

A New Vision

by George Verwer

George Verwer challenges God's people to seek a deeper relationship with God and to prioritize wisdom, prayer, and excitement in their lives.

Duration: 49:50

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 9:38, Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 10:2, Acts 13:2-5

Topics: "Vision"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a vision for missionary sending based on the word of God. The vision is being spread through tapes and the internet to leaders around the world. The speaker emphasizes the need for breakthrough concepts in order to see new missionaries, especially since the number of career missionaries in the United States is dropping. The sermon also highlights the importance of committed senders who are willing to sacrificially support missions financially. The speaker references the story of Barnabas and Saul in Acts 13 and encourages the audience to take greater ownership of the call to send missionaries.

Transcript

I'm excited. I'm excited about this weekend. I know those of you who know me say, hey, that's no big deal.

Verwer is always excited. It is true that I have been excited every single day since my conversion to Christ and I can assure you that I'm not a good missionary speaker in many ways because my great burden isn't missions. My great burden is Jesus and my great burden is just to see Jesus reigning and ruling in people's hearts.

In fact, I turned down many missions conferences in order to take youth events, in order to take all kinds of other meetings where they don't know I'm a missionary because when they know you're a missionary quite a few key people don't show up and that's always discouraging. And even as we go through this weekend, we will be focusing on missions, but I believe the Spirit of God will have something for everyone because you're in a mission field right here in Memphis and you need the power of God as much as we do overseas. You need the wisdom of God.

I'm amazed at the lack of wisdom among God's people. There's an overemphasis today on power and seeing the power of God. But if you have what you may think is the power of God without the wisdom of God, you soon will have a circus and we have many evangelical circuses going on around the world and a

few in the United States.

I'm amazed at the mistakes they make in Washington. I'm a grace-awakened person, so I do forgive, but it's hard to believe that some of these people have done any studying or got any wisdom. And the Bible emphasizes wisdom.

I'm amazed at what people will go to pay at a motivational seminar. Probably we would get more tonight if we charge 15 or 20 dollars each and market it in a 90s fashion and listed me as a motivational speaker. But some motivational speakers pick up 20 grand, 30, 40 grand a shot, just like that.

I've listened to some of their material. Some of it's actually quite boring and the lack of wisdom that some of these motivational speakers has, which in turn leads hundreds of people astray into New Age philosophy and all kinds of crazy things, is really quite off the wall. And my prayer this weekend is that God will give you some nuggets of wisdom for your own work, your own ministry, for your home, for your family.

I was selling books in my hometown shortly after my conversion and I met a dear wise old woman and she knew I was a young little babe in Christ that needed wisdom. She bought a lot of books for me, so that encouraged my heart, and then she invited me in, sat me down and started to preach. I was only about 18.

And she said, you need a lot of wisdom in what you're going to do, she said, and you said, therefore you should study the Proverbs. And she said, a proverb a day will keep the devil away. Have you ever heard that? There's 31 Proverbs, one for every day of the month.

And ever since those teenage years, I've tried to read the Proverbs every day. And any wisdom I've ever had, because my number one job is still the oversight of this whole movement, which I do by email, telephone calls, and working through better people than myself so that I can squeeze in a few meetings in between my other work. And today is so exciting because when you come down the highway, you can also be on your mobile phone and talk to the whole world, even from freeway number 40 between Nashville and here.

I'm excited. I've been excited every day since Jesus came into my heart. And if you're not excited, then there's something wrong with you.

And you need to just simply quietly repent where you are. That doesn't have to be any big fanfare. You don't have to raise your hand or come forward.

You can just quietly repent of lukewarmness, lack of excitement about Jesus, lack of excitement about missions, or maybe you're just ill and you could see a doctor and see if you need vitamins or what you need to get you excited. Because I'll be very honest, the lack of excitement among God's people concerning Christ and the kingdom and missions and the lost is a scandal. It is bigger than the scandal in the White House.

It is bigger than the scandal in the bar. It is bigger than the scandal down in the New Age, whatever. And my great burden, wherever I go, is to see God's people coming into biblical Holy Spirit excitement.

Now, that doesn't mean you have to be loud. I'm a little bit loud. And then they turn these microphones on.

I mean, I don't actually need these things. But they're good to try to get me to speak softer and protect my vocal cords. And I was loud before I was a Christian.

