt trip on me, except this morning. I finally have seen the way. There is a way out.

Probably the people that need this message are not here in a voluntary Thursday evening or Friday evening meeting. But I just pray that God will give you a sensitivity. I'm working on a message on this subject right now.

I'm not ready to give it. A sensitivity toward people's needs. And here's a book you may want to use.

You won't agree with everything in it. I don't. It's Bruce Narmore and Bill Count's books, Freedom from Guilt.

Many young people are carrying guilt from the home. They're carrying guilt from over-rigid churches, legalism. They need this message.

And I pray that you might begin to use that book. You know, I never wanted to get particularly involved in a counseling ministry when I was a young Christian because I didn't even know what it was. I was too young.

But I was just suddenly thrust into involvement with so many people because I led people to Christ almost every week. And everybody I led to Christ had problems. Now, I hope the people you lead to Christ are better off than the ones I led to Christ.

They had problems. Real problems. They were real people.

Now, when I was in Chicago, I was talking to a man. He was singing in one of the biggest evangelical church choirs. And then he finally shared with me, after we got to know each other, that he was a homosexual.

And he was practicing it as well. And so at the age of 20, I started a ministry, in a very small way, among people with a homosexual problem. I always had this conviction, is accept them, love them, and point them to Jesus and a disciplined life.

And I've seen that work. And I was so thrilled recently because over the years, at least the first 10 years, I never had a good book I could give these people. And they were crying out.

Often they were people who professed the Lord, but then fell back and didn't know the way out. Didn't know the way out. Every campus in America has them.

You have them. They're everywhere. And they need to be loved.

They need to be accepted. But they need to be pointed to the disciplined life, the living Christ, and the way out. Tim LaHaye has finally come up with a book, *The Unhappy Gays*, which I'm just in the midst of reading.

I can't totally evaluate it. But I've had some very critical people say it's the best book they have ever seen on this subject. *The Unhappy Gays*.

Showing that it is impossible to be a true follower of Christ and to be a practicing homosexual. You know, in all of our major cities now, we have gay churches where they practice homosexuality and they marry men together with men and women with women. This is a big thing in America.

I'm sure you're aware of that. Here is a book you will want to use in your ministry. And I trust that some of you will be interested.

You cannot be involved with people today without being involved with homosexuals. It's impossible. San Francisco, one-fifth of all the people are homosexual.

And they're in the churches. And they're everywhere. And we need concerned people.

And if you think you're going to cure homosexuals just through instant deliverance, you're in for some heavy experiences. Some do come across quick. And that's wonderful.

But for many, it's tears, it's toil, it's fasting, it's prayer, it's love, it's discipline. I had a letter from a student at one of our Christian colleges. He said a leading Bible teacher came to his college.

She went to the man for counseling. And the man seduced him on the spot into homosexual sin. You think that may have wounded that young college student? Dare to say.

Some of these things are almost unbelievable. There's a book we need. Elizabeth Elliott is one of my favorite authors.

And this woman is a woman of God. The wife of one of the men who was martyred in Ecuador through *Gates of Splendor* is the book. You probably have read it.

This is her latest book, *Let Me Be a Woman*, a book for women. One of the most incredible books I have ever read in the disciplined life. It's also one of the most unpleasant.

It's written by a Nazarene. He's a man who believes in holiness, believes in sanctification, believes what most of you believe. Shows how does it fit together with discipline.

A lot of people never put this together and they end up on the ash heap. And this is a book that should be required reading in every Christian college in America. Richard Shelley Taylor's *The Disciplined Life*.

Do you have trouble keeping in balance? We're going to be talking about that tonight. I'm a natural extremist myself. I really thought I was getting sanctified and was becoming more and more holy.

God was using me. I was winning people to Christ, leading prayer meetings. I'd been in Mexico.

People thought this and that of me. Boy, I really thought, you know, God's Spirit was really moving and I'm sure He was. I was becoming more and more like Christ, more and more sanctified.

I was about 20. Then I got married. Interesting.

God's graduate school. Some of you are going to get a PhD. I will tell you, you take God's graduate school in marriage, it will take you 25 years to get the degree.

You know why? The only one who can issue it is your own children. When they grow up and they're all following Christ as a testimony of your love and your reality and your home, they can give you the degree. So I discovered I have a lot still to do, a lot to learn.

Being filled with the Holy Ghost, being baptized in the Spirit. This is not the end, beloved. I'm sure you know that.

It's the beginning. We still have a lot to learn. Eugenia Price, a woman.

A lot of men don't like to read women's books. She's written this book where God offers freedom, the wider place. One of the most unique Christian books I've ever read.

Really helped me from extremism. Some of you, after you're hearing me, you'll still think I'm extreme. But you can imagine what I've been without some of those books.

Some of my own books are also available. Revolution of Love. Hunger for Reality.

Not very good, but a lot of good quotations from other people's books. Probably this is why the Lord sent me here to introduce you to these books. You say, I don't have any money.

Well, I have my friend, my banker friend, Dave Milligan. And if you want these books, just see Dave Milligan at the book table and tell him what you're taking. He'll get the total and you can pay him later on, you know, within a month.

