

# Beware of Peoples Pet Doctrines

by George Verwer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, fasting, and humility in leadership, as well as the challenges of maintaining loyalty and unity in a pluralistic society.*

**Duration:** 1:16:48

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 22:39, Acts 1:8, Romans 12:10, 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 4:2

**Topics:** "Pet Doctrines"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of building and helping others, even in the face of potential destruction or opposition. The speaker shares Alfie Frank's testimony about a fire, highlighting the need to continue building despite setbacks. The sermon also addresses the challenges of living in a pluralistic society and the need to adapt the message to different cultural contexts. The speaker mentions a book on inductive preaching that has influenced pastors to change their preaching style, emphasizing the importance of effective communication in spreading the vision of God.

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## Transcript

...for your letters and reports and especially for praying during the recent operation I had. It'll probably be a long time before I'm able to sing hymns. If I'm going to be able to conserve my voice, I can't do both, preaching and talking all day long and also sing hymns on top.

So when you see me in the future, I probably won't be singing much anymore for a while. That's quite an interesting challenge. I have a couple of things on my heart.

I have some things planned and I have some things that perhaps just came. In my attempt to get voice rest, I sometimes just sit and read and think. I've had this book with me for some time.

Is That Really You, God? by Lauren Cunningham. A book that is getting very wide distribution at present in the United States. And I just picked it up and started reading a little more.

Just these words I thought would be just a ministry to us and a challenge. As some of you know, Lauren Cunningham, the founder and leader of YWAM, was with us in 1963 in that great summer campaign. We became very close friends, though we've not been able to keep that going on a practical level.

We do through correspondence and just had a letter from him. In fact, I think he sent this because it says, Blessings, Lauren Cunningham. And this is a very honest book.

And I think it has a message for us at this time. It's what he's learned about guidance. And the summary is in the back section, which I've already studied.

I have a funny approach to books, learned it from my wife. But you may not agree with all of his ideas about guidance, but you can't help but be ministered unto. In fact, I've been made very aware that their ship ministry has been going for 10 years since they lost the first ship, which he tells about very honestly in his book.

That meeting in which they all stood up and cheered that God had given them a ship. And they were jumping around, praising the Lord. A number of things happened, and they suddenly, within a short time, realized that their eyes were on the ship, and that they were proud, and a lot of other things.

And they began to just repent, weep. And within those coming weeks, God took the ship away from them and the deposit, which is a story pretty well known to the Christian public. The story behind the story is not probably known so well, and it's dealt with in quite an amazing way in this book.

But the point I wanted to read goes long back before that, because Warren Cunningham was originally part of the Assemblies of God movement under a man named Zimmerman, a very large denomination. And he went through quite an awesome experience with Zimmerman when he was asked to lead the team they had for summer work with young people. And it was sometime after that, I haven't got the chronology, but sometime after that, this experience that I'm just going to read to you took place, when Warren decided to spend a week in waiting upon God in prayer and in fasting.

Where should I start? The first two days were uneventful. I would get down on my knees and pray, walk around the room and pray, sit down and pray, stretch full length on the floor and pray. There were also lots of leisure for reading my Bible.

But most of the time I was just waiting. I just waited. Sometimes God would speak a word or two, and other times we enjoyed a companionable silence.

It was the third day of the fast before the breakthrough came. The only word I can use to describe what happened to me is surgery. It was like soul surgery.

I was lying face down on the carpet waiting on God. Suddenly a sharp scalpel of conscience probed. Remember Springfield? That's the center of the Assembly of God movement.

Faster than I could imagine, attitudes began to surface, critical feelings and resentment toward my own denomination and my denominational leaders who hadn't seen the vision of YWAM the way I did, especially my brother Thomas Zimmerman. For two years now, since I reported to Springfield after the Bahamas, I had been smarting under that rejection, and in my heart I had begun to deny my own roots. I suddenly saw all the time I had wasted trying to defend myself and my ideas.

That time was robbed from the real work that needed to be done, talking to people about Jesus Christ. Crying, I asked for mercy. From now on I'd speak out in real praise for my former leaders.

