

After Against the Night What Next

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the importance of taking actionable steps in faith after spiritual events and the need for ongoing commitment and perseverance in living as ambassadors for Christ.

Duration: 17:44

Scripture: Psalm 68:5, Isaiah 35:6, Luke 12:48, Luke 14:28, Luke 15:7, 2 Timothy 4:7, James 1:22

Topics: "Missions"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of following up on a revival or deep spiritual experience with action. They quote the Bible, stating that those who receive much will be required to give much. The speaker encourages the audience to share what they have learned and experienced with others, and to get involved in activities that allow them to share their faith. They also discuss the need for balance and grace in our spiritual journey, reminding listeners to pace themselves and not become discouraged when they make mistakes.

Transcript

I'm really glad that you were able to go to Against the Night. I had the privilege of being involved in Against the Night myself last year, and it certainly was a challenging, stretching, and exciting time. Of course, after we go to such a great event, especially when we make some kind of commitment in our heart and in our mind, we often ask, well, what do I do next? And God's put a few thoughts on my heart about some things that we can do next, and I'd like to share those with you.

First of all, I'd like to read from the Living Bible in James chapter 1, starting at verse 22. It says, And remember, it is a message to obey. It is not just something to listen to.

So don't fool yourselves. What kind of person just listens and doesn't obey? It's like a man looking at his face in a mirror. When he walks away, he quickly forgets what he looks like.

But some people keep looking into God's law that sets people free. They don't walk away and forget about it. Such people will not just remember it, they will also do what it says.

Then God will greatly bless them in all that they do. I think we all want the blessing of God, and I know in my own life for many decades, I've had the privilege of experiencing the blessing of God on a daily basis. However, many don't seem to be willing to pay the biblical price of commitment and living day by day in

the power of Christ in order to see that blessing become a reality.

I think of C.S. Lewis, this great famous British philosopher, teacher who was an atheist and an agnostic. Some of you know about his life story. It's been very famous in film, drama.

But C.S. Lewis once said, We have the tendency to think but not to act. We have the tendency to feel and not to act. And if we go on thinking and feeling without acting, someday we are unable to act.

That's been always one of my greatest burdens for ministry, both the spoken ministry and the ministry through music. I just am so ministered to through powerful Christian music and especially often the music of Bill Drake. And yet, as I walk away from the meeting or after listening to the CD, I have to ask myself, Lord, am I willing to put that in practice in my life? If you've listened to the lyrics of some of Bill's songs, you know it's pretty strong stuff.

And probably you have some of his CDs or tapes, and you've listened to them since *Against the Night*. But the big question is, are we willing to put this kind of challenge, this kind of teaching into practice in our own lives? I think it's a great mistake when people think that their whole life is just going to be radically changed through one night or even through a great revival. A lot of people today are talking about revival.

And of course, I love to see revival. But the fact is, even revival and having a really deep experience, a special experience with God, if it's not followed up on, actually sometimes produces a more difficult situation than a person who's never had or tasted that in the first place. The Bible says, to whom much is given, much will be required.

If you receive something from *Against the Night*, then you're going to be required to give something. Maybe sharing something of what you heard with other people. Maybe getting involved in something this summer where you will be able to go out and share your faith.

I think of some of the big events that we're faced with this summer. We're looking for people to get involved in Love Europe. And we'd be thrilled to send more information about that.

It's going to be one of the most unique Love Europe summers ever with such a huge variety of opportunities. The new leaflet produced by our UK office about opportunities for this summer is one of the more unusual leaflets in the history of LM. Some of you who are younger teenagers might want to consider the whole challenge of Teen Street over in Germany, a really cutting edge kind of interactive communicating event for younger teens that year after year it just keeps growing with more and more people coming.

And I just know that's something that could be fun and very, very challenging and stretching for those of you who are younger teenagers. I think of one of the big buzzwords around OM right now is global action. And in Singapore at the main leaders meetings of OM this is a big hot subject.

And global action is going to be OM's new year, six-month year and two-year training stretch program which will take place on the ships, on land and right across the whole world. It's a program for the 90s preparing for the 21st century. And if you're a young person who has made a commitment to Jesus and you're serious about following him, global action is something you need to look into.

At the same time we are absolutely convinced and I'm sure you are as well that radical biblical obedience and discipleship has to start right where you are and that is probably the toughest place. You can get

laughed at, you can get misunderstood, you can pray for someone and attempt to witness to them and then find out that things are actually getting worse and you wonder well how is God answering my prayers and that can be fairly discouraging. But I would challenge you to continue to attempt to share your faith right where you are using often the more indirect approach, not necessarily thumping your schoolmate immediately with John 3 16 or something along that line, but attempting to serve, attempting to love, attempting to understand people.

There are a lot of hurting people here in Britain and in every other nation in the world and we are those who minister healing. The Word of God actually describes us as ambassadors, ambassadors of Jesus Christ and you've been called right there in your school, right there in your college, right in your workplace, you've been called to be an ambassador. That is exciting if you think of the implications of that but in a sense you'll be like an ambassador in a hostile country.

