

A Revolution of Love

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living out our faith in a way that is characterized by love, joy, peace, and other fruit of the Spirit.

Topics: "Gods Love", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

George Verwer preaches about the revolutionary power of love as the core message of Christianity, emphasizing that God is love and true love is from Him alone. He challenges believers to understand that sound doctrine must include love, humility, and brokenness, as love is the basis of all Bible doctrine. Verwer highlights the importance of living out the fruit of the Spirit, especially love, and the need for a genuine hunger for a life of love and a willingness to forsake all for Christ. He stresses the essential link between sound doctrine and practical living, urging believers to seek a life of love that reflects Christ's sacrificial love for us.

Transcript

I would like for you to turn in your Bibles to Galatians 5:22-26 - verses that should be deeply etched in the mind of every Christian:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness goodness, faith (better translated 'faithfulness'), meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

The fruit of the Spirit is love. We believe Christianity is a "revolution of love." and we are convinced that there is nothing more important in all the world than this.

Now let us clarify our concept of love. In 1 John we are told that "God is love." This is a clear and simple definition: God is love.

In other words, true love is from God . . . it does not exist apart from Him. We know that God is One. Therefore, we cannot think of God the Father without thinking of love; we cannot think of the Lord Jesus Christ without thinking of love; we cannot think of the Holy Spirit without thinking of love. There is no separation. God does not send love. He does not manufacture it. God is love.

Now that appears to be a very simple statement, but I am convinced that only an extremely small percentage of believers have really come to grips with this truth. A seminary student said to me this summer, "I finally listened to all your tapes and all your messages, and it has only just dawned on me what you mean by 'revolution of love' - what you mean when you say 'God is love.'"

As we see the state of the church world-wide and the state of the average believer, it is easy to become discouraged. We look for discipleship, we look for those who are laboring together in unity, in prayer, in power . . . and we see quarrels and divisions, complacency and mediocrity.

Many young people are asking, "Why is the church in such a state? . . . Why is Christianity today making so little impact?"

Many talk about the "secret." Somehow we have missed the secret, they feel, and therefore the church is as it is. They think that perhaps what is needed is a new book that will reveal this secret and bring deliverance and restoration to the church.

Now it seems to me that it would not be very fair of God to keep secret the most basic ingredient of Christian effectiveness. And I do not believe it is a secret.

The Basic Message

There is, I believe, a basic ingredient which is largely lacking in Christianity today, and the lack of it is the source of most of our problems. It is the cancer which is eating away at the church, but it is no secret. In fact, it is so non-secretive that it is written on almost every page of the New Testament. And yet, because the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked, and because we are so bent on our own way, we do not see (or seeing we do not believe) that the basic message of the New Testament is LOVE!

It is my absolute conviction that most of us miss this most obvious and most repeated message, even while laying great emphasis on "sound doctrine."

Well, I would like to ask you, "What is sound doctrine?" We have long discussions on the Second Coming, on the Atoning Work of Christ, on the Church, the Holy Spirit, etc., etc. But what about love and humility and brokenness? These usually go into a separate category, but I want to tell you that if your doctrine does not include love and humility and brokenness, then your doctrine is not sound.

There are thousands, even millions, of people who claim to be "orthodox Christians" because they cling to a certain set of beliefs in accord with the Bible. They are aware that they do not practice much humility, but they do not think that makes them any less orthodox. They are aware that they do not really love the brethren in Christ (especially those who are different from them), but that does not cause them to think their doctrine is not sound.

They admit that they know nothing of "laying down their lives " for the brethren and esteeming the other as better than themselves, and yet they consider themselves fundamental orthodox Christians.

Oh, what an error this is! This false concept - thinking we can be orthodox without having humility, thinking we can be sound in doctrine without having love, thinking we can be fundamental evangelicals though our lives do not show forth the fruit of the Spirit - this is the greatest error that has hit Christianity even before or since the reformation!

Doctrine cannot be separated from practical living. Brethren, I do not see Jesus Christ as a dual personality, partly doctrine and partly moral, trying to bring to separate realms of truth into our minds. He was not on the one hand trying to teach us what we call doctrine, and on the other hand trying to make us morally upright. It is completely wrong to think of doctrine as being apart from living.