So I'm not saying being excited means you're loud. I'm loud. I'm from New Jersey, but people from New Jersey tend to be a bit loud and rude and obnoxious and a few other things until they're born again, in case any of you are from New Jersey.

A lot of the people that I know who are excited about missions and excited about Jesus are actually quite quiet people. If you're looking for men to plant and women to plant churches in the Muslim world, probably you would not choose people of my temperament. Do you know anything about this temperament business? I'm the most negative of all four temperaments.

You have phlegmatics, sanguines, choleric, and what's the other one? Melancholic. Oh, they're terrible. But I'm known as the choleric.

You know, we're sort of aggressive. We get things done, but we hurt people in the process. It's better if we wouldn't marry, but we're usually lustful, so we all marry and usually get divorced.

And Tim LaHaye's book about choleric is really, it's really quite depressing until you get to the section about spirit-filled choleric. And the spirit-filled choleric is sort of just a generally confused person who has met God and is attempting to put into practice the Christian life. I always say, as I speak to many young people, that if God can use a character like me with all my weaknesses and born in New Jersey, son of a Dutch immigrant, then nobody else has an excuse.

And I hope you realize that missionaries, even leaders and founders of missionary societies, we're just weak, ordinary, struggling people. You feel you've got problems in your life, you write to me. I probably got two for every one you have.

If you write to me and you have more problems than I have, I send you five free books, so give it a try. Now that reminds me of the fact that we have bought a lot of books. When you go out there and look, some of you know me, God bless you for hanging in here, but when you go out the door there on my left and wander around there, you'll find a huge book table piled with books, and you will wonder, what are all these books? But you see, we know one of the keys to mobilizing, motivating, energizing people in missions are missionary books.

We get confused selling books and making change. We're fast lane operators. We find all that a bit of a pain.

These books are on a donation basis. You can give a check, you can give a postdated check up to the year 2000, but we want the books to go out. What are some of these books? And some of them, because we never have enough faith to order enough books, though I remember coming here to First Seed Bay and way back in the 70s and putting books out one Sunday, and I think it was one of the greatest book bonanzas in my entire missionary history.

I don't know if you're still reading books as much as you were in the 70s. I didn't get around here so much in the 80s, but we have got some mega books tonight. Born for Battle, a book on intercessory prayer.

I appreciated what you said about Prayer Emphasis Day. My actual practice, and I don't say this to boast, is that every day is a Prayer Emphasis Day. I always try to have between an hour and seven hours of prayer each day, and I've practiced that since I was a teenager.

Because prayer is so exciting. I wish I had time to just teach you about 30 ways to make your prayer life exciting. Because a lot of people, they don't know how to make prayer exciting, and so prayer meetings become boring and therefore people don't go.

Yeah, a lot of young people say the church is boring, and I think they're right. Some of the music is certainly boring, but following Jesus Christ is not boring. I have never had a boring day since my conversion.

That is not an exaggeration. I've had boring hours. I've had boring minutes, and that's terrible.

I've met lots of boring people, but I've never had a full boring day. And one of the reasons is because I discovered as a teenager the excitement of prayer, and walking with God, and knowing God, and the reality of worship, the reality of praise, Thanksgiving, intercession, praying while you walk, praying while you're driving, praying with your walkman on, praying in bed, praying under the bed, all kinds of prayer. And you ought to get this book, 31 Studies Born for Battle.

When you get serious in prayer, then you'll want to get Operation World, which many of you already have, right? How many of you already have it? That is probably a higher percentage than any church in the world. How many of you now are reading and praying through it regularly? Raise your hand again. We had a liquidation of many hands which proves that I really should be speaking to you about the children's edition of Operation World.

This is a lot better for those that are not big on reading, and there's some children will not even go to bed until they have read a page out of the children's edition, which is probably the greatest children's book in the entire history of the Church of Jesus Christ. This is a mega book for children, and we don't have that many, so probably they'll all go tonight. I always have a book of the decade, which is Grace Awakening by Charles Swindoll.

I have a book of the century, which is, I remember pushing it right here in your church. Martin Lloyd Jones' Spiritual Depression, Its Causing Cure. I don't think I have those with me.

And then I have a book of the year, book of the year, 1996. I just found in a missionary apartment in Argentina a few weeks ago. I'd never seen the book before.

It so blessed me. I wanted to stand on my head. When I was in the Boy Scouts, I did a special program standing on my head because my top of my head is flat and I could stand there a long time.