Grateful again for them and for my heritage, I let God defend the vision if it was his or was from him. Lying there on the green carpet, I knew that God had heard me and forgiven me. The scalpel probed again and again.

Throughout the day, hour after hour, my pride suddenly loomed before me. I saw the times I had acted for the recognition of men rather than God. Mom's words in my bedroom turned office, dropped into my mind.

Son, if you get proud, God cannot use you. Then God put his finger on sins of the mind, sexual fantasies. As each sin of thought or attitude or action came to my mind, I confessed it and asked God to forgive me and help me to turn away from it.

When I knew the soul surgery was over, there was one more thing to be done. I found stationery and a pen and began the first of several letters I knew I had to write making things right with people. Dear Brother Zimmerman, it was excruciating, but that night I settled back into bed with a brand new feeling of cleanness.

On my desk in the little room was a tidy pile of letters. The one on the top was addressed Springfield, Missouri. Let's just have a moment of prayer, especially for youth with a mission who God has mightily blessed and who have been through tremendous traumas and who again, even at this moment, are in great trauma in their ship ministry, though that's only one of a great network of ministries.

Lord, we thank you for the power of the printed page. We thank you for Lauren who came in our midst in such a humble way and just took charge of the literature warehouse in the summer of 1963. Many didn't even notice it.

We thank you for those times together and the fellowship that YWAM and OM has been able to have now for over 20-some years. And we pray for them in their hour of need. We pray for Lauren as he's got so many responsibilities, for Don Stevens, Captain Applegate, Floyd McClung, many others who we know.

And we thank you that as parallel movements we have the privilege of laboring together in world evangelism. Lord, search our own hearts in these days. Help us when this conference is over to get along with you in prayer and fasting.

Help us even now in these woods to really be honest and open and to allow you to put the scalpel to any roots of bitterness, any unforgiveness, any duplicity, anything that's not sweet with the fragrance, the personality and the life of your son Jesus Christ. Lord, we trust you that you will speak to us and you will be honest with us as we wait upon you. We will not confess for the sake of confessing.

We're aware of situations where people confess things only for the sake of seemingly being able to confess something. But Lord, especially as tomorrow we spend time around your table in prayer, sharing, may we be willing and ready for the scalpel of your Holy Word. Lord, we thank you for the wealth of knowledge we have.

Keep us from spiritual gluttony. That by your grace we may take these books, these tapes, this truth that so burns in our hearts and give it out across the world generously with pure and clean and proper motives. For we pray in Jesus' name, amen.

I really long to be able to have more time with all of you, sharing different things. And I'm thankful when I hear of some of you that actually listen to a Verwer tape and write me maybe with a question or a burden or something you may not agree with. As you know, we now have a jumbo series, not all Verwer, a mixture of Nigel Lee and Hans Strom and George Miley.

I don't know how we missed getting Peter Maiden in here, but we'll have to produce just the Maiden series alone one of these days. But believe me, I have found an enormous, unbelievable interest and hunger in the material that's on these tapes. And I hope that you will at least try to listen to some of it, contextualize it in your own situation, use what you can, throw out the rest.

Now, I'm going to... You know, it's ten times harder to speak now to O.M. than it was 15 years ago. You know, you're all so much wiser and smarter and you've all got formal theology and eschatology and you've all read the management books and you've got a lot. And I can see how these pastors in America with 16 PhDs sitting in their congregation get a little nervous.

And I've been listening to a number of the pastors who have lots of PhDs sitting in their congregations. Very interesting. But I'm not going to be, by God's grace, intimidated tonight and just open up and give you a triple header and trust that the Lord will use it.

First, I want to share something I shared at the area leaders' meetings that immediately everybody demanded photocopies of and that I shared with the new recruits' leaders' training the other day. It's called The Paradoxical Commandments of Leadership by Howard Ferguson. I think this will really minister to your hearts.

It's really helped me because... You know, I think one of the things that can intimidate us the most and make us so vulnerable to extremes is our own failures. Many men at moments of failure have committed sins they would never, never commit when they were motivated, from immorality to many things. And I think this will just help keep your motivation up in the midst of a battle.