"Oh," someone says, "there is a good, evangelical Christian . . . he has good sound doctrine. He does not have much love for others and he is not very humble, but he's very sound in doctrine." He is not sound in doctrine if he does not love the brethren. What do we read in 1 John 4:8? "He that loveth not knoweth not God."

There is no sounder doctrine than love, and apart from love there is no sound doctrine. This is the basis of all Bible doctrine. You take the base out and everything you build will eventually collapse.

The wise man

Let's look at James, chapter 3, at some verses that have deeply spoken to my heart. Verse 13: "Who is a wise man endued with knowledge among you?"

Well, who is he? Who is wise and endued with knowledge? Is he the one who knows all the answers? Is he the one who has the solution to every problem . . . the one who always knows which road to take, how to witness and lead souls to Christ, how to distribute literature? Is this the wise man in your midst? Possibly. But, not necessarily.

The bible says, "Who is the wise man . . . among you? Let him show out of a good conversation (or life) his works with meekness and wisdom."

In other words, God says the wise man who has the correct theory and who knows what the Bible teaches, "All right, let's see it in your life. First, above everything else, let's see it lived out. If a man is truly wise, then he is truly meek."

Reading on in James, we find certain factors disqualify a person from this wisdom. "But if you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth." When we claim to be sound in doctrine and to have New Testament truth; and yet our lives are not filled with meekness, but rather with bitterness, we are actually lying against the truth in our lives. This is the great problem everywhere, today.

Look at the next verse: "This wisdom descendeth not from above but is earthly, sensual, devilish." Do you see what this means?

An illustration

Let me illustrate this kind of earthly "wisdom" with an incident that occurred recently. A brother made a mistake in the practical realm. One of his co-workers, who never did capture this revolution of love, knew that the other was in the wrong.

Very quickly he said, "This is wrong. You should not have done it. " The other brother, in a bit of excitement said, "Well, I was told to do it this way." The first a little more excitedly, said, "Well, I know it is not right. This is what you should have done." And soon they had a full-scale argument.

Later on, I talked to the one who claimed to be right. I said to him, "Do you feel you were right in that situation?"

"Absolutely," he said. "I was right and everybody around here knows I was right!" And he had managed to convince everyone else that he was right.

Then I said, "Tell me, when you spoke to him were you in the flesh or in the Spirit?"

He stopped at that and thought for a minute. "Well, I don't suppose that I was really what you would call in the Spirit."

I said, "Well then, you were in the flesh." He was a bit hesitant but said, "All right, I admit that I was in the flesh, but I was right."

I said, "But dear brother, doesn't the Word of God say that from the flesh cometh no good thing?"

He wasn't right! The way I think, the way I believe Christ taught, the way I believe the New Testament teaches, he was absolutely wrong because truth never comes without moral quality and you cannot tell the truth without love.

The curse of today is orthodoxy without love, orthodoxy without power, orthodoxy without the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we move into the Catholic world or the Muslim world or the Communist world, remember that no matter how right we are about an issue, the minute we act without love, we are in the flesh and not abiding in Christ, and it is sin. No matter how much "truth" comes from your mouth, it is not truth.

That is what the Bible says here. This "wisdom" that does not come with meekness and gentleness and love is not wisdom. It is sensual, devilish. Some of the most horrible and unbelievable situations arise in the ranks of Christianity amongst those who have "lip truth" but do not live the truth. And what a stench it is to God!

The next verse says, "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." How we have seen this in our work. The moment that envy creeps into the picture, no matter how much "orthodoxy" there is, or how much truth is floating around, the result will be just what is described here - confusion. And every evil work follows close behind.

Pure and peaceable

Then verse seven: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure." Do you see it? The wisdom that comes from above is first, not orthodox, but pure. And whenever what we say, and do is not of the highest moral quality, then it is not from above, but is the earthly, sensual, devilish pseudo- wisdom of the world.

God's wisdom is first always pure, then it is peaceable. Alan Redpath says when you know that you are not in the Spirit, you know you are a little upset, then never open your mouth! I like the way he puts it: "At that moment, literally force yourself back into the will of God." Force yourself back into the will of God, and then speak. But never open your mouth when you are not in the Spirit, for no matter how hard you try you will never speak with true wisdom.

