

Because of the Cross

by George Verwer

The sermon calls believers to respond to Christ's sacrifice by living humbly and serving others in the mission of evangelism.

Duration: 40:51

Scripture: Luke 18:35, 1 Peter 2:24

Topics: "Cross of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, Dave Borman shares his passion for spreading the word of God and seeing new believers come to Christ. He emphasizes the importance of church planting and assembly ministry in reaching the world for Christ. Borman highlights the effectiveness of even the youngest believers in sharing their testimony and witnessing for Jesus Christ. He also discusses the strategy of the year program and addresses misconceptions about the work of OM. Overall, Borman encourages believers to give their entire selves for the sake of world evangelization and to be ready to go the extra mile in sharing the message of Jesus Christ.

Transcript

I'm sorry, but we were just too late to catch the first few words of this address. Jesus Christ took the penalty, the punishment, and the gas, spiritually speaking, that we deserve. The Bible says he bore his sins, our sins, not his, he had no sin, our sins in his body on the tree.

So what should our Christian life be? Our life should be like that young man, who out of joy, who out of thankfulness, came again and again and again in service to the man in the bed. And I believe, young people and friends tonight, that our going out with the gospel is one of the greatest ways to say thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for taking death for me.

Was it C.T. Stott or someone else who said, if Jesus Christ could give his life for me, what can be too much for me to give to him? How true, how true that is. I have something written in the front of my Bible, I would like to read, that speaks very distinctly to me. And I'm going to read to my own heart, by a man named Faber, I believe a great Christian mystic.

He said, Oh Lord, that I could waste my life for others, with no ends of my own, that I could pour myself into my brothers and live for them alone. Such was the life thou livest, self-abjuring, thine own pains never easing, our burdens bearing, our just doom enduring, a life without self-pleasing. This is the life that God

has called us to.

To me it's described, perhaps best in some ways, in a little poem, that I carry around in my diary and which I have to read very often. This little poem, again and again, shows me what the real aspirations of my heart must be. And I believe this will lead to worldwide evangelization.

This is the prayer, it's called the litany of humility. Deliver me, Jesus. Oh Jesus, meek and humble of heart, hear me.

Deliver me from the desire of being esteemed, from the desire of being loved, from the desire of being extolled, from the desire of being honored, from the desire of being praised, from the desire of being preferred to others, from the desire of being consulted, from the desire of being approved, from the fear of being humiliated, from the fear of being despised, from the fear of suffering rebukes, from the fear of being calumniated, from the fear of being forgotten, from the fear of being ridiculed, from the fear of being wronged, from the fear of being suspected. You know, unless we can pray this prayer, I don't believe we'll be effective on the mission field. Because I believe those things are going to happen to us wherever we stand as an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

How we should be ready to pray that little prayer. It continues on the other side and it says, Jesus, grant me the grace to desire that others may be loved more than I. Can you pray that tonight? How we crave love. As we've explained the other night, how we want love, how we want attention.

Can you pray tonight that revolutionary prayer that others may be loved more than I? That others may be esteemed more than I? Can you pray that tonight? That in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease. Can you pray that? That others may be chosen and I set aside. That's revolutionary, isn't it? That others may be praised and I'm unnoticed.

Is that the desire of your heart? That others may be preferred to me in everything. And the last, so speaks to my heart. That others become holier than I, provided that I can become as holy as I should.

Oh, young people, A.W. Tozer hit the nail on the head in a very clear way that we cannot argue with when he stated the popular notion that the first obligation of the church is to spread the gospel to the most parts of the earth is false. Her first obligation is to be spiritually worthy to spread it. To spread an effigy or degenerate brand of Christianity to pagan lands is not to fulfill the Great Commission.

And as we go forth this year, we cannot go forth as missionaries in the full sense of the word. We can only go forth as those who desire to learn this life, who desire to prepare to perhaps someday be a real missionary in the real biblical apostolic sense of the word. We can go forth as learners, as Timothys in the first stage of being Timothized.