You don't have to agree with everything. It's not going to become policy. I just throw it out.

You can chew it over. Number one. Ten commandments.

People are illogical. You probably discover that in these days. Unreasonable and self-centered.

Love them anyway. First commandment. Number two.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Do good anyway. Three.

If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway. Four.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway. Five.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway. Number six.

The biggest man or men with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men with the smallest ideas or the smallest minds. Think big anyway. Seven.

People favor underdogs, but they follow top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway. I know sometimes those who are not having English as their first language get a little bit confused on this.

Especially when they know that the Verwer family now has a dog. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Think of Alfie Frank's testimony about the fire.

Build anyway. Nine. There are some people really needing help that may attack you if you do help them.

Help them anyway. And ten. Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world the best you have anyway. Now, maybe you'll say that needs to be brought into balance. You can, of course, work on that in your leisure time.

The second part. See how short that was? That wasn't too painful. The second part is just the outline of this message that the Holy Spirit seems to be using that I first gave on the ship.

I think it was on the ship. On why it is becoming increasingly hard in our culture. And many pastors are finding this true.

Many Christian leaders I've talked to. To win the loyalty of people. Now this is very, very important for O.M. because O.M. has been built on relationships, on loyalty, and yet without double talk and manipulation and painting a picture in which people feel that really O.M. is the only thing they could ever work with.

Lauren, in another section of this book, brings out when God just brought them and YWAM to their knees and they confessed that they thought they were the greatest spiritual movement in the world. And God just humbled them and they just repented about that. But I don't have time to give this message.

I'm not even sure where copies are, but if you write perhaps after all the hustle and bustle is over we could trace one down. Some feel we should put this into print. I don't know if that's going to happen.

Let me just give you the outline. Why it's so hard to win and maintain. It's harder to maintain than win, oftentimes.

We see so many groups. People jump. Away they go.

Two years later, they're divided. The divisions that I have come across again this year in churches are just staggering. Just staggering.

Anyway, these are fairly simple things, but let me share them. Number one, the wide range of strong emphases among God's people today. This is so true.

If you read Christian periodicals, I try to follow very spasmodically about 25 Christian periodicals, 30, 40, depending on... I dropped a lot of them in the cutback magazine subscription. Then I borrow some of them. For example, the unbelievable controversy raging right now in America about Robert Shuler.

I mean, it's amazing. One man. I mean, he's got a whole theology member.

Robert Shuler, theology. And Christianity Today just interviewed him. And their article, I'll tell you, is a lot more positive than the attacks that I've been listening to before that.

And just to try to find out the truth on any of these things, it's not so simple. It's not so simple. And I just stand amazed at the range of controversies the church and mission groups.

We saw this at the APMC conference, the Association for Church Missions Committee in North America. The number of areas where top missionary leaders are absolutely at loggerheads. One writes a book.

If you wait around a year, another one writes a book against it. Quite amazing. Television, videocassette, even the audio cassette, has greatly changed things today.

And we live in what people describe as a very highly pluralistic society. And each one of us here, though we like to believe we're loyal to the OM vision and the way that God has led us, we are all tremendously influenced by a wide range of things. And I think, personally, it's good.

And OM has opened the door to that. The books we introduce you to. The endless different guest speakers that come through OM.

And I think it's a great mistake when groups, I know a group, a very strong group in America right now, they pull back, close the doors. No guest speakers. Read mainly the books that come through the leadership.

And they go down the road of neo-exclusivism. Of course, when we see God blessing mightily neo-exclusive groups, sometimes we think, well, maybe we're the ones up the creek. I forgive the expression.

But, at least for me, it's too late to go down the neo-exclusive road. We departed from it two decades ago. And I, even despite the hypnotic effect of Buck Singh and others, just decide that that's not the way for Operation Mobilization.

I personally would rather see it just fold up. So, people will be exposed to tremendous ideologies and theologies. And you may be surprised at times by this unity that does exist within OM.