How many times have you hurt someone because you spoke too soon? Husbands, how many times have you hurt your wife because you did not keep quiet a few minutes longer. I know how many times I could have kicked myself all over our little room because I did not wait a little longer before I spoke.

The Bible says, "The wisdom that come from above is first pure, then peaceable, then gentle." Gentle! What do you know about that, young zealot? You know it is easy to be zealous between the ages of 17 and 35. That's right! It isn't hard for energetic youth to be zealous. "Ho, I am out to conquer the world. Everybody is going to hear about Jesus Christ!" And away we go in the zeal of the flesh until around the age of 30 or 35, or after the first child comes, and then we suddenly discover that our "zeal thermometer" is beginning to drop. Finally, we have to admit that we have been working in the energy of the flesh. Youthful lusts! Youthful lusts directed into Christian activity. Youthful zeal! Youthful enthusiasm! But what youthful gentleness - The wisdom that is from above is gentle."

How do you respond?

And it is "easy to be entreated." What does that mean . . . easy to be entreated? Some of us love to read the Bible just for the sake of Bible reading, and we go over these verses time and time again and haven't a clue what they really mean. "Easy to be entreated" means easy to be taught and corrected. This quality is tested when, for instance, you are washing dishes, and someone says: "Look, why don't you use the dish towel . . . and, oh my, you need to put some soap in the water." Are you easy to be entreated in such circumstances? Or, perhaps, you are loading a vehicle with books and a brother says, "Don't put them in that way. Do it like this." How do you respond? The way you respond to correction is a great test of what Jesus is doing in your life. When someone comes up and puts his arm around your shoulder and says, "Sorry, brother, but you are doing it all wrong." What is your reaction? "Praise the Lord. I appreciate that brother." Is that your reaction?

One of the greatest tests in the Christian life is when you are confronted with correction and criticism.

Anyone can live for Christ when he is receiving pats on the back. Anyone! I mean outwardly. As long as you are doing your job well and are being appreciated, you can lean on that psychological "crutch". But when you are criticized, rightly or wrongly, then you can only lean on Jesus.

This is exactly what we need to do, and possibly that is why God sometimes allows the props to be knocked from under us, and puts us under fire in the form of criticism. We need to learn to work only for His "well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Let's look on to some other tests of true wisdom. Next, it says, the wisdom that cometh from above is full of mercy and good fruit, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Full of mercy . . . toward the weaker brother, toward the offending brother, toward the guilty brother full of mercy and full of good fruit. It is without partiality and without hypocrisy.

This is orthodox doctrine. And I pray that if anyone can show me that this is wrong thinking or that I am mis-interpreting the New Testament, and that it is possible for me to have sound doctrine without peace, purity, gentleness, etc., that he will show me. But please do not try to tell me some dear brother has a miserable life but sound doctrine, because I just will not believe you. Sound doctrine and wisdom that comes from above always comes with a Bible-linked life. This conviction is the core of all true Christian work .

The greatest desire of our hearts for the church and for every believer is to see this linking of sound doctrine and sound life together.

Explosive message

Now let us turn to 1 John 3. I want to tell you that as I have gone through this First Epistle of John this year it has rocked me! This epistle is so loaded with revolution and dynamite that if we had reached the average Communist with this message before the message of Marx reached him, we would have many more born-again Russians.

I will never forget that young, red-hot Communist who came into our office in Lancashire, England, two years ago. We took him into this epistle and showed him the teachings of Jesus, and two weeks later he got down on his knees in the kitchen and gave his life to Christ. I tell you this message of First John is right from the heart of God for this generation!

Now let's see what God says to us through 1 John 3:11. "This is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. "

What is our message as Christians? Sometimes it seems that our primary message is "believe." Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and afterwards everything will be fine. Well, perhaps you find it so. But, when I read "believe" in the New Testament, I find something that is like an atomic bomb. When a man really believes on Jesus Christ, it is a revolution becoming operative, a revolution of love. You cannot separate one from the other.

People are always having trouble over this question of repentance . . . what does it mean when it says "repent and believe"? Are we saved through only believing or believing plus a few good works? It is through believing only. But real belief brings revolution. It results in moral action. There is no such thing as real belief without repentance. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Good works will never save you, no matter how hard (or how long) you work, or how many works you do. But when you believed, you are going to work as a result, because the Holy Spirit is the Author of good works.