And if we don't have this attitude, we know that we'll only see defeat. At the same time, we know that the youngest believer can be used in world evangelism. The blind man whom Jesus Christ healed was immediately used to witness for Jesus Christ.

His testimony was simple. His testimony was clear. It wasn't the four spiritual laws.

It wasn't the twenty-eight principles of presenting the way of love. It wasn't any of the things that perhaps we learn about in a conference or a Bible school. It was the simple word.

Once I was blind, now I see. This is our message. This is what we go forth to tell the world.

This is why young people, even young people only a few years old in the Lord, can go forth under the proper supervision and teaching and be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ. Sometimes even more than others. God has given us as young people an open door to the world.

Wherever we go as students or young people, the door is open. The people are willing to let us in the home where many times the normal missionary would have a hard time. And many times we can open the way for him, and it's happened hundreds of times, thousands of times.

Our work, we believe, must complement, it will never take the place of, but must complement the work of the established mission, more so the work of the indigenous church. God's plan, we believe, around the world is to use the local church as his testimony to make Christ known. The basic strategy as far as I see it in the New Testament, this will come as a surprise to some of you, is not to come sweeping through an area, giving everybody the gospel.

The primary strategy is to establish a local testimony that will in turn spread through the whole area, giving everyone the gospel. Sometimes this takes a time. It's true, if in Barcelona we hadn't spent the last two years planting a church, we could have covered all the provinces.

But we believe by putting that time and seeing that assembly planted, and seeing believers gather together, and working completely with the other assemblies in Barcelona, that in the long run, more people are going to hear about Jesus Christ than if we just sweep through. This is basically the strategy of our year program. Very few people know what OM does.

I have never seen so many ridiculous ideas about anything as I've seen about this work. It is fantastic. What people think that we do, some think we travel in blimps, throwing tracks through the air, believing that any track that hits a town automatically evangelizes the town.

Others believe we travel in our lorries, special devices to shoot tracks far and wide out the windows as we pass through. It's just unbelievable the things I hear. Little do they understand what really is on our heart.

This year as we go out in the year program, what will be happening? In Paris, most of the young men will be working with a French brother to establish a living assembly. In Vienna, the main work will be to follow up among contacts, working with some other churches to establish a living group of believers. In Freisteit, Austria, the work will be to establish a living group of believers.

In Barcelona, the continuation of the assembly that has begun there. In Montevideo, the continuation of the assembly there. In Pomona, there's a continuation of the assembly there.

A traveling team in Spain to go out to already existing churches to help them grow and expand and reach their area for Jesus Christ. In Persia, the problem has come many times in our strategy of who we should work with. God has taken us over many difficulties in some ways, as it is such a complex, complex situation.

That's why our strategy changes from field to field. But even though much blitz work has been done in Persia, it has always been with the aim of seeing little living assemblies born and to work with missionaries who have this vision, to help them. In many countries we are not ready to do this.

We believe it must be nationals. And we believe that until the nationals are raised up, that it is good, especially when we're young, to spread the word of God abroad. This is all right.

This is not the best way. But it is one of God's ways, and He uses it because He's sovereign. We believe in the long run in Persia, it will be the establishment, the helping of others to establish these living assemblies.

In Turkey, of course, you realize that all these years our strategy has been the same, to see a living group of Turks born, to see them going on. The work is not basically literature distribution there, nor in most of the other fields, although that is oftentimes one of the effective ways we use, as well, of course, as our tent making. And in Turkey over the years there's been one goal, to see a group of believers established, and praise God, there's a little nucleus there, the first, practically, first nucleus of believers in the entire nation.

In Trieste, Dave Borman has labored year after year with a passion to see a little living group born in that city. Though the efforts have been difficult, there are a few praised to His name. This is God's way to reach the world for Christ.

It's true, in a summer campaign, many times it is good to spread the word far and near, especially when we have so many young people who couldn't possibly be used in church planting and assembly ministry and things like that. Spread the word out, help the churches do this so they can give themselves to the more strategic work, so they can give themselves to the building up of the assembly, the preaching of the gospel, the edification of the saints. We can go forth.