If you don't pay, I'm going to take the loss. Also, for every book you buy, please take one of the magazine books that I mentioned this morning. I'm not going to repeat the books that I mentioned this morning, but they also are valuable books.

And praise God for the books you can use in your counseling ministry and in dealing with so many different kinds of people and seeing them come into spiritual maturity and spiritual balance. Now, my subject this evening, maybe you thought I was going to talk about the work of OM or the ships and maybe I can bring some of that in. I'll try to.

You can get free literature on the table about that. You can sign a coupon and get our prayer letter or see Dave Milligan at any time. If any of you would like to talk with someone tonight and have prayer together, share something that's on your heart, the priority of our team is that.

The second thing is the book table. You see someone standing behind the book table, just say, look, I wonder if I could just pray with you about something the speaker said. We work as a team.

They know how I feel, though we're all different people. And so if there's anyone that wants to share a burden tonight or just pray with someone, I'm sure your own people are available as well. Pray with one another.

But if you want to talk or fellowship with one of us, that's why we're here. For 25 years since my conversion, God has been burning this message in my heart. And I'm going to share it with you tonight with the conviction that this is one of the most important exhortations I believe some of you will have for a long time.

Because you're zealous young people. You love the Lord. You want to burn out for God.

You want to preach. You want to win people to Christ. You want to know the reality of the Holy Spirit.

That's wonderful. You know what A.W. Tozer said, one of God's prophets to this nation? He said, the more keen Christian is more easily led astray. And I believe some of you who are sitting here tonight will be on a tangent, you'll be on an ego trip, or you'll have ruined your ministry within 10 years from now if you don't pay attention to what I believe God wants to say tonight about spiritual balance.

Do you remember William Brenneman? Did I ever tell you about him? We don't like to talk about him anymore. Because that man was claimed to be the most spirit-filled man that our nation ever knew. He flowed with continually all nine gifts of the Holy Spirit.

He had a following in our nation of tens of thousands. He had a prophetic ministry. I had a man come to me in my own work, I remember it about 17 years ago.

He felt he had to leave our work in the Muslim world to go and to get what this man had. He gave me his literature. I was somewhat impressed.

Toward the end of his life, he denied the Trinity, he went away from the faith, and he started a false cult. Now we have to deal with Brennemanites in Madras, in Switzerland, in many parts of the world. Satan is not a jerk.

The Word of God says, be not ignorant of Satan's devices. And one of the strongest passages on this subject is found in Ephesians chapter 6 that I would like you to turn to. Ephesians chapter 6. Tozer said in that same article about how the keen Christian is often more easily led astray.

We need to learn how to test the spirits. I brought another quotation from him this morning that may help you survive in the present-day Christian world. And sometimes it's good to develop a little bit of healthy disbelief.

O.M. has attracted a fair number of zealous people from many, many different churches. Many Baptists, many Pentecostals, many Methodists, many Brethren. We've had them all in big numbers.

22,000 have been through our training program. And we get close to people. We've attracted a lot of zealous people, for I can tell you non-zealous people are not too attracted to Operation Mobilization.

We get people that want to move the world. And we get people who are willing to lay down their lives for Christ. And through all these experiences over 25 years, also with many Christian leaders and involved in a counseling ministry, perhaps we see things in 10 years that most people will not see in a lifetime.

On top of that, we have a research department and many of us are involved in continuous reading and researching of what's going on around the world. And so we share this with you with a prayer that it may be of some help in your own future ministry. My concern tonight is not Operation Mobilization.

That is not my concern. Most of you are probably not planning to come on Operation Mobilization. Most of you I'll never see again.

My concern tonight is the glory of God. My concern tonight is your own spiritual life that somehow if we do have a rendezvous two, thirty years from now, you'll be able to say I've run the race. I've finished the course.

I've been kept from the sidetracks and the extremes and the tangents and the fiery darts of the evil one. And I'll say, Hallelujah. That's my burden.

Sometimes people ask me to come and speak about the ships, Doulos and Lagos. So I come and speak about the four ships, Relationship, Discipleship, Worship, Fellowship. They're the four ships I'm interested in tonight.

Now, we wouldn't mind some of you coming to work on the ship. We need people. We don't get too many from Florida.

We've got Francie Griffin here tonight. She's from Frostproof, Florida. We're still waiting for her to come.

But if she doesn't come, maybe you can send us some substitutes. And we'd love for some of you to get involved in O.M. So don't misunderstand. But that's not my burden for tonight.

Let's read the passage. Ephesians chapter 6. Let's read verse 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, in having done all to stand.

Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance supplication for all saints. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that in this I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. These are strong words.

I think of Corinthians where it says, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty unto God to the pulling down of strongholds. Many other similar verses. Verses that tell us we are in a warfare.

Tozer said, the whole world is a disaster area and nothing is right nor will be right until put right by the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. We live in a disaster area. A few days ago I was speaking in Toccoa Falls Bible College where just a year and a half ago a dam broke above the college and a mountain of water

rushed down and 20 or 30 more people were taken home.