Wanting "experience"

A few years ago, a dear emotional Christian woman told me about people who were having experiences in the Spirit. I asked, "When the Holy Spirit works in such a mighty way, shouldn't that produce a moral revolution? Shouldn't the man who has such experiences afterwards be filled with love and joy and peace? Shouldn't he forsake all that he has, as we are told the early Christians did in the book of Acts? Shouldn't he lay down his life for others?"

The lady aid to me, "Sometimes the Holy Spirit comes just to give us joy and a wonderful experience and blessing." I said to her, "You mean that sometimes the Holy Spirit comes apart from His Holiness?" She began to ponder that.

I tell you, the Holy Spirit does not come apart from His Holiness. The emphasis is not on Spirit but on Holy, and He cannot come without His moral character. It is for this reason that we measure a person's experience with the Spirit (although we prefer to say the Spirit's experience with the person), on the basis of his moral quality.

You cannot separate the word "believe" in its Biblical context from the word "love". Do not try! How many men we have in our churches, leaders Some of them, who speak to a congregation from the Word of God, but in their homes know nothing more about loving their wives than the man in the next house who cannot stand his! And they go on and on, continuing to think they are spiritual men with just a besetting sin of not being able to really love their wives. oh, how absolutely heart-breaking! Do you not see the absolute

incompatibility of such views? So many Christians cannot get along with their neighbors! Oh, how sad . . .!

If your "besetting sin" is that you cannot love people, you are in great danger. We do not mean to say that it will always be easy to love people, or that you will not have battles about it. It will be a daily fist fight with the forces of darkness, but the Word of God clearly teaches that we are to love one another.

We cannot have fellowship with God without having fellowship with our brethren in Christ. we cannot love God without first loving the brethren.

Look at chapter four, verse 20: "If any man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar, he that loveth not his brother which he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen" ?

The prevalent idea today is that if we love God enough we will eventually love our brethren. But when I read this verse, I hit the floor because it says very clearly, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? " If there is any brother or any sister who you do not love, actively, operationally, then something is wrong.

I am of the conviction that 99 per cent of the prayers of Christians do not get any higher than the ceiling because of a lack of love. If the prayers of the saints were being answered during these days, the world would have been evangelized long ago. At the prayer meetings we attend there is always tremendous verbal exercise. Fantastic things are asked of God.

"Lord we claim this country for you." "We believe, Father, that you will open a way into China." "Lord, we trust you to bring 100 new people to the meeting tonight." And on and on we go, and yet all the time there is another brother in the same prayer meeting whom you cannot stand. Oh, not that we don't love him . . . we would just rather not be around him. Of course, we don't hate him . . . it is just that our personalities conflict!

Love your enemies

There are hundreds of watered-down phrases for not loving other people. "Oh, I love him in the Lord, but I don't like his mannerisms . . ." "Susie is alright, but she is so hard to get to know . . ." "This one has emotional problems and that one comes from a low social background."

In the sight of God it is all hypocrisy. God never said in His Word, "Love your brother if he is a keen chap, well dressed, zealous, a soul-winner . . . and if he loves you." No! On the other hand, Christ told us in the Sermon on the Mount that real love does not begin until we love our enemies!

This whole concept of loving our enemies is, for the average person of today, nothing but an outdated theological phrase, so impossible for the human nature to attain that it is never taken seriously, even among Christians.

We know nothing of it, nothing of really loving a man who cannot tolerate us, who speaks evil of us, spites us, does not like us, or the way we operate. More often we cannot love even the people around us with whom we live and work.

Some time ago, someone told me flatly that he loved everybody. I replied: "You are saying quite a bit brother, when you say that." But he was insistent that he loved everybody. I happened to know of at least one person to whom he didn't bother to say 'hello' in the morning. He could pass this person several times

a day, never showing kindness - not a smile. I asked, "Do you really love him?" He said, "Of course I do. Well, I mean I love all the believers."

Do you see it? It is all there in the head. There is no love without action! Potentially he may have loved him. Theoretically he may have loved him. But it was not reality.