Differences of opinion. I know some of you are new. I, after 20 years, am amazed at the unity that we still have in the light of so much that's blowing around in these days.

But it is a factor to keep in mind with the young people. There's no way we can get this army of young people to move for God and do something specific because we want to do that without working on winning their loyalty by your friendship, your love, and by the various ways that, according to the Bible, are appropriate. Number two, I need to not get carried away on each point.

Just give it to you. That's not easy for me. But the reaction to the cults.

Jonestown. A lot of freaky things that are taking place. Bob Mumford was one of the leaders of the modern charismatic movement who led the group that was always accused of the pyramid leadership, discipleship thing.

There's an article in Buzz this month about the Bradford House Fellowships who were really under attack by many other churches. Quite a balanced article. And these people, in the last couple of years, I read a lot of their material.

Kip Mumford's letter called Plumline. They have been talking more and more about balance. They have acknowledged mistakes.

And I wrote something that's really interesting. Bob Mumford, Plumline, May, June, 83. Unfortunately, many who seriously want to believe in the reality of the charismatic phenomenon are often unable to do so because of our extremes, our silliness and confusion when we fail to keep the balance.

Interesting. And today, of course, people are overreacting to the extremes they have seen. And there are things that when people initially see a movement like Plum, certain types of people, they are turned off just like that.

And as we talk a little later, as we get to the main message on communication, you'll see a little more. Number three, many semantic problems. Different things have different meanings to different people.

I never got in much to fishing, but I have been very interested in streams in the church. And following these different streams, following, for example, what's been happening lately to the Le Brie Fellowship, following the ongoing drama of Bill Gothard and his movement, following the Fort Lauderdale people that Mumford is linked with. I guess somewhere or other I've studied and followed at least 50 different streams.

And in different countries you have whole new streams, even rivers. And it's quite amazing. And the problems that come because different words mean different things to different people.

Revival to a Southern Baptist in Georgia would not mean the same as to a Welshman in Swansea. And this creates a mass of possible miscommunications. Number four, many extremist books, many total answer books, tapes.

My, you know one of the big tapes going on now is Exodus 2. Have you heard that tape? Man has prophesied that all the Jews are coming out. They've got the buses ready in Finland. They've got the food ready in Germany.

People are coming out. There are people in OM who are caught into this. I don't know.

Who am I to say? I am trying to run a little investigation on it right now. I just asked Oscar if he could get over and look for those buses. There are just so many things going on.

And of course, it seems that people for some reason feel that if they could influence George Verwer a little bit, somehow, you know, I would influence all of you and you would influence the whole Christian world and everything would change. It's a generalization but you get the point. And so the endless tapes and books, many of which you can't sell because we're not into selling some of this kind of material.

But, you know, we can be very naive about what these young people have been taught before they walk into our lovely conference and now are declared an OMer. And I had the most critical letter recently of some of our people, I won't tell which field, out taking meetings. This man thought, is it our major teaching to send the newest, greenest, youngest, ignorant out to meet with the pastors and take meetings in the churches? Now he is a bit of a critical fellow.

But it's interesting, isn't it? What people believe in the books they've read. Number five, of course, super spirituality. Number six, the cynical society.

That's the other side of the coin, isn't it? You know some of the anti-Christian things that are perpetually coming across the media. And then we wonder why some of the people in the town who are trying to plant a church think we're a cult. I remember Dr. Schaefer trying to tell us to have more pre-evangelism.

And I believe he's still right. Number seven, now let me just say on that cynical society point, that no matter how you move, someone will complain, gossip, or drop a cynical remark. And it makes it... And because there have been these leaders who have tried to dominate people, I believe it is becoming increasingly more difficult to lead a team of people or a church in the work of God.

And many, many pastors have shared that with me. Number seven, disobedience to parents and the fact that many have never learned submission. You know, I'm sure I wasn't the world's best son, but you know,

I submitted to my father.

You know, I come from, I guess, that old-fashioned generation. My father was boss around the house. And I just learned to submit.

One of the best things I ever learned when I went to Moody Bible Institute was submit. I didn't like it. But some people today have never had an experience of submission, even to their own parents.