I'm not sure of all that I did at that time because I've repressed some of it. But this book so excited me. Splashes of Joy in the Cesspool of Life.

How many of you have read that? You ladies, look at this little gang in the front row. They're all into splashes. But this is written by a woman, and I believe all of us men need to read more books by women.

Because as men, we are naturally lopsided, and when we get some splashes from a woman in the form of a book, it's just wild. A lot of this book is humor. How many of you are into humor? How many of you are opposed to humor? Opposed to humor? A lot of people in some churches are very opposed to humor.

Laugh and the world laughs with you. Cry and you simply get wet. This is the kind of chapters you got here.

This one's dedicated to me. How can I be over the hill when I never got to the top? Motherhood isn't for wimps. Oh Lord, let my words be tender and sweet, for tomorrow I may have to eat them.

I introduce to you, Barbara Johnson, Splashes of Joy dedicated to missionaries around the world. Let's pray together. Lord, I thank you for the printed page.

I thank you that almost every day of my life, I've been motivated by the printed page. Encouraged by the printed page. Rebuked by the printed page.

And as we carry these books from the book table tonight and give them away to our friends and distribute them, we believe we're going to multiply the blessing more than we can ever imagine. So Lord, we'll give you the glory and we'll give you the praise. Speak to us from your Holy Word now.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Turn with me in your Bibles to Acts chapter 13. I'm going to share with you a vision tonight.

I don't say this lightly, but tonight for me is a historic moment, because I'm going to share a vision that God gave to me on an airplane flying from Cordoba, Argentina to Buenos Aires some weeks ago. It was a very scary experience, because I haven't had this kind of vision, which comes from God and comes into your mind, for a long time. I remember back when God gave me the vision for the ships in the mid-60s, the vision that I shared immediately with a small group of people to get a ship for world evangelism.

And a few years later, I wrote out a memo when I was living on one of the ships, the first ship, why we should get a second ship. My mind jumps back long before that, when I had my fiasco and the Soviet Union was arrested by the KGB and accused of being a spy. And my name was flashed across the newspapers in 1961 as an American spy arrested in the Soviet Union.

After two more days of interrogation, they decided I was a religious fanatic and gave me a submachine gun escort back to Austria. Our work before that was known as Send the Light. That was going on mainly in Mexico and Spain, and our thrust was the Muslim world and the communist world.

But it wasn't to be exactly like that. And I went for a day of prayer after that experience in the Soviet Union. And during that day of prayer, I was actually on the top of a tree.

I used to like to climb trees, praising and singing. And God gave me two words just out of the blue, Operation Mobilization, which has been the name of the entire movement ever since. That's trained 95,000 people in evangelism who are working in every nation in the world with every mission society in the world.

Over 100 mission societies and groups trace their birth back to OM. And on top of that, we've been able to give the word of God to about 700 or 800 million and see many tens of thousands come to the Lord Jesus Christ. But the vision of Operation Mobilization in the tree that day was a change on my original thinking because it meant I should get involved in Western Europe.

Before that, I wasn't interested in Western Europe, Britain, Germany. They had enough churches. I wanted Turkey, Afghanistan, Iraq.

I don't want to go where they have lots of churches. But God was to change my life and birth a movement that would be known for its partnership with churches, especially in Europe. And soon we had a couple of

hundred people coming out from those churches in the first OM summer in 62 and then 2000 by 1963.

I remember when God birthed the vision for that 62 summer. It grew out of that experience in that day of prayer. But it was in a weekend of prayer and waiting on God in Spain with some Spaniards that I shared the vision for that next summer.

And it was right after that summer that God gave the vision to multiply everything by ten. I'm sure part of that was very human. But I felt everything we did in the summer of 62 with all the blessing we saw from God and OM was just really being born at that time, we should multiply it by ten.

We had 12 big trucks taking literature in teams. I said, Lord, give us 120. It was out of that that we got later on the vision for the ship, which actually came to me in a converted pub in Bolton, Lancashire, or a converted bar.

We turned it into a Christian bookshop. So I guess when people have sometimes referred to me as a visionary, that is, I guess, somewhat true. The vision for India came very, very quickly.

In those days, I could do things on my own. Now we're a modified democracy operating by consensus, and sometimes doing something at OM is a bit slow. But we just had leaders' meetings in Singapore with 135 leaders from around the world, and we've launched something new, which isn't my vision.