God's work, not ours

A Christian is at all times indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God and so has all His potential for this tremendous revolution of love. The Holy Spirit is there, just waiting to take possession of a man and make him loving. He is just waiting to move that man to volunteer for the washing up, for cleaning the toilets, for cleaning out the back of the trucks. The Holy Spirit is waiting to make him ready to take the low road and jump ahead of his brother in the dirty tasks. But what happens? Out pride, stubbornness, and egocentric living, quench the action of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Jesus Christ said, "love your neighbor as yourself!" Oh, isn't it that amazing! I am so glad that Jesus was more intelligent than Aristotle or Socrates. Isn't it nice we Christians have the truth? But what has been the result in the practical realm? What has it been in India, for instance? Certain missionaries with their heads in the clouds, shut themselves away from the people in their missionary compounds, put locks on all the doors, and taught, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." And in Africa, what have been the results? Well, in many places, the missionaries are saying, "We love our neighbors as ourselves. But, well, the colored people had better use the back doors, and clean the houses, and be nannies for the little white children."

What, then, does all this talk of love really mean? "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Well, how do you love yourself? How did you love yourself this morning? You got out of bed groggily, wiped all the sleep out of your eyes, went to the mirror and said, "Oh, how I love you! You are so wonderful; I love you, I love you, I love you so much!" Did you? Well, if you do that too many mornings someone might call in a psychiatrist for you. That is not the way we love ourselves! That is the way we love our neighbors. That's right! "The Lord bless you dear brother. yes, yes, the Lord bless you. the Lord do wonderful things for you."

We sign our letters "love in Christ", and think, "Well, that's another one out of the way." But that is not the way we love ourselves. Perhaps we can understand love better if we use the word "care." You have been caring for yourself all day long, ever since this morning when you woke up and your self love automatically went into action. You had a wash and a shave, brushed your teeth, used a few creams and lotions, and put the proper amount of clothes on to keep your body warm. Shortly after getting out of bed, you had a little pain in your tummy - very slight, but enough to get you into action. Immediately you started towards the coffee pot and bread and jam.

If you are really honest you will probably have to say that as you came to the table you were not wondering if there was enough kitchen help, if there were some in the group unable to come to breakfast this morning, people to whom you could take some food. No, you sat down, and noticing that there was no margarine on your table, you began to look for some on another table. You were taking care of yourself automatically.

I am not saying that this is wrong. Neither does Jesus. It is wonderful that Jesus knows all about us. If humanity could only grasp this truth, we could burn all the psychology books in a good-sized trash can. One leading psychologist recently said that if we took all the straw from the psychology books of our day

what we would have left would be far inferior to the Sermon on the Mount.

Oh, for men and women that would follow the revolutionary psychology of the Man who understood the human mind better than Freud, Alder, Jung, and all the rest put together.

God doesn't say that you should not love yourself. But He does say that you should love your neighbor in the same way as you love yourself. He does not say that you should not have breakfast, but He does say you should be concerned about your brother's breakfast as well. Oh, I tell you this thrills me. I do not know if I am communicating . . . I can only say what Brother Bakht Singh often says when he is preaching: "Well, that is as much as you can get from a clay pot. "

And I know that I do not express myself well many times, but I just pray that the Spirit of God will show you what this revolution of love really is - what it means to obey the second commandment of Jesus Christ daily from the time you get up in the morning until you go to bed at night. Only this will make an impact on such a materialistic age as this one. Our tracts will not do it. Our Bibles will not do it. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another." Not if you have sound doctrine and zeal. No! They will know it if you love the brethren. This is the greatest challenge in the Word of God - to love men as Christ loved them, to love them as we love ourselves, to care for men as we care for ourselves.

Forsaking all

And the only logical outcome of such love is forsaking all! I believe that when a man falls in love with Jesus, it can be compared in some ways to a young man falling in love with a girl he has dreamed about all his life. The day they are married, he transfers his bank account and puts it in her name, he takes out an insurance policy in the name of his beloved. In other words, because he loves her, he gives her all he has.

Some of you are having trouble with this message of discipleship. Some of you are having trouble with this thing of forsaking all that you have. you are holding back, and you have a conflict within you. You have this conflict and find it so difficult to give up your possessions, and the reason is[, is] that your relationship with Jesus Christ is not right. You need to fall in love with Him, and then your greatest joy will be to lay everything at His feet. It will not be painful, it will not be as though something were being wrenched from you - it will be joy .