That was an emergency. Even the president's wife went there. I was able to share with them we saw God move in the meetings there that Toccoa Falls was still in a state of emergency.

And this college is in a state of emergency. There are evil forces. Maybe when you come into Florida there's a big sign up that says, Welcome to Vacation Land.

Tens of millions of tourists, brochures, go all over the world inviting people to Disneyland and Vacation Land, but you as a believer in Jesus Christ, there is no vacation in the work of God. You may take a break. You may take a literal week off for a vacation.

But if you think that during that week the devil is going to go away and leave you alone, you must be living with your head in some kind of sand. Some of the people I know when they've taken a vacation they've had the worst and most difficult experiences in their life. Because Satan doesn't take any vacations.

And some people think, Well, I'm here in training. I'm here in training and then when I get my training I'm going to go out and attack the enemy. What do you think? Satan is stupid.

Do you think he says to you, Now you get your training. You learn how to destroy me. You get the word.

You learn about my devices. And three years we'll meet and we'll have some encounter. Satan doesn't allow any boot training.

With the United States Marine Corps you can have boot training. The enemy is not there. You run through fields and swamps.

Even then some get killed. But in God's work there is no boot training. The devil is after you the moment you give your life to Jesus Christ.

And the moment you recommit your life or are filled with God's Spirit or begin to move in spiritual reality Satan will move you up to primary target position. Is the devil real or is he not real? He is real. Why don't we live that way? Is this campus pulsating with the reality that there is a real devil who wants to sink many a student? And if you don't think students can't get wiped out in Christian college you really must be naive.

I've had students come to me from top Christian colleges and admit they were living a completely double life. I've had letters, dozens and dozens of letters from students who were even leading in public meetings, even sharing nuggets from the Word of God and going to whorehouses on Saturday night. One of our top seminaries just graduated a man.

His wife found out that all during seminary even though she was a beautiful woman she was giving herself to this man. He was going to prostitutes because he wanted oral sex. Our nation has been deceived into endless, endless double living.

It's impossible to catch up with it. Within a few more weeks you'll hear another one of the top authors, one of the biggest names in the Christian world in America has just taken the dive, left his wife, shacking up with some other woman. Oh, we don't talk about this, do we? We're the great optimists.

Revival is here. Is it? Is it really? Satan has a master plan and his plan is to destroy believers, to wipe them out, to put them on the shelf. Why did Paul say, these are not my words, why did Paul say, I buffet

my body, I bring it into subjection, lest after preaching to others I become a reprobate.

I would challenge you to take the names of 30 or 40 students who are with you now and pray with them and see where they are 20 years from now. You want reality therapy? I'm sure some of the things I say tonight you won't understand or you may not agree with. But I am positive that 25 years from now our fellowship would be at a much higher level.

And I just beg of you, try to see the balance of what I'm trying to share with you this evening on this subject. We're in a warfare. Satan tries to keep people from committing their lives to Christ and after they commit their lives to Christ tries to get them on a tangent, tries to get them off balance, tries to get them to be an extremist, tries to get them on an evangelical go trip or whatever else.

Let me give you some specific areas because we don't want to take all night though your leaders are very generous in telling me just to feel free but I don't want to abuse that privilege. And I know you probably want to go back and study real hard tonight or pray through the night or something else. First of all, and I would appreciate your taking notes, first of all, we've got to find the balance between repentance on the one hand and the need to repent when the Spirit of God convicts us about anything and acceptance, forgiveness and the things that Bruce Naramore talks about in this book.

This book, without strong messages on discipleship, is off balance. In fact, I'm reading a book right now that's pretty heavy against the use of some of these principles of psychology. This book, with some of the heavy books on discipleship, with books like Power Through Prayer, with books like Ralph Shallis' book on spiritual growth, it'll come into balance.

A lot of people that I counsel have a terrific problem accepting themselves. So all that they're trying to do spiritually eventually comes undone. They rededicate their lives, they have special prayer, I mean it's amazing what people will do.

I had someone come to me, had over 20 crisis experiences in his life. He had tried everything. Every new invitation, every new road to sanctification, he had tried it and he was still living in the dark.

Why? Because he had an incredibly low self-image of himself, he had been reared in an orphanage, basically he was on a failure syndrome, he couldn't accept himself, he had no confidence, and so everything eventually went around full cycle. And you will find students right here who are in that situation. You may be one of them.

That person needs to understand God's acceptance. Ephesians 1.6 You are accepted in the Beloved. That person needs to understand some of the things that men like Bill Gothard are teaching.

You may not agree with everything, but there's an element in that man's message that God is using. They need to understand freedom from guilt. They need to see that when they fall flat on their face, God still loves them.

He is our Heavenly Father. He doesn't reject us and kick us out because we fell on our nose. Tozer in bringing things into balance from many of his strong statements said, God is easy to live with.

Do you know that? He explains in another statement that he finds many Christians religiously jumpy because God knows their every action, their every thought, everything they're doing. And so they become religious neurotics. Church is filled with them.

Even the pulpits get quite a few. You can feel the vibrations a hundred miles away. We need to be able to repent.