In fact, I have felt strongly for the last 25 years that my work was to back up other people's visions. The great vision of Hyderabad and all that India is today was not my vision. I had the joy of just being a servant and backing up the vision of Joseph de Souza and Divakaram and other Indians.

The vision for South Africa and what's going on there, spreading into Angola, spreading into Mozambique, not my vision. I'm just helping, just backing it up. Some of the big visions for Operation Mercy, moving among the Kurds, engaging in helping in their physical needs.

That wasn't my vision. Somebody else's vision I've been just trying to help, true of what Gordon Magney is doing. Some of you know him, in serve among the Afghans.

And so in some ways over the past years, I've become less aggressive. I've become more laid back. And my burden was just to empower and to serve and to help others.

And I was quite happy in this role. There's plenty to do in something as big and complicated as OM. Then somehow I got drawn into a movement called AD2000 and beyond.

Not well known yet, except in some third world countries. But it's a network. It's not an organization.

Many organizations relate to it. Southern Baptists are in that, very big players. Campus Crusade, very big, WAC.

Many, many different movements are networked in. Doesn't mean they agree with everything. Doesn't mean we work together in everything.

But there has been a feeling by some of the big groups like Campus Crusade and the Southern Baptists and some very beautiful, humbling statements made by some of their leaders that we cannot do it on our own. We need each other. This movement is led by a young Latin American named Luis Bush, who is able to win people and get them together in Colorado Springs and then get them together in Korea.

We had our big AD2000 gathering in Korea last May. Luis Bush and other people, as I consulted with over 30 people before I joined this movement in leadership capacity, wooed me into becoming the chairman of the section of the movement for the mobilization of new missionaries. Now, when I got into this particular track, led by a young man from Youth Within Mission named Perry Rickard, they had the goal of mobilizing one million new missionaries.

I said, you're crazy. I said, we've got to get it down to a more somewhat sensible figure. There are less than 200,000 missionaries in the whole world today.

There are different ways to count missionaries, even being quite broad-minded. And so my contribution to AD2000 mission mobilization track so far was to get the number down to 200,000. We agreed to try to help mobilize 200,000 new missionaries.

Now, it's very important to listen at this point and understand we don't think we're going to do this. This is a ballpark figure. A lot of it is already happening, has nothing to do with us.

But we feel it is good to have goals for the whole body of Christ. As far as we're concerned, some of the great missionary shakers and movers and senders and goers will not necessarily be part of AD2000 and may never get our letters and may never hear of this vision I'm sharing with you tonight from Acts 13. But they're still part of God's family.

We're all one, whether they will agree to be one with us or not, they're still one according to the Bible if they're God's children. On this flight just a few weeks ago from Cordova to Buenos Aires, I had the heaviest vision poured into my mind that I've had since those days when I thought about India and launched that and launched the ships. And I'm shaking.

I'm still wondering what is going on. Is this, you know, is there some ego in here that I've got deceived? And so I share this with you in a bit of fear and trembling, though it looks like now this vision is in the air. Louise Bush believes it's from God.

Perry Rickard of the Mobilization Tract believes it's from God. The people in OM that I submit to believe it's from God. It's now on the Internet going around the world.

It's now going out to 2,500 leaders in the form of a cassette across the whole world. And I'm extremely nervous. But the vision is simple and the vision is from the Word of God and the vision for many people is not new.

But some of the concepts in this vision are breakthrough concepts. And I believe we need breakthrough concepts if we are going to see new missionaries, especially since the latest report shows that in the greatest missionary sending nation in the world, the United States, the number of career missionaries is now dropping. Let's read the passage, Acts chapter 13.

I'm sure you've read it many times. Now, there were at Antioch in the church that was there prophets and teachers, Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene and Menaen, who had been brought up with Herod, the Tetrarch, and Saul. And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart from me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

Then when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent, there's our theme, they sent them away. Verse 4, our theme again, so being sent by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia

and from there they sailed to Cyprus. And when they had preached or when they had reached Selemus, they began to proclaim the word of God in the synagogue of the Jews and they also had John as their helper.

Many, many times over these years I have preached from this passage. But on the airplane that day, in a state of struggle, in somewhat of a state of discouragement, to give the background, I was at the OM Love Latin American Congress in Cordova. The numbers were not as high as we were hoping.

I met with some key Argentinian Christian leaders. I speak Spanish, by the way. And it's obvious that the great numbers of missionaries they're hoping for from Argentina, they are not coming, at least not yet.