Number eight, very important, Satan hates reality, unity. He hates to see people loving one another. Becoming like-minded as we're exhorted in 1 Corinthians 1.10. Number nine, pride.

The Bible says, Proverbs 13.10, by pride come contention. Number ten, idealism. And we attract very idealistic people in O.M. And these people we are discovering are not easy to keep happy during the year.

And we are getting interesting feedback from some of them about their leaders. They expect their leaders to do evangelism. Expect that he might know how to win a soul to Christ.

The average recruit, let us understand this well, cannot comprehend what we are doing here in this room now. Some can, praise the Lord for that. And they don't see us here anyway.

Maybe if they saw us, they'd think, wow, look at this guy. Tremendous gift of sitting there and being silent for two solid days. This is the kind of man I could really relate to.

They don't see us here. And there seems to be a passing of a buck going on that somehow we feel there must be some younger, new set of people that will be the example to all these young people. We are the family people.

We don't expect them to see us. But of course, if you look around for the numbers of people you need in a movement this size, only a few single people or even a large number of single people are to set the example that young people can see with their own eyes. I think you are going to discover it's just not enough.

And then 11. Very basic. Someone, when I only had 10 points, they came to me and added the 11.

Our own sins and failures and weaknesses. That, of course, I think if we respond properly, brokenness and love, we can make up. Often great loyalty comes as people see our weaknesses and failures and sins and how we deal with it.

Believe me, there's a lot that we could say on that. And I hope you'll take it to heart. Now, let's just get to this little message I told you about if I can find it here in my little notebook.

I'm often in a terrific tension to know what to share. And I'm just trusting that this is what the Lord wants and that other things that I have on my heart will come through other brothers and other sisters. And I feel very strongly that if you only come to this conference, and I know sometimes that's all you can, then you miss, generally you miss what God wants to give us here in this month of waiting on Him. This conference was built on the concept that prayer was the most important thing in the work of God.

And it used to be a couple of hours minimum prayer every single day. And we can't jam everything into this weekend. And we've never claimed that this weekend is primarily for prayer.

And sometimes that praying and waiting upon God is done best in your own countries with your own people and in a more restful situation. But we do have prayer. We're going to have prayer tomorrow night.

We're going to have prayer throughout the rest of the conference and days of prayer. And waiting on the Lord together and I just think that's so important. And maybe you can't do it this year.

But in the future if there's any way, if the Lord provides the finance, and generally it doesn't cost so much more to stay here a few extra days. The bigger expense is getting here and going back. Try to plan to be here a little longer.

I find many of the young people and junior level leaders are really craving time and fellowship with people who are now only a name on a paper. Never an easy answer to that. But there are some answers.

Spread the vision. God has given us a vision. I don't think we need to defend that.

An OM is known all over the world as a movement of tremendous vision. Pioneer movement. That's got 37,000 graduates and that's given the gospel to 300 million people and seen many, many thousands come to know him.

I think when you're an OM, especially if you're reading some of these books, you're more aware of your failures than you are of your victories. And again, we have to repent and rise up and press on. But I feel it is a time in the light of things that many people have said when we consider just some of the practical ways that we can spread this vision.

Forgive me for using an old text but those words ring in my mind that the Lord gave He shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the uttermost parts of the earth. You know, in spreading this vision there's still nothing stronger than the word of God. And when we use the scriptures and we teach the biblical basis for missions from the scriptures, the Holy Spirit uses it.

And I just use Acts 1, 8 again and again. Don't be intimidated in your preaching. So many pastors I talk to are intimidated because we've got Charles Swindoll on the television and we've got this guy and that guy and here's this pastor, you know, this little congregation.

He feels he doesn't have a great preaching ministry. I believe we're going to see a great turn in the kind of preaching that we get in some places in the coming years. We've already seen it if you study preachers as I try to do.

There's a new book out now. It's an absolute bombshell. It should be required reading for every preacher.

It's on inductive preaching. And it's interesting as you go through that book you discover that some of the methods God taught us years ago about communication are now considered the way to go in really getting through to the TV generation. It's considered one of the top books on preaching right now.