We need to be able to deal with sin. We need to know the reality of being delivered from sin and its grip. But we need to understand ourselves and know God's way of mercy, God's way of forgiveness and what it is to find balance in that area.

Secondly, we need to find balance in this area of prosperity versus poverty. In 2 Corinthians 6.10 it says, we're poor making many rich. Have you heard many sermons on that one? We're poor making many rich.

I can't believe it that here in America there are people trying to teach that if you really do the will of God and you love God and you're filled with the Spirit, He is going to bless you financially. Now I believe you have enough brains certainly at your age to know that's unadulterated nonsense. Now it's sticky.

It's a tricky one. So hear me out. God does prosper some people financially.

Of course. But don't make a theology out of a particular situation. Probably I told you last year one of my favorite stories about the lady who got the leap experience.

She was in a tremendous meeting. She leaped in the air, got a terrific blessing, and when she came down she just felt so wonderful, wonderful tingle and the Lord had met her. Okay, you know, I never despise anybody's spiritual experience, even the women.

But look, you know what she did? She went to her concordance, she looked up the word leap, and she developed the theology of the leap. So in her meetings, at the end of the meeting, she got everybody to leap. Of course, most people didn't experience what she experienced.

Trot on one another's toes, whatever else. God does prosper some, economically. But God does not prosper all.

And it's a lot easier in the American culture, seemingly, to experience that prosperity than out in India. I have fellowship with spirit-filled people in at least 30 nations. Most of them really people of Christ, they know God, they know the power of the Spirit.

Most of them are poor. What are we going to do with them if we teach a theology of prosperity? The apostles, most of them were poor, making many rich. We reversed it.

We're rich, making many poor. Study it for yourself. Write to me.

But let's avoid this extreme. And it hurts a lot of people. What do we do? We get Joe Businessman.

Joe Businessman tells how he got saved. He tells how he committed his business to the Lord, prayed over it, got the pastor to pray over it. The Lord blessed him.

Now he's driving the Lincoln Continental, etc., etc., etc. Of course, he's also giving very big gifts to the church. And he says God blessed his business.

I will not argue with him. Praise the Lord. God probably blessed his business and it's wonderful that he's giving his money to the Lord's work.

But what about the ten other businessmen who experienced failure? You see, often as we give a testimony without realizing it, we help some and destroy others. I used to do this all the time. If we get more into balance, we will say, yes, God blessed this businessman, but this man over here was blessed through the failure.

I have a friend of mine, because of the mafia in Chicago, he was put out of business, disaster after disaster. God used him in another way. God is working in different ways in different people.

When will we learn in the church, by turning our brain on a little more, that you can prove anything through case histories? The Moonies do it. The JW's do it. All the cults do it.

Let's not do it in the church. Case histories are not enough. We need the Word.

We need more of a total picture. We need to avoid generalizations. We need to know this case history, but we also need to know that case history.

We get the testimony of someone who was really blessed in a mighty way this way, but there may be some others who did the exact same thing and they weren't blessed. We may blame it on their lack of faith, but we need to be careful, because it's easy to hurt people. I was fanatic for trusting God.

I wouldn't even buy a piece of soap. I went down to the shower in prayer, trusting that a piece of soap would be left in the shower. I was known as a fanatic on the campus where I was a student.

And I used to preach this pretty hard. And I learned some things the hard way. I remember a very sensitive brother, very sensitive.

He heard some of my testimonies. He cried out, God, God, provide that soap. He went down to the shower.

He's looking, scraping, hunting. No soap. What happened? Did God die? He didn't have enough faith? He wasn't as spiritual as me.

No. Have you ever tried to copy someone spiritually? And end up unable to cope with what you are copying? God works in different ways in different people. And this is one of the reasons I love this little woman, Eugenia Price, who has helped me understand a little more of God's ways.

Yes, God does prosper some. God has prospered our nation. He's allowed it.

He's prospered many Christians. We should know why. It's so that we can give to the rest of the world.

So that we can share. Not that we can become fat and selfish, some kind of a reservoir with a big dam. No.

The blessing can go out around the world. Praise God for the degree it is. I want to tell you some of the most generous people in the world are living in the United States of America.

And other nations know that. But they're a minority group. They know to see more.

They know the reality. It's more blessed to give than receive. Thirdly, we need the balance between becoming a full-time worker or remaining as a layman.

There is some tension in America over this and it's an important subject. You're going to have to face it. I say we need both.

But I also believe there's a danger in America of over-professionalization. Everybody's a paid worker. The churches now have to have an assistant pastor, an assistant to the assistant.

They're all getting whopping big salaries, expense accounts and credits cards. I was in a church. The man who was in charge of showing the slides.

Can you imagine this? This was a good holiness church. He was in charge of showing the slides. He got a salary.

He slotted in his time how much he was using the slide projector and he got a salary for doing that. A little part-time job. You know, a little extra money.

Sort of like selling Amway products or something like that. I believe that we are becoming professionalized and we have too many full-time workers drawing salaries in America and too few overseas. Too few of this group here that are willing to move overseas where they're not going to get that nice house and the nice car and the benefits and the pension and where their wife is going to really have to learn to deny self if she's even going to exist.