There's a lot of talk, there's a lot of hype, there's a lot of exaggeration about what supposedly God has been doing in Argentina and God has been doing wonderful things, but some of it gets a bit exaggerated. There are many struggles in the Argentinian church. There has been major immorality, and the young people that have wanted to go so far, many of them have not been able to raise their support.

We had Brazilians at that meeting. I talked to the Brazilians. I minister in Brazil, and in Brazil as well, a much bigger country than Argentina, considered the great future missionary sending country of the world.

It's obvious that the big numbers some are dreaming about are not yet really in the pipeline. So, humanly speaking, on that flight, I was again struggling with this number, 200,000, wondering if it was even from God. That number wasn't something I thought of.

Remember, I'm the one that brought it down from a million. But I had agreed. I had, in a sense, reluctantly taken ownership of this vision.

I was asked to speak to 75,000 people at the Olympic Stadium in Korea. And here I am challenging all these Koreans to consider world missions, and 80 percent in that meeting stood to make a missionary commitment. I'm back to Korea again this summer for a follow-up meeting among many thousands of students.

All kinds of things have happened in my life, especially in the last 24 months, that are really quite scary. And as I wrestle with unbelief and wrestle with my doubts, I have a heavy negative streak. I wrestle a lot with cynicism.

I'm a borderline agnostic. I'm not a natural spiritual person. I'm a natural backslider.

And if God doesn't meet me every day, somehow I start to get a bad attitude, even concerning missions and Christian leaders and AD2000 and OM and whatever else. I don't know if any of you have any of that kind of struggle in your life. But you might as well understand, you don't have some kind of spiritual Holy Ghost, laser beams, some kind of combination of converted Clint Eastwood, Madonna and Prince combined here to share with you about world missions.

You've just got a needy character that God saved in a Billy Graham meeting. I didn't even seem to have that much to do with it. You know my testimony, most of you.

One little old lady heard about my trouble with the police and my trouble with my swearing and my pornography, put my name on her hit list, prayed for me not only that I'd become a Christian, but I'd become a missionary. Amazing! She just prayed this. She didn't even discuss this with me.

You know, I like to decide what I'm going to do with my life. Sent me a gospel, John, through the mail. That led me to the Billy Graham meeting, March 1955, where I was converted.

Somehow on that airplane, some ideas began to come into my mind. I began to just write things down. And I saw for the first time, it could be done.

In fact, getting 200,000, if we consider the whole picture, it's not that hard, it's not that many. If other churches your size around the world would do what you have done, it's finished. We've got 200,000.

But you see, we don't have that many churches, relatively speaking, like First Evangelical. That take mission seriously. That raise hundreds of thousands.

That send out workers. They have missionary working groups. But if it can happen in one church, and we know across America it's happened in many, and it's happened to quite a few in Great Britain, we're still talking about a small percentage.

Only a small percentage of the churches in the world today that love the Lord are sending churches, especially here in the southern part of the USA. But the potential is there. And my heart was just filled with the potential of the number of churches in the world today.

Somebody said it's several million churches in the world today. I don't have the exact statistics. There seemed to be some contradiction.

But to carry on this strategy, as God put on my heart, though it's subject to many adjustments, you know, God didn't give me the numbers in a revelation, we need just 100,000, just a little more than 100,000 churches. And 75% of those churches only need to give one missionary in the next four or five years. Our goal, let me remind you, is 200,000 new missionaries launching out, hopefully many of them into the 1040 window, but we're not going to tell them where they have to go.

It's way too complicated. 200,000 from the whole body of Christ, whether they're in any network or whether they're independent or whatever, with a special focus on having the gospel for every person and the church for every people in the world, which is the motto of the AD 2000 movement and many other movements. We only need 100,000, a few more churches.

I pointed out sort of recommendations of what size church should give or send forth a certain number of missionaries. I have overhead. Maybe I'll show you those sometime.

I should have brought them here tonight. I went back to the night of prayer of my international coordinating team in London, England, and I shared these things, and that tape is the tape that's going all over the world. I'd be happy to send you a copy.

I've called this vision so far. We may change the latter part of the name, but up to now it's called Acts 13 Breakthrough 2000. We've got a number of other names because it's still in draft stage.

This is still being discussed, still being prayed through. Then I made a list. God, just as I was on the plane, began to put the countries on my heart.