In India, our one great burning desire, despite many things that take place, is to see living assemblies planted. To unite with those men like Bhaktsingh who have this vision, who are called of God, who seem to have a modern day calling as an apostle, to help, if it's trucks, if it's literature, if it's painting a building, if it's building the church, whatever it is, to lay down our lives and to help this movement spread, get its roots in. At the same time, we never want to lose the vision of the masses.

It's easy as we get the vision and maintain the vision of the local church, God's place for the local church, God's plan for the evangelism out from the local church, it's easy in the midst of that to lose the vision of the masses. Many have done it. What can we say of the millions who go out into eternity and have never had a scripture because we hadn't that vision? Oh, how God wants to give us a full vision, to see local believers established, to see local churches revived, empowered, and given the materials and the manpower and the vehicle power to move and to do the job.

We believe that this can happen. I think one of the unique ways we've seen in India how this happens, some of our teams, even Peter Balin from this assembly, goes and works with the local assemblies. He spent several months visiting and ministering in the existing assemblies.

Prayer is mobilized. Unity of heart is mobilized. Then to Kashmir, a thousand miles away, but not alone.

Not as a band of young men sort of flippantly going out, but a band of young men backed by the prayers of the saints, sent forth by God's men. And this is why these teams many times are effective for Jesus Christ. Simultaneously from the same assemblies goes another team, sent out by God's people, prayed for to Orissa.

No wonder men and women come to Jesus Christ through these efforts. This, I believe, is God's method for world evangelization. And I believe if OM is to be effective around the world, we must be completely

united and working with the local believers.

Many times this will mean even turning our backs on our Western missionary friends. If we must choose between our Western missionary friends and many Western missionary methods which many times do not work, and national indigenous living movements, we must choose this. We don't believe this choice will have to be made.

We pray that these difficulties will not arise, but they do. But as you go forth to Spain, you must identify yourself with the Spanish church. As you go to Italy, you must identify yourself with the Italian church.

You must be as an Italian, not as an American in Italy. If you go to Turkey, you must be as a Turk to the Turks. If you go to the Arab world, you must be as an Arab to the Arabs.

You must be ready to learn the language. You must be ready to learn the culture. You must be ready to literally fall to the ground and die in that country.

It's the only way through. An Indian to the Indians, a Frenchman to the French, an Austrian to the Austrians. Young people, this is probably one of the things that's burning on my heart more than anything else that I haven't mentioned to you yet.

And really, I need another two years to get off what's on my heart. This thing of identifying with the country you go to. We've had such Americans, they arrive in India.

All they can talk about is California. Not in a bad way, not in a bad way, but just they're still living in California. They've got the California mentality.

But the California mentality doesn't make an impact on a Rajasthani who doesn't know California from a boweeble. And I don't think they have boweebles in Rajasthan. But as you go out to these countries, you must be ready to take off your Westernisms.

In India it does mean off in the suit jacket, praise God, and the tie, gone, praise God. But of course it goes a lot deeper than that. Our basic attitudes must be revolutionized if we're going to reach the world for Jesus Christ.

Oh, how easy it is to carry our culture. And instead of spreading Christ, we spread a culture. Instead of spreading the Gospel and speak where the Bible speaks and be quiet where the Bible is quiet, we spread our Western culture.

Our Western way of marriage, our Western way of dress, our Western way of doing so many things. We don't realize that in Austria they don't live like they live in Liverpool. In Turkey they don't eat nor drink nor take their coffee the same way you get it in New York.

Never forget my first cup of Turkish coffee. It was in a Bible society in Yugoslavia. I thought it was going to jump out of the cup.

And there will be many things you face, young people. And if you're not ready to go there and sit down at that table and in the Spirit eat that food and fellowship with that man and identify and like it, then you better stay back. There's still room in Bromley.

Not that those in Bromley are less committed, but you'll be able to live there a lot better as an Englishman. My American friends, some of you who are working in Bromley, you will discover soon if you haven't already that you are a foreigner. You might as well be in the Congo because they don't do things in England like we do in America.