The man who does not know the joy of giving has not yet begun to live, for it is, indeed, more blessed to give than to receive. It is a revolutionary principle of life that our greatest joys come from giving. It is completely contrary to our flesh. By nature we grasp everything to ourselves and we become the center. But when we become Christ-centered it is just like centrifugal force, like a whirlwind throwing everything outward and leaving Christ pre-eminent, our one love !

"Love thy neighbor as thyself," said Jesus. And on another occasion He illustrated in the parable of the Good Samaritan who He meant by neighbor and what He meant by love. Care for thy neighbor as you care for yourself. That is why I find it hard to eat breakfast without praying for India, why I find it hard to take a piece of bread and a sip of tea without a pain in my heart for those souls who have no food.

We who claim to have the truth, we evangelicals, we Bible-believers, have become hardened to the need of mankind. The Oxford Group or Moral Rearmament has been known to have more compassion on

university campuses in Britain than any evangelical group. Because they were giving a shilling a mile to buy food for the starving multitudes, these fellows marched in a great line from London to Bristol. That's right! I tell you we are a sham. If I said to you, "Brother, I would like you to go and distribute tracts tonight and I will give you a dime a tract," how many tracts would you give out? If I said I would give you \$100 cash for every soul you bring to Jesus Christ, do you think you might study soul-winning a little more? But tell me, who can put a value on a soul?

We need to see where we are before God. Look at 1 John 3:14, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

That is quite blunt, isn't it? You say, "Oh, I am not abiding in death. I am born again." How do you know you are born again? Well, there are a number of ways, but one of them is LOVE. You raised your hand in a gospel meeting. You said, "Jesus, I believe in you." But if you did not go out from that meeting with the seed of the revolution of love in your heart beginning to produce love for the brethren, you were only engaged in a cheap exercise of arms. You were never born-again!

The church is filled - and I say this with a pang in my heart - the church is FILLED with unregenerate but "orthodox" men who have made so-called decisions and claimed to believe in Christ, but whose lives are filled with hatred and bitterness toward their brothers in Christ. It is a delusion - the largest, most detestable sugar coated pill the devil ever gave out! There is no conversion without revolution. There is no conversion that does not produce the need of a loving life, tiny though it be in the beginning, and I believe that this is the message God has given us to declare to the world.

Look at the 16th verse: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." This is how we know God loves us. This is how we know the love of God, the way we perceive it, the way we understand it - He laid down His life for us. He died for us, He did something. He did not sit up in glory and sing, "Oh earthlings, I love [you], I know you are mine." He did not do that. That is what we do. We sit in our meetings and sing, "My Jesus, I love thee," and yet many times we are not on speaking terms with the man in the pew beside us. Any man who can sing that without going out from that meeting to show love in his life has passed through a religious pantomime which is an insult to Almighty God. Absolutely! And, I am convinced that the world will never be evangelized except where we experience the love of God in our hearts towards others!

We are not going into all the technical terms. We will not list the points - one, two, three - how you can experience the love of God. It is quite clear that there are no spiritual pep pills. But what I am trying to do is create hunger. Hunger in your heart to be like Jesus! Hunger in your heart to know this life-changing love! Hunger that will get you so absolutely starved for God that eventually, through knowing Him, His love will be spread abroad in your life!

"Blessed is the man who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, for he shall be filled."

The first step in this revolution is to want it! It is a universal law that when you want something badly, whether it is good or bad, if you continue to crave that desire it will take hold of your sub-conscience mind and eventually you will get it. How many times has it happened that someone has asked you the name of a person and you said, "I have his name right on the tip on my tongue . . . now what is it?" You were motivated to want to know that name. You tried again, "What is that man's name?" And again, "Now what is his name?" And then you laid it aside for awhile. You thought you had laid it aside. But you had fed a desire into your inner being, into your subconscious mind a question, a desire, and the wheels started

going. Ten minutes later, completely without conscious effort, what came into your mind? The name of your friend!

Think for a minute of Charles Whitman, that young university student in Texas who went up into the tower on the campus and began to shoot people at random. This thought had come into his mind many times before. He had even mentioned it to his psychiatrist. But I am sure that the first times it occurred to him he was shocked and thought, "I could never do anything like that." Nevertheless, the thought continued to come to him more and more frequently. It was suppressed and suppressed into his subconscious mind until it finally took possession of him totally and he was powerless against his craving.