I don't know whether I had my global jacket. This is a very handy jacket, by the way. I know some of you probably think it's a bit weird if you're sitting in the back.

This is a map of the world. This is not just any old color. I was on a flight, actually, from Brazil down to Argentina a couple of years ago, went up to the cockpit to talk to the pilot, and they were having a discussion as to where they were.

And the co-pilot said they were flying over Ecuador, which is way up here. I think you can see it better with the globe. Latin America flying here down to here, Ecuador is up here.

They used my global jacket in the cockpit of a jumbo jet to see where they were going. They were flying right over Uruguay. It's a story, true story I'll never forget.

I've been flying with other airlines since that experience. But there I was again, and I spend a lot of time on airplanes and hate it most of the time, though I learn to make the best of it. That's the story of a lot of things in my life.

Can any of you relate to that? Anyway, that's another message. But I just began to write down the key potential sending countries, Korea, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Germany, Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia. I've been in most of these places.

And then I started to put numbers down. And all the numbers that I expected each country to send, I put the number mainly of churches, sending churches. It was quite amazing.

It's not that many. In fact, in the United States, according to my vision, and I know big visionaries here in America will be insulted by it, we only need 25,000 churches to participate in this. Now, this is difficult for a church that is already sending a lot of missionaries and battling to support them.

Because that itself is a huge task. Because we want 200,000 new missionaries. But in those kind of churches, people are returning.

New people are going out. And so I'm sure churches like First Event will very much be involved in this program, which I believe is God's program based on this simple concept of Acts 13. So when I came back, I put those numbers on an overhead projector.

And now those numbers by World Wide Web email and other methods of communication are going all over the world. I happen to have a video camera there as well the night that I spoke. This is the first time in front of a large congregation that I have ever shared this vision publicly.

And I feel it is more significant than any other vision God has ever given me in my whole life. Because all the other visions were mainly to involve the organization that God put me in, OM. OM launched those ships, though other people got ship visions as well.

The vision to send people short time, short term, which goes back to my living in Maryville, Tennessee, and realizing America at least had the opportunity to hear the Gospel, but Mexico didn't. And I shared with my friend Dale Roton, let's go to Mexico this summer. That was also one of those small beginning visions, which in those days I used to have about every other month.

But God meeting me on that plane, God giving me these statistics, giving me a number of ideas. I have a memo, your questions answered, about Acts 13 breakthrough 2000, in which I've taken three pages to answer the toughest questions that people can fire at me about this wild idea of seeing 200,000 missionaries mobilize. I answer right off in the first question, what do we mean by a missionary? And I

answer in that first question or the second question, why do we need 200,000? I pointed out, by the way, that in the United States, we have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of Christian workers.

Why do we need so many pastors and missionaries and Christian workers? I think the number has gone way over one million full-time workers in America. And we're all excited about 200,000 more for the rest of the world. Now, we are talking about 200,000 more.

There's between 150,000 and 200,000 out there. Some of those are on furlough. Some of those are coming back.

We'll never be able to measure it right down to the last missionary because we're talking about the whole globe. We're talking about having a global vision. And one of our burdens for this weekend, even though you may not comprehend all of this, is that we become global in our thinking, global in our praying, that we go against the tide.

And the present tide in America is against global thinking and global giving and global praying. The present tide is saying, America is such a mess. There's so many problems.

There's so many drug addicts. AIDS is growing. Crime is growing.

Prisons are bulging. Ah! Many are lukewarm in our churches that our major thrust must be here. Let me shock you with something.

There is no nation I have been in and I've been out 40 years where Christianity is more deeply rooted and stronger than in the United States. So if you think the church and everything is a mess here, do you know what I would suggest? That Christianity, in fact, then, is not true. And some people now in America believe that.

I don't. And I believe the mistake and the reason many are discouraged and confused and praying all kinds of weird prayers and other things is because we have unbiblical expectation as to what Christianity is supposed to do in a nation. And we have departed from the simplicity and the basic teaching of the New Testament, which says, now is the way and few there will be that find it, into some kind of concept where we're hoping somehow we will have a Christian nation even though there are no verses in the New Testament about that.

The fact is Christianity has often thrived more in a hostile environment with hostile government and hostile leadership than it has thrived when everybody was happy about it and government law was in line with what is taught in the New Testament. Now, on the other hand, don't misunderstand me because I'm mega big in salt and light teaching and I believe when there are committed radical Christians, there will be the salt and light and that will influence government, it will influence society, and I am committed as an American to see that happen in every possible way. And when I speak at a place like Wheaton College, I don't challenge them all to go to the mission field.