And here you have the boot and the car not on the feet and many other things that you're going to have to get used to. And we have a list, two pages or two sides of one long sheet, giving all the Americanisms that we need to try to slowly get rid of as we live here in Great Britain because this is also, for those of us from other countries, a different culture. And if we come here with all our Americanisms, we come here with all our American ideas, we discover that sometimes we don't get quite as far.

We discover that we often make enemies because this is the way it is. May God grip us with what it's going to take to evangelize the world. A local church-centered strategy, a willingness to identify with a culture, to die to your own culture.

Now this is not easy because we've all been brainwashed. That's right. From little childhood, we've all been brainwashed by our culture.

And I can remember before I could hardly walk being given an American flag. And I can remember being taught the little songs, God Bless America, My Country, Tis of Thee. Little did I ever realize we robbed the tune from God Save the Queen.

Never even knew. I remember when I got my first history book and I was taught about the big bad British and the Boston Tea Party. Taxation without representation.

Give me liberty or give me death. Brainwashed. This might be a minor thing.

These minor things as we go out to the field become serious problems. You've always had the idea that India was mainly a group of backward, lazy people, primitive, living in the jungles. And you get around to India and you have this superiority feeling.

It can be even in the subconscious, it's deadly. The big white chief, poor little Indians, won't work. Won't work anymore.

Won't work. Because today these people have proven themselves as brilliant as any of us. India is sixth in the world in atomic research.

It sells atomic reactors or atomic things that are necessary for atomic research even to places like France. These countries and these people have proven themselves just as brilliant when given the chance as any of us in the West. The age of imperialism, the age of colonialism is gone.

And we must make sure that every inch of this attitude is gone from our lives if we're going to make an impact for Christ in the nationalistic, non-white world that we go to today. World evangelization is a lot more than going somewhere. It's being somebody.

It's not being somebody. Are you ready for this? I wonder how many of us are still willing to say, Lord I'm not ready for Persia. I'm not ready for India.

Though we've only got a week or two before we leave, are there some that realize you're not going to identify with that culture? You love the British way. You love the American way. You love the tea four times

a day.

You know when you get to India, you order your first cup of tea. Some of you, when we Americans make the tea, you just about leap. We forget to put the milk in first or some other thing goes wrong.

We put one too many leaves in or we make it in a glass instead of a cup or some other thing. And this is a major tragedy. You get to India and you have your first cup of tea.

And you have it boiling. Boiling on the stove. Pour all the sugar in.

Boil it up. Put the leaves in. Boil it up.

Boil it, boil it, boil it. They serve it to you. You'd never know it's tea.

What are you going to do? You're going to write home and say, Mommy sent me some tea. It's a minor thing, but I've seen many a British young person in quite a stew without his brew. And all this thing of food is no minor factor in missions.

And we've got to be ready to go out and eat it and love it and believe that we'll live through it. I wonder how many of us really are ready. In the end, you don't have to be ready to go, but you have to be ready to be ready.

If we all waited until we all got ready for this kind of thing, we'd never go. In ourselves, we can't. But are you ready to be ready? Are you ready to learn? Are you ready to bend? Are you ready to stand before that Austrian pastor and do what he tells you to do, even though that's not the way you do it in America? Are you ready to stand before that national leader who you might not agree with him? Maybe you think his sermons are five times as long as you think they should be preached.

Do what he tells you to do, because you esteem him higher than yourself for Jesus' sake. Oh, young people, evangelization is much more than going somewhere. It's much more than getting in a truck and crossing a border.

It's much more than getting a visa and your passport. It's a whole new life. It's a whole new life, unless you're ready to leave the old ways, the old habits, the old customs, the old ideas.

Your own nationalism. How we were taught in Bible school, how the great problem in Africa today is nationalism. The great problem in South America today is nationalism.

We were never told anything about American nationalism. I didn't think nationalism? We don't have any nationalism in the United States. I don't know what we have, but we don't have any nationalism.

What have we discovered as we've gone out on OM? Here in Europe, probably our Americans are the most nationalistic. We carry a subconscious nationalism that makes anything that's come out of Africa look mild. The same also comes out of the British Isles.