There's too much today of wanting the best out of both worlds. We want to serve Jesus but we want a lot at the same time. It's rather contradictory to what Jesus taught if you do study the teachings of Jesus in the midst of all your other courses.

May God take us back to the New Testament. May God take us back to the life of Jesus Christ. And when I think of the Apostle Paul, he said you have many teachers.

He was rebuking the church. He spoke strong words. He said the kingdom of God is not in word.

It's power. And he was speaking firstly of moral power. If you study that in its context.

Moral power. To be God's men. To be God's women.

To do the right thing. To be ethical men. Men of integrity.

I believe that is one of the most beautiful words in the English language. Integrity. And often it is missing.

Even in the Christian church. So that's an area where we need balance. I know this isn't going to happen overnight.

I don't judge individuals. But I just say let's work toward a little more balance in this area. And let's point out to the church that the world is going to be evangelized by the layman.

By Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Ordinary. They may not even have the privilege of going to Bible college. And I know that many of you here are probably going out into what may be a layman's ministry.

You'll get a job somewhere. You'll support yourself. And you'll serve Christ.

That can be just as much God's plan as going out with me to India. The main thing is just to make sure you're on the right track. And that isn't always easy.

I know. And then the balance between the crisis experience and growth. This is a big area.

Obviously both are in the Bible. Think of Acts 4.31. One of my favorite verses. When they prayed, the place was shaken, they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they went and spoke the Word of God with boldness.

Have you ever read the rest of the chapter? It's hot! It's interesting when we study some of these chapters. We take what we like and we leave the rest. Have you ever had a Bible study on Acts 2? Why don't you turn that? Just take a little look at Acts 2. There are certain verses in Acts 2 that we especially like.

We hear a lot of sermons on them. Of course we hear a lot of sermons on the first, second, and third verse which are very important. Pentecost.

But as we get to the latter part of the chapter, we have a description of the early church. And so we preach. We take the whole counsel of God.

What do we say? Let's look at verse 41. Then they that gladly received the Word were baptized. The same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Hallelujah! That's what we want. We want people to be saved. Great.

We take that verse. Then we go to the next verse. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.

Fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers. Well, half of us take that verse. It's getting a bit tough.

You know, half of us. Probably your type. Friday night crowd.

You'll take that. Verse 42. Then we get to verse 43.

And fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. Hallelujah! We want that one. Right? We believe that's the Word of God.

Anybody who doesn't believe it, we're not going to fellowship with them. Okay. What about verse 44? And all that believed were together and had all things common.

You wait until you come across that one in your expository class of the book of Acts. Well, they did experiment with communism in the book of Acts, but they discovered it didn't work. That's one of at least 10 different ways to explain away that unpleasant verse.

It's funny we don't explain away verse 43. Oh, some churches do. And we say, oh, they're watering down the Word of God.

This is dangerous. How can we fellowship with them? But what are we doing with verse 43? And verse 44. And verse 45.

That one we cut right out of our Bible. Great men of God used to study the Bible with a pen. Today, the modern evangelicals should study the Bible with a pair of scissors and cut out all the verses he never plans to obey.

Come up with papier-mâché, whatever you call it. Verse 45. And sold their possessions and goods and part of them to all men as every man have need.

There are over 50 verses in the New Testament that give strong exhortation toward selling possessions or living on the barest essentials or coming more in line with the lifestyle of Jesus Christ. But it is the most unpleasant message you can preach today. When some of our prayer meetings began to move and the Spirit of God moved in prayer meetings and students went back to the rooms started selling possessions, stereos, thousands of dollars worth of records, I will tell you those campuses shook.

And sometimes not in the same way it was in the book of Acts. Why do we see so little of this today? Why is today the age of accumulation? We have more and more and more and more bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and we even paint the name of Jesus over it. No wonder the whole evangelical scene in America to some degree is mainly a right wing, middle class, bourgeois thing that is out of step with 80% of where the rest of the people are in the nation, especially the millions who live in our poverty stricken areas, our ghettos, most of the blacks and a high percentage of the minority groups.

Oh, but we don't want to say anything about this lest we be thought that we're leftists and that's the worst thing that you could ever be in the evangelical church. Well, just to make you happy, I'm not left, but I'm not paranoid right either. And praise God, there are many, many voices now including some very thinking men that are speaking out.

And think of that book that's just come out, Rich Christians in a Hungry World. Don't read it, you'll get an ulcer. They sold their possessions and goods, part of them to all men as every man had need.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Do you notice the swing, the balance in this whole passage? The blessing, the power, then the responsibility, the sacrifice, the discipline, then the blessing, the power.

We need both. You can't have one without the other. Not in long-term reality.

You can play around with it for a while, sooner or later it'll go off course. It'll explode in your face and it's not a pleasant sight. There are many other passages we could look at that indicate very clearly how often we take the verses that we like or the verses that are part of our denominational structure or the verses that are part of our particular thing and we leave the verses that we don't understand or that cut too hard into the status quo and the culture that we are so locked into.