I challenge them to do God's will and to build a kingdom. And we need to build a kingdom in Chicago and Memphis as well as in Mongolia or New Delhi. And we need people in the marketplace, in the banking world, in the political world, in the arts world, in every other aspect of society.

And we have more than enough believers now in America to do it all. Of course, people say, well, we need revival. That's true.

That's true in every other country in the world as well. Do you realize how small the Church is in Europe where I spend a lot of my time? And yet on a per capita basis, even in places like Germany and Great Britain and Sweden, the Church is relatively strong and healthy. And they are planning to send out thousands of missionaries.

Now, that's not many for countries the size of Britain and Germany, but it shows that God is working there. And this may not seem to be the normal place to start in our mission thinking, but I think we need to be reminded that God has done great things in our country. And God is working in our country.

And we are still one of the strongest, if not the strongest, potential missionary-sending country in the world. I hope Korea passes us up. I hope Brazil passes us up.

But any thinking person knows they have a long, long way to go. And as I go around to all these colleges, next week or the week after I'm at Biola University, I've just Sunday night been at Oral Roberts University, 4,000 students. I've just been at Priorcrest.

I've just been at Bethel. I've just been at Wheaton. I've just been last year at Taylor University.

There are thousands of students with cutting-edge commitment who are thinking about missions, or who, if they don't go, want to become senders. So I am excited about what God is doing in America. Last week, 40,000 pastors gathered in Atlanta.

Unheard of in the history almost of the world. 40,000 pastors with basic convictions from the Word of God. They're not big into world missions yet, but they have that somewhere there in the promise.

And promise keepers, I believe, are going to move in God's timing into world missions. And they, together with many others who are not necessarily connected with that, will provide one of the greatest potential missionary groundswells that the world has ever known. And we can get those 25,000 sending churches, and we can get those 50,000 or 75,000, depends on how many each church sends.

I haven't worked out the numbers to that detail in this strategy. It's doable. Do you know that term? That's a new American term.

It's doable. When I first heard that word in connection with missions, I didn't like it. Do you know Ralph Winner? Has he ever come to one of your missions conferences? Ralph Winner, surely, with all of his controversial thinking and ideas, is one of the most unique missionary leaders in the 20th century.

I just thank God for this man. Because Ralph Winner helped us look at the unreached people. Ralph Winner is an optimist.

Ralph Winner is still talking about giving the world, everybody, the gospel by the year 2000. Many have given up. Many missiologists and especially the theologians are writing against this concept.

And Ralph Winner is still saying it's doable. It's doable. And he churns out the statistics, and he churns out the information.

And when I read it, I just get so excited. I was sitting with him in the WEF, World Evangelical Fellowship, meeting in Manila, and he was up in the balcony so that he could work on his word processor at the same time, listen to what's going on, and he was churning out some article to point out that we can do it. And I believe God wants to bring a baptism of optimism to our hearts in these days in which the tremendous negative things coming from all sides, in books, on television, on the radio.

And we all know of the problems in the church. You don't need to have much intelligence to see the problems. We all see some of the depressing kind of Christian television that makes us feel negative about even the body of Christ.

I have great struggles with so many things. But it's my prayer that this weekend there may be a baptism of optimism and that just as God gave me this optimistic, faith-filled expectation in the airplane a few weeks ago, that somehow he would fill your heart, not just for this big ballpark figure for \$200,000 that you may not be able to relate to, but for your own church to see that money come in, to see that budget met, to see new workers go out as well as the old workers supported, and all the other things that are connected with being a missionary sending church. To realize that being a sender, which I feel I am much more than a goer, though you would classify me as a goer, living in London, England, in a basically sending country, I feel really I am a sender.

A lot of my work is raising finance. It's prayer. It's recruiting.

It's church relationships. It's more to do with the sending than it is with the missionary strategy of, you know, how to plant the church in Turkey. Other men and women in OM more talented in those areas than I are doing that kind of thing.

But I am so thrilled being a sender. The prayer, the money. Some of you work hard.

My life has been challenged more by lay people in the business world than almost by those in the full-time ministry, a term I don't like, because I know business people who are cutting edge in sending. I have a friend in Australia. I wish you could be with me when I visit him.