And oftentimes, we've got to go, young people, with what this poem describes. Ready to esteem these brothers better than ourself. Ready to submit.

Ready to identify. I'll never forget the first time I had an Indian meal. Sat down on the floor.

Made my, take my shoes off of all things. Wasn't used to taking my shoes off to eat. To take my gloves off, but not my shoes.

They brought the food, waited for the utensils. We're going to eat with this. What are we going to eat with? I heard in Japan they have chopsticks.

Maybe they have shovels here. I don't know what they have. And in my mind, I remember this one particular time we sat, the children were there.

It was in Madras. We're sitting on the floor. Little mats.

Waited for the plates. They brought leaves instead. A little leaf out in front of me.

Another man came behind the leaves with a bucket. Some rice. Another man came with some other yellow stuff.

Boom. Puts that on top. I looked at that.

Nobody told me this before I went. And then the lady, of all things the lady, started digging in with her hands. Rolling in the little balls.

Putting them in her mouth. For three years I've taught my children not to touch the food with their hands. My children smiled and gleamed.

I want to tell you that some girls that have gone into it, it's taken more than a few weeks to learn to eat relaxed with their hands. Not a small thing. We have to be ready young people to just fall into the ground and die.

So many things in these countries that unless we have this attitude, unless we have this submission, this brokenness, this willingness to learn, this willingness to identify, so many things we'll do that'll offend us. Think of a story recently where one westerner on his team was hot. One of the Indian brothers wanted to take a bath in olive oil.

Wanted to bathe himself in olive oil. The westerner, typical, maybe not typical of O.M., I hope not, made fun of him. Oh, going to bathe in olive oil? And I don't know what else he said.

You know that brother was so hurt. Letters got written. It took me, it took Thomas Samuel, it took prayer, it took sessions to just overcome that one blunder.

Is it necessary to be a learner? Is it necessary to have the right attitude? Is it necessary to be ready to learn the culture? To identify with the people? Oh, young people, we have to be so alert to this. I was talking to one of our Italian brothers. I said, what's one of the things that brings a problem with the girls in Italy? He said, well, you see, some of the O.M. girls and the western girls, they go out in the street and they're loud.

And you see, any girl in Italy who's loud, well, she just has a certain kind of reputation. And it's true that many of us from the west are loud. And especially girls from the west just don't add up to what an eastern woman is.

And unless you're ready to learn, unless you're ready to bend and submit, unless you're ready at times to change your dress and to change your hair and to change a lot of other things, you will just be a hindrance to the gospel of Jesus Christ. And you'll bring a reputation to God's work that will hinder, that will hinder rather than help. Young people, the work we're going into is not impossible because of the amount of literature that's needed.

Not impossible because of the miles we need to travel. It's not impossible because of the people to be reached. It's impossible because most of us have not come to that place where we really know brokenness, we really know humility, we really are ready to die to our culture and our background and our western ways and our nationalisms and our idiosyncrasies.

You know, in the Middle East, if you want to really give a man a lot of blasphemy, you don't have to open your mouth. You just show him the back of your heel like that. And you've spewn out enough to have him knife you.

Little things. I never forget one time in India, I let my foot touch my Bible. Boy, you don't let your foot touch your Bible.

Not in many places anyway. Little things. Are you ready for that? You say, well, that's very good for those going to India, those going overseas.

What about those of us who stay back in Britain? Believe it or not, it's the same problem. Many are not being effective in evangelism because of peculiarities in their personality that put people off. You approach them with the gospel, but because you haven't let the Lord take over your personality and conform you to the image of Jesus Christ and smash you down, you discover that people are repelled by you.

People are not drawn to you. And I'm convinced that if we're going to reach 20th century man, we're going to have to be ready to adapt. We're going to have to learn his language.

Many of our favorite sentences that we use in witnessing are pure nonsense sentences to the 20th century man. The word Christ has almost become a nonsense word in Britain today. The word God loves you.

The word love itself is practically meaningless. We're facing a generation of brainwashed people who have been brainwashed with the ideologies of Sartre, Brunner, Bultman, Nietzsche, Spinoza, Kierkegaard, and whose minds are thinking on a completely different level. We are entering the age of despair.