Dr. Francis Schaeffer said, we are a brainwashed culture. I yearn for spiritual balance. But sometimes to have balance, we've got to say some strong things on this side to bring things more back into center.

In this whole area of the crisis and the growth, I'm just so strong on both. Do not think that balance is always a position of compromise. Balance often comes with both extremes.

We need experiences with God. We need to meet God and be invaded by the Spirit of God. And that has to happen more than once.

But at the same time, we need spiritual growth. A brother was sharing with me today, a brother who studied in this school, that this is the best book on spiritual growth he's ever read. Just brought some copies over from Europe.

This man is an Englishman. He's become so French, used in revival in North Africa, used in revival in France, that he writes his books in French. We have to translate them back to English.

You may not agree with everything in this book, but it's a fantastic book on spiritual growth. Here are seven provisions for Christian growth. The crisis, without the process, becomes an abscess.

And we see that everywhere. And if some of you are going out as pastors, you're going to be weeping over that in your church for many, many years. Find the balance.

Acts 20, 32 says, I commend you to God, and the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among those who are sanctified. And then we've got to find balance between discipline and liberty. That's why I like Shelley Taylor's book, *The Discipline of Life*, or *The Discipline of Life*.

It says in Galatians 5.13, we're calling the liberty, only use not the liberty as an occasion to the flesh. Sometimes you find students in colleges, they're rebelling against rules. I followed for 20 years the schools that have sacked the rules.

In not one school did the people become more mature. In not one school did they blossom into maturity as they predicted they would if they didn't have so many rules and regulations. Instead, licentiousness came in, more pregnancies, more nonsense, more homosexuality, more dirt.

Isn't that interesting? Why don't we just admit we're not as mature as we think? Why don't we admit that a few rules, which is really a regulation of love, and it becomes necessary if you're in a community. If you're living on your own, you need less. If you're living in a community, like when we live on a ship, you've got to have some rules.

It's basic to survival. And with discernment, we can see that. And so, there needs to be discipline.

There needs to be some rules. But at the same time, we're free. There is liberty.

We're not to be manipulated. And it's a difficult thing at times to find the balance. The next area, and I want to move a little quicker, is to find balance between submission and freedom.

What is still one of the most controversial issues in the church today is a very heavy movement in America. It's spread over in England. That tells us we've all got to submit.

We've all got to get some shepherd over us and do what he tells us. And marry whoever he feels we should marry. And go on a holiday or vacation when he feels it's really the right time.

And I will tell you, it's the cop-out of the century. You cannot cop out from finding God's will. Finding God's will is tough.

And you will fall on your nose. And there will be some tears. But you can't cop out.

You're a human being created in the image of God. And you've got to get to know the will of God. Now, at the same time, the Bible teaches submission.

And the reason some people have gone extreme into submission is because some people didn't want any of it. And we read in Hebrews 13, 17 to submit and respect those who are over us in the Lord. And you

need to do that here at a Bible college or a Christian college.

We see that in 1 Thessalonians 5, 12 through 13. Again, submit unto those who are over you. Respect them and submit to them for the work's sake.

Oh, to see that in balance. You know, one of the ugliest words in the Christian world, we don't like to use it much, we just do it. You know what I call it? Manipulation.

And sometimes people who are in leadership position in the church, they learn, sometimes I think without even realizing it, they learn how to manipulate people, crowds, audiences. And it frightens me. It frightens me.

And I get in situations where people are telling me, God is working, God is doing this, God is breaking through. And maybe I'm a skeptic, forgive me. But sometimes I'm convinced it's not God who's doing it, they're doing it.

They're doing it. This is how immorality invaded the Children of God movement. You probably have heard of that cult.

That man started as a Christian Missionary Alliance pastor. And then bitterness came in. And I tell you, a root of bitterness is the ugliest thing.

One of the ugliest things you can get in your Christian life. If this school walks on you, if some other Christians walk on you, if some church walks on you, if a pastor walks on you, if you have terrible experiences with God's people, whatever you do, don't allow a root of bitterness because it can destroy you. It can destroy you.

God's message is love and forgive. And go the extra mile. This movement is now manipulating people, manipulating young women, sending them out into the streets, giving their bodies in sex.

This is basic doctrine. Give your body in sex to bring men into the kingdom, to show them, quote-unquote, the love of God. And people wonder why some of us talk about the dangers of extremism.

The dangers of manipulation. We sometimes manipulate people to get their money. Money is a big thing.

We get our big plans and we get our big dreams and things don't begin to go the way we should and foreclosures comes and banks move in. And so what's the answer? People, there they sit, so innocent, so ready to believe someone who's got a superior reputation for godliness and the manipulation takes place. And people get hurt, get destroyed.

They get wrinkled up and thrown away like old newspapers. I've seen it for 24 years in our nation and I'll not keep my mouth shut. And as you, as a new generation, go out to face the multitudes, may you go out in sensitivity, in compassion, in love.

Not as manipulators and organizers. And one of the most devastating books has just been published by Tinder House. You know the name of it? God for Sale.