I have another friend in Singapore who's putting large finance into ministry, but the pressure his company is under. Next week I'll be several days with one of the best supporters of our work, a man in Oregon, an inventor, a scientist. He's an older man.

He should retire, but he's cutting edge, sending. And you're talking big money. You're talking sacrificial money.

You're talking about people that instead of buying one more big thing or this or that, they put the money into world missions. Many years ago, I had a hero. I had many heroes, but one of them was Borden of Yale.

He was a millionaire that went to Yale University, and when God touched his heart about this needy world in which we live, and the Muslim world, Borden of Yale began to give all of his money away, and he went to Egypt as a missionary, and he was soon dead. And there's a biography of him. And many of us in OM read his biography.

And that's why OM today has 1,000 people in the 10-40 window. Do you all know what the 10-40 window is? Anybody doesn't know what the 10-40 window is? Let's show you the 10-40 window. Don't confuse it

with something else like your bay window.

The 10-40 window is 10 degrees north of the equator to 40 degrees. My fingers span it, starting in the west coast of Africa. It goes right across that whole heartland of the Middle East, right across Afghanistan, Pakistan, all through India, Burma to Japan.

That window, you'll see lots of pictures of it. There's a video here. You can pick it up tonight, five minutes tonight before you go to bed, a song about the 10-40 window by Bill Drake, a singer who often travels with me around the world.

That 10-40 window video song was shown to all those leaders from all over the world when they gathered at Korea. Ninety percent of the more unreached people in the world live in the 10-40 window. And God in his providence, before we knew anything about such terminology, made this part the heartland of operation, mobilization.

We have a thousand workers there. What is it going to cost us to keep those people there? What is it going to cost us to give them the tools to complete the job, the Bibles, the New Testaments, the literature? Some of you know in India now we're launching Project Light. In India alone, and I'm going to finish in a few minutes, is to target another 100 million people in the land of India.

I'm sure you'll be hearing much about that in the future. One hundred million. That's just one part of OM's forward global thrust.

The greatest need right now is not more people to go. That's there. The greatest need is for sending churches and sending people.

My new hero is a little different than Borden of Yale. Can I tell you about him as my closing story? My new hero is a guy that went on OM and heard me preach about the 10-40 window and went to a seminar and heard about Central Asia. You know, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan.

These are not new pizzas. These are new nations that now are open to the Gospel. And he got so excited in this meeting he made a commitment to go.

And he wanted to go. Now, this young man belonged to an interesting family. His father owned a business that was making money for the kingdom, and his father and mother were putting in tens of thousands for world missions.

But when he got home from this OM summer campaign and he was excited about going back, he sat down with his father and his father shared that he just discovered he had a heart condition, needed surgery, would not be able to run the business in the same way. And the father said, Son, I know you want to be a missionary, but I want to ask you for a few years, would you lay that on the altar and help run this business to keep all this money going out to these workers? I will tell you, you may not understand this, but if you walk with me these 40 years in 60 nations, you would. That's my new hero.

And unless we see men and women raised up who are willing to be cutting-edge committed senders, then neither the vision of the 200,000 nor the vision of Ralph Winner in 82,000 will ever, ever come to pass, at least in the next 10 years. Serving as senders. Twice in Acts 13 it mentions the word send.

We're going to be talking about that for the next two or three days. And I'm praying that all of us will take greater ownership of this great commandment of our Lord Jesus and this great vision to see the whole world reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us pray.

Father, you know everything about us and you love us still. You know the things that aggravate us, maybe have aggravated us even today, little things that have gone wrong, little times when our patience has been tested like mine. And we just somehow want to turn away from these little things and from the small world in which we're forced to live.

And you will give us grace for this world in which we live. But Lord, from these moments we want to move away and take on, we want to take on this global vision, the 1040 window and the whole world. And we want to pray, Lord, that you, as it says in Matthew 9, would send forth workers into the harvest fields, yea, even 200,000, from 100,000 participating churches across the whole world.

Oh God, this may be too big for us, but it is not too big for you. And so we would pray that you would raise up the senders and the sending churches in Argentina and Brazil, in all of Central American Mexico, in Canada and across Europe, and now in Southern Africa and the rest of the world. From Korea especially, send forth those workers.

Those who sat in that stadium some months ago, send them forth. And oh God, raise up those who would joyfully and sacrificially give that this may be a reality in the next few years. For we pray in the exalted, powerful name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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