We are entering the age of relativity. Not only in atomic energy where it might be true, but in philosophy and religion. How many of us are willing to learn the language of the men around us? The man in London, the university student, or are we going to continue in our little own ways that we've picked up who knows where, wondering why we're not effective for Jesus Christ? I believe it will take the same kind of revolution to make an impact on the 20th century man in Britain as it will in some ways to reach the man in India.

It will take a revolution in the way we witness, the way we walk, the way we talk, the way we react. It will mean that perhaps at times we'll have to pick up the newspaper and at least know what happened in the morning. We'll have to at least know what a drug addict is, what philosophies of some of these people are.

We don't have to study, take courses in it. We must be concerned enough to know so that the man talks to you about the cup final, you don't sort of look at him as if you were talking about astronauts. Many of us as Christians are very unwilling to identify ourselves with sinners.

Jesus went among sinners. He was accused, he was torn apart as being a friend of sinners. Today we stay aloft.

Our homes are our castles and no one dares enter in without a special pass that's hard to get. And we wonder why we're not making an impact. And today in Britain the evangelical church is over here in a little island, Holiness Island, only it's not very holy.

And the world is all around it and there's very little contact. Billy Graham comes and we all get excited, tremendous, we're rock Britain for Jesus Christ. We have it rock Britain.

There's been a potential shaking, amen, and I'm not, and I'm all for it. But unless now you, nurse, teacher, doctor, factory worker, whatever you might be, are willing to roll up your sleeves and get down among the sinners, bring them into your home, win them, show them the love of Christ, you're not going to reach them. We'll continue this island.

We'll speak, they will not hear. We'll preach, they will not understand because we've built this enormous gap between ourselves and the world. There's a great difference, young person, friend, between isolation and separation.

I believe in separation from every defilement of the world, but I don't believe in isolation. Where I can't invite a man in my house because he's of another class of society, or his feet are dirty, or he might break my favorite vase, or he might break one of my cups if I serve him a cup of tea. So completely contrary to the philosophy of Jesus Christ.

Yes, to evangelize the world, it's going to take identification. It's going to take humility. It's going to take adaptation, flexibility, love.

All these things we've talked about again and again, but in a practical way in the realm of food, in the realm of dress, realm of talk, realm of walk, the way we look, the way we sit. Some girls, if you sit in the Middle East or in India the way you sit once in a while here, you'll start a major revolution. That's right.

And young girl, I beg of you, don't you go to Persia, don't you go to India, don't you go to any of these other countries unless you're ready for a revolution in the way you dress and the way you act, unless you're willing to believe God to make you a quiet, submissive, broken, humble woman, don't go. You'll destroy the work of God. You'll bring bad repute to the name of Jesus Christ.

We've got to be ready to go the extra mile. Yes, evangelization is more than a trip, more than giving out literature, more than preaching, more than any of these things, whether it's in England or in the regions beyond, world evangelization is going to take the giving of one's entire self completely for the other. Can we remember that poem we read in the beginning? May we remember it as we go forth in our work.

O Lord, that I could waste my life for others with no ends of my own, that I could pour myself into my brothers and live for them alone. Are you ready for that? You must be. If we're going to reach the world in our generation for Jesus Christ, let us pray.

Our Father, deliver us from every foe, deliver us from every form of superficiality. God, make us ready to go into these nations and fall into the ground and die to our westernisms, to our provincialisms, to our idiosyncrasies, to our ideologies, to our follies. We might be all things to all men, to Inza, the Indian man, an Indian, to the Frenchman, a Frenchman, to the Italian, an Italian, to the Englishman, an Englishman, to

the twentieth century man, a twentieth century witness.

O Father, bless those that go back to their offices, back to their factories, not to their hostels, back to their homes, that they might be the friend of sinners. They might have a love that radiates and communicates and builds and saves and snatches men from the jaws of death. We might go forth likewise, ready to give our lives for others because Christ gave his life for us.

We pray in his name. Amen.

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