Because we've commercialized and we've Madison Avenue-ized so often the gospel in our country and we've cheapened it beyond degree. We need balance, desperately need balance in these areas. And then the balance between zeal and wisdom.

I'm sure you know what my problem was. Heavy on zeal and a little weak on wisdom. And I have a lot more to learn.

But we need zeal. And praise God for zealous people who make mistakes. And as God begins to teach you something of discernment, as you can begin to see things, you'll have to beware of becoming a cynic.

With a tendency to go against the tide and to speak out. When God also gives you insight into spiritual things, there is the danger you will become in the church today a cynic. Tozer recommends as a cure for cynicism, the spirit of thanksgiving and praise and worship.

When I find cynicism coming into my heart, which can be deceived, then I like to worship him. I realize he is sovereign. I realize he works through people that are often making mistakes.

That's why he can use me. I believe God can work even through people that may have some area of sin in their life. Now that surprises you, doesn't it? For 24 or more years I've seen God using people who even had sin in their life.

There was a man in Germany being mightily used, and for 12 of those years he was living in adultery with his secretary. He even had two children by her. He eventually divorced his wife and married her.

No one in Germany could deny that that man was not being used. When God's Word is preached, it will be used. If God could use a donkey in the Old Testament, don't be too flattered if God uses your testimony.

Walk humbly before Jesus. You don't want to be some kind of an evangelical donkey. Being blessed, being used is not proof, is not proof that you are necessarily walking a Christ-like way.

God is merciful. He is sovereign. He works with us as human beings.

And there are some things in this area, and I could give you a hundred incidences, you'll never fully understand. But this we know. The more pure the vessel, the cleaner the vessel, the more God can do, and the less chance there will be a gigantic backlash as it happened in Germany when this man was exposed.

Another man in a nation south of Germany was a big name when I arrived in Europe. Wow! He was big. He was influential.

The church didn't do anything about his immorality. They didn't even find out. The church often knows so little of disciplining people.

But the police department in his country caught him. He was the president of a small Bible school and had personally seduced one-third of the girls in the school. You know, I don't go around looking for these things.

No, I've got enough problems. I'm basically a positive thinker. I go out in the woods so I don't have to, you know, just worship the Lord in the woods.

But if you're going to get involved with people... I had a girl come to me for counseling, my wife and I, who had been in that, who was almost seduced by that man. What am I going to say? I don't want to think on anything like this. And my challenge tonight as you go out into this world is that you're going to have to get involved, and if you're going to get involved, then you're going to need this kind of balance and this kind of

wisdom and discernment to deal with people, and to see them become whole again and restored.

Oh, may God show us the importance of having zeal and yet allowing it to be balanced by wisdom. James 3.17 is the text for one of my chapters in this book, *Revolution of Balance*, and I'd ask you to study James 3 and all those verses to help on that particular area. And then we need balance between the work, the work we're involved in, and our families.

Most of you are probably not married yet, but you will be. If this is a typical American campus, the big thing here really is probably not God. The big thing is girls.

Dating, social life. Not outwardly. Oh, that would be heresy to ever say that.

Outwardly it's God. But when it comes to the nitty-gritty, where we spend our time, the way we think, our whole social life, what we do, the big thing in America is this. It really is.

I hope your school's different. I don't know about your school. You evaluate carefully, prayerfully, lovingly, with much compassion.

There's nothing wrong with social life. And some of you are going to meet your life's partner here. Wonderful.

But I will tell you, it is my conviction that with many, it's premature. It's premature. Montgomery, one of the great generals in Britain, said before you master the art of warfare, don't even think about marriage.

He wasn't speaking about the warfare that takes place after you get married in the home. He was talking about soldiering. And there's a sense where before we get into marriage, which is such a big thing that demands more commitment than discipleship in the Ganges in India, which demands a higher integrity than being a pastor, which demands more patience than being an evangelist.

Before we throw ourselves into this marriage thing, let's get our lives sorted out. Let's know something of discipline, something of self-control, something of controlling the appetites of the flesh. I'm convinced that many would do well to spend a year or two serving Christ single, being trained before they throw themselves into the marriage thing.

We have gone overboard on this. Overboard. Some are ready for marriage when they're young, and I never judge them.

We have some in our own work. But many are not. And it's so easy for infatuation to get out of control.

And many girls, many women, especially from Christian homes, are naive. Why, if you're a man of God, they will let you do almost anything. You've got all the spiritual terminology.

Of course, you won't commit the final act of fornication. No, no, you'll wait till the wedding. But so many don't.

So many don't. And it's the big con, it's the big con that we miss God, and God's will, and a deeper walk with God, and reality in prayer, reality in witness for the sake of our social involvement. You say, you want to be socially well balanced.

Good. Put your life on the altar and let God do the balancing. You haven't got enough brains to do it.

I know I don't. And then the relationship that you get will be balanced, and it will be built on principles of the Word, and you'll get married, not for mutual satisfaction, not for mutual pleasure, but you'll be married. Yes, they will be involved.