We hear of some places where embassies get blown up and that becomes a major feature on the news and as you're an ambassador of Jesus Christ right there where you are it will not be easy, there will be disappointments, there will be misunderstandings, you're not necessarily going to see immediately large numbers of people turn to Jesus but as you persevere and I think of those words in Corinthians, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. As you're that kind of follower of Christ I believe you will reap a harvest. The Bible says you shall reap if you faint not.

Sometimes young people find their greatest difficulties are right in their own home and they get intimidated by that. That is so completely normal. It is completely normal to have difficulties in your home.

If you make a little greater effort to understand even your own parents you may actually see some bridges built in communication that will be far more significant than anything you can imagine but if you stand in sort of a judgmental way and oh they never understand me or oh why is my dad doing this or why is my mom doing that you actually knock down bridges and you lead the way into creating pain. Parents are human just as we young people are human. Some of you know probably that my favorite book these days is a book called Grace Awakening.

The latest competition to that for 96 is Splashes of Joy in the Cesspool of Life by Barbara Johnson. A book that will just blow your circuits as it's just mainly using humor to communicate the message of Grace Awakening. The message of how to survive through suffering.

The message of just being a little freer in our own spirit. I often have to tell some of my OM people who have this great burden to be radical disciples and obey everything immediately. I say to them hey why don't you just loosen up a little bit.

Just loosen up. You know we're not going to get it all done in one day and no matter how spiritual we are we're still human so let's maybe go out and buy a pizza rather than think we're going to tear down all the strongholds of our town uh down tonight in the name of the Lord. I guess that leads me to say just just this in all that we do we have to seek grace, love, biblical balance.

Commitment is important and I hope that many of you have made a strong radical commitment to Jesus, the kingdom and world vision through your against the night experience. But I now hope you'll follow that up by pacing yourself, finding biblical balance, staying on a strong learning curve, being willing to uh to apologize or repent when you do sin or fail, learn how to bounce back. We sometimes use the word

rebound when you sin when you drop the ball and whatever you do don't get discouraged and as you get into those dark moments remember that old saying never get out of a off a train when it's in the tunnel you know wait until the train comes out of the tunnel there'll be a station there'll be a few lights then you can uh get off and do what you need to do.

We're living in exciting days. We're seeing a great worldwide prayer movement. We're seeing sort of mini revivals uh exploding and popping out in different places.

We're seeing new open doors in new countries. I think of the whole central asian uh situation once all locked behind the iron curtain now open places like Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan. I know some people think they're just new pizzas but they're new nations that we need to be praying for.

That's why wherever I go I try to get people to read Operation World or You Can Change the World because when we pick up books like that they really can help us understand what's going on in the world and when we understand what God is doing in the world it's very encouraging and when we get to understand the nations of the world we feel more global. We feel uh more committed and that is very a very motivating experience. I meet people all the time they say Christianity for them is boring.

This this is ridiculous. Christianity is not boring. Maybe their brand is boring.

Maybe they're playing church but I know in my own life ever since my conversion I don't think I've ever had a boring day. I've had some boring moments. I've probably had up to a few boring hours.

I surely have met a lot of boring people but a boring entire day. It should not be. We are kings.

We are priests. We are God's children. We're building the kingdom.

We've got spiritual weapons. We've got the call of God upon our lives. We have the Holy Spirit living in our hearts.

We have a phenomenal inheritance in Jesus Christ. We don't have any excuse. We really don't have any excuse for following on now from this great event to be the kind of daily disciples that the Lord is talking about in his word when he says if any man or woman come after me let them deny self take up the cross every day and follow me.

How about it? I hope you'll keep in touch with us. I hope you'll keep in touch with our office. I hope you won't hesitate to write if you have a prayer burden or a prayer request or you want more information about how to be more involved.

I hope you'll find some kind of missionary, visionary, Christ-centered prayer fellowship you can be involved in. Hopefully prayer meeting right there in your own church and I believe as you follow just some of these practical exhortations and principles that I've shared, some of which I'm sure you've heard before, then I believe you're going to be a long-term marathon runner for Jesus Christ. The whole world this summer is going to be focusing on the Olympics but I can tell you the living God is going to be to some degree focusing on you and he's wanting you to be a spiritual Olympic runner for his kingdom touching lives this summer and building his kingdom which really makes what they're doing in Atlanta this summer look fairly small.

God bless you. Let's just pray together. Lord I thank you for this chance just to open my heart how I would love to meet all these people face to face and pray with them but will you thank you Lord that we are tied together in a great fellowship even though we may not meet one another and we're asking God that what we received at that great event against the night may continue the rest of our lives and that you will add to it and that we will grow in grace and biblical maturity so that we can be your marathon runner running right to the end of the race.

We ask this in Jesus name. Amen. us if i run out from the battle how could i ever face your son the light for little children for the poor in the east whose lives spill out like water in a barren wilderness i've had peace in my complacency but that season's out the war that rips into my heart is the one that will ravage them father god the creator of the heavens and the earth here i am use this vessel as a tool to do to break my heart bring me tears help this soldier to his knees to persevere at this commission and secure the victory i must crucify my apathy and face the enemy for if i don't offer my life now i surrender to defeat father god the creator of the heavens and the earth here i am use this vessel as a tool to do your work break my heart bring me tears help this soldier to his knees to persevere at this commission and secure the victory pray for the world

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