This what happens when you lust. Every time you want something that is not of God, you sow a thought. And soon it will result in action and you will reap the harvest of sin in your life. Remember the verse, "And I gave them their request, and I sent leanness to their soul!" Be careful what you want!

Maybe you have a desire you wouldn't express to me . . . or your best friend . . . or even to your husband or wife. Maybe it is new clothes, maybe it is marriage, maybe it is recognition. Perhaps it is something legitimate, if God were to give it to you. But the desire is so strong in you and you think, "Others have it," and the seed is sown in your heart. And then you think, "Why can't I have it?" And the seed of bitterness is sown. And the desire is persistent and you begin to think you can't live without this thing and soon, God will let you have it. But be careful, because you will also get leanness unto your soul.

Brokenness

In the same way I am convinced that if you want a life of love, if you want to be conformed to the image of Christ, if you want to join that remnant of people who are fed up with words, hymns, and hypocrisy, if you want reality and revolution in your life, then you will have it. If you are starved for such a life, you will have it. "Blessed is the man, who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, for he shall be filled."

It will take time. Perhaps you have heard this before and you say, "last year I heard a message like this and I got on my knees and wept before God. I said, 'Lord, I want to be loving, I want to be humble, I want to be gentle, I want to be a servant.'" And now you look back at the past year, and it is not very impressive. Do not be discouraged. What God wants of us is BROKENNESS. He wants us to realize that in our flesh there is no good thing, that we can not love the brethren, that from the time we get up in the morning until we go to bed at night we live a life of utter selfishness, except when God interrupts us. Do you want this? Do you want to know something of loving your enemies? Do you want to know something of being a servant, something of being easily entreated, of weeping for men who are without food and without Christ?

We will never forget a one-day campaign we had in Bombay some months ago, when the Lord had laid it on our hearts to distribute a half million tracts in one day. After have distributed some 400,000 tracts throughout the day, we had a meeting in the evening. As we closed that meeting we said that if anyone was constrained to go back into the streets with tracts, we still had a few left . . . about 100,000! There were several volunteers. I had absolutely no desire to go out that night with more tracts. It was 11p.m., we had started the day at 5a.m., and I had worked through the night before on the maps of the city. I was tired. I did not feel any love tingling through me. And as I started out, I just stopped where I was and turned my eyes upon Jesus. I saw Him going the second mile - I saw Him going up Calvary's hill for me. That was love! It was not cheap sentiment. It was not a letter signed, "I love you." It was action. And I said to myself that if Jesus could go the extra mile for me, then surely He could help me go the extra mile for those others He loved. Love is action . . . "If you love me, keep my commandments."

We went out into the streets of Bombay again, and around midnight I could see for about a quarter of a mile in front of us around five thousand men and women sleeping on the pavement. I've never before such a sight in my life. I had two big bags filled with tracts and for the first time in my life, I went from "bed to bed", giving out tracts!

This world in which we live is a sick world. It is a world of misery and tragedy such as most of us cannot begin to imagine. Millions are sleeping on pavements, starving to death, knowing nothing of the love of God for them. The church sings, "My Jesus, I love Thee." And at the same time 150,000 people a day slip into eternity . And we say we love them. I say we don't. If we loved them with Christ's love, we wouldn't stop until we had, sold a million books and distributed 100 million tracts. And as we did it, our tears would bathe these lost souls. I know too little about it. I have wept little over souls and much over my unloving heart. But I can say tonight before God, "I WANT IT"! You can take all that I have! You can take my family (and I do not say this lightly), BUT I WANT A LIFE OF LOVE! I WANT GOD!

If you can say this, we believe you will have a blessed time! But if your primary desire is Christian service, Christian activity, Christian fellowship, no matter how good that thing might be, I do not believe you will be happy.

Heartfelt prayer

Let us pray . . .

In silent prayer before the Lord, if you really mean it, I want you to cry to Him to teach you to love, to break you of self, pride, stubbornness, that the love of Christ, shed abroad in your heart through the Holy Spirit, might be operative daily, hourly, moment by moment.

Cry to Him to teach you to love your enemy, to love your critic, not in word , but in deed. Cry to Him that you want love, you want Jesus, you want God, for God is love!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-verwer/a-revolution-of-love/>

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