There's nothing wrong with pleasure, praise God, but below all that will be commitment to one another for the rest of your life, whatever comes. And Shelley Taylor, in his book on discipline, speaks about how even if a man's wife suddenly through health or through some other difficulty can never, for example, engage in the act of marriage again, that he must remain loyal, and he is without excuse if he goes into some kind of trip or perversion or porno or whatever else. We don't speak much about this, but you know there's 300 verses in the Bible on the subject of sex.

And I recommend to you a book that has come out recently, I'm so ashamed I don't even have a copy. It's worth its weight in solid gold. It's called Eros Defiled by John White.

E-R-O-S. Eros Defiled by John White. I see some of you nodding your heads, yes.

Amen. Good. You can say amen when I preach, boy, I tell you.

That's how I got started. I preached to all the Pentecostal churches in Mexico. Man, my Spanish was so terrible, they didn't care.

They got the vibrations and were praising God, saying amen all the time. But get that book, Eros Defiled. See what the Word of God says and keep it in balance.

And as you go out, as you get married, make that priority. God is first, then family, wife, husband, then the work. I almost made the biggest mistake in my life in that area.

Neglecting my wife, neglecting my family, and others, praise God for it. Friends, even enemies. You learn sometimes more from your enemy.

Exhorting me. And God brought us through. So important.

So important. And then the balance between faith and common sense. That is so important when we get challenges even like this morning.

God has given us a mind. And we need wisdom. We need discernment.

And I won't tarry, but I think God wants us to exercise great faith. But God also wants us to use our minds. That takes faith, I tell you, for some of us.

To use what God has given you. You say, how do you find the perfect balance in that? You don't. You don't.

You see, there's a lot of things in the Christian life that I can't give you in a little diagram, a perfect little chart, a perfect little easy answer. I've been wrestling with some questions for 24 years. I've read books.

I've fed and memorized on this book, God's Word, so much. But there's some issues that just, you know, when we get to heaven, we'll see face to face. But now, it's a little bit dark.

Some of the suffering you've faced. My own wife's sister, just as we left them in England, my wife's sister has already gone through enough suffering in her life. I can't tell you about it.

She calls us up, but we called her up two days later and find out their four-month-old baby dies in the crib just like that. Not even a chance to pray. The baby just went to sleep.

It was dead. It's called a crib death. I never even heard of it.

Until this happened. And I feel in many ways, and I've often preached on this, that many times the little sufferings that God allows are to prepare us for a big test. So don't buck the circumstances too much.

Watch what he says. God uses the circumstances to break us. Tozer said something.

There's a man who believed tremendously in faith healing. And you know what he said? He said, some things that come and they go without hardly even praying. You've had problems like that.

They just come and go. Then there are the problems that come and through prayer and sometimes fasting and prayer, they go. Then I thought he would stop.

Then he said, there are problems that come and they don't go. They don't go. And he said on that third kind of problem, you're going to learn more about life and reality, I don't remember how he expressed it, than any other.

I know people who demanded that God did something for them and when God didn't do it, they turned against God and became bitter. You cannot do that with a living, holy, righteous God. You cannot try to put Him in a box and put your little label on it, even if you pinch your label from somebody's book.

God is God. He is great. There are elements about God we will never, never understand.

Today in America, our God is too small and our egos are too big and we're getting in a lot of trouble. I won't go on any further tonight, but I beg of you in your Christian life, as you hear many voices, as you read many books, that in the midst of it all, seek spiritual balance. Seek to let one truth balance another truth and bring it into sensible focus where it will work.

And that happens because we're rooted and grounded in love. That's the greatest factor that brings balance. And I'm sure that if you do this, coupled with total commitment, coupled with spirit-filled living, coupled with dynamic faith, coupled with many other things that you will hear during these days, that we will have our reunion 20, 30, 40 years from now and I'll be able to say, praise God, you've run well.

I know that those of you here tonight love the Lord Jesus Christ and I want to pray for you. God will mightily use you and that you'll be a man and woman after his own heart. We would welcome any of you to come on Operation Mobilization, on our ships to India, to the Middle East, for a summer or for a year or two.

This is the kind of thing we would teach and a lot more. There's cassettes in the back that have more of this teaching from Jesus 78, from other times together. And if you feel that you could learn something in this kind of on-the-job training, it's only 10% teaching and 90% putting it into action.

If you feel you could learn something and speak to Dave Milliken or write us, correspond, because we'd love to be involved with you. The geography isn't the main thing. Oh, yes, we can take you to Spain, Israel, Turkey, Iran, Bangladesh, Pakistan.

We're all over the world. The ships are covering the whole world. But it's not geography, the big thing.

Reality is the big thing today. You may know that you're on that straight and narrow path, following God's way, following God's Word, avoiding the extremes, the tangents, the tricks, the subtle, ugly tricks, and tricks of Satan. And I believe these things cannot just be taught, they have to be caught.

And the greatest method of teaching is the one that we are trying to put into practice, though we're not against formal education, and that's to take a small group of people and put them with a man of God. Not a perfect man, but a man of God. Let them live with him.

Let them see it. And it happens. And that multiplies.

That's the way our whole movement has grown with hardly any publicity. God multiplying reality from one life to the next. That includes knowing what to do when you fail.

That includes...

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