Inductive preaching. And I was with a fundamentalist pastor who generally always up to now has used the old didactic and that form of preaching. I know you probably want definitions of some of these terms.

You'll have to read the book. But he has been really persuaded by this book to change his preaching style. Interesting.

God has given us a vision. God has given us a message. God has given us experience.

Can you imagine the total experience of the people that are sitting in this room? And now we've got to put feet and we've got to put legs on that which God has given to us. I think largely this has to be done within each country. We can learn from one another but our countries are unique.

Pakistan is not India. India is certainly not Turkey and Turkey is not France. And New Zealand is not England and England is not America.

We can learn through our cross international contact but we need to study. We need to study word. We need to study the people we're trying to reach.

You know the way I listen to people? In many of my meetings I ask for feedback. Honest feedback, especially negative. I have read through over one hundred feedback, one thousand feedback papers from people who have been in my meetings responding to what I've said.

Most of it is positive but there are those negative things. There are those miscommunications. And you also ought to learn more from the negative.

So if some of you want to find out a little more about what people are thinking, why don't you just ask them? Why don't you ask people when you're sharing in a meeting, even your testimony, to take out a piece of paper. You won't always feel free to do this. And feel free to ask anything you can even say about O.M. or about what you've said.

Or I often put a prayer request. People want to be prayed for. We're going backward if our main burden is always just to get people to pray for us.

If you don't have an intercessory realistic ministry in praying for others, then I wonder what your credentials are for asking them to pray for you. The Bible says do unto others as you would have them do unto you. And I find that when I legitimately tell people I want to pray for their requests, and I pray through every request I get in paper, the response is amazing.

And what I have learned about people in the past few years since I've been doing this more is quite staggering. Anyway, let's move into some specific points. I've written these things down and some of them you can even throw out some of them.

It's not a problem to me. Take what you can. Because the last thing I want you to do is to think that you are to go and communicate the vision the exact same way that I would.

Every one of you is original. Every one of you, through what you study, what you read, and what you receive, have to develop your own original package. That doesn't mean there won't be things in that method of communication from others.

There will be, even subconsciously, without knowing it. And that makes it difficult because again, if someone says to you, oh, you sound just like George Burrough, that's probably enough to kill you for life. You know, I had somebody, when I preached at Moody years ago, say something along that line, you're trying to copy this man of God because he just about blew me away.

Because that kind of thing sometimes is quite strong. I put number one, we sow the seed and we trust God to bring in the harvest. And I really believe that if we could give a little greater effort in OM to getting the message out, the tapes, the books, the cassettes, the materials that we have, I believe we would see

something happen.

Especially if it were bathed with prayer. Real, consistent prayer. I'm going to move on from there because that's something we are doing.

There's no area in OM we can't improve. No area. We are doing that.

We need to do it more. But let's move on. Number two, we present a definite burden and a definite vision and it's not the same for each one of us.

It's not the same. My first burden is not world missions. I tried to do that.

I can do that. It's not me. My first burden when I face people is spiritual health.

I want to see them walking with Jesus. The first thing isn't whether they come on OM or not. If you get on OM out of God's will it can be a cul-de-sac.

And I know that Peter Maiden is this way. I know that Nigel Lee is this way. I know that many of you are this way.

Your first burden is to see people first of all being born again and don't presume everybody in front of you is converted. Secondly, to see them edified and built up in Jesus Christ. There are others you may not feel you have that anointing and that burden from the Lord but you want to be able to present in a very down-to-earth way the work of OM or the work of world missions or a vision for China or a vision for India or a vision for the Middle East or the Muslim world.

There's terrific scope for a whole range of burdens. I hope you don't think this is too spiritual but get that burden from the Lord. Get that burden from the Lord on your knees in the Word and in your reading of course.

And when God gives the burden and you then transfer that burden and share that burden people will see it's real. And I've had people say well I didn't agree with that OMer but I could see it was real. And that sometimes goes a long way because enthusiasm is often contagious.

Again, let God bring the results. There's a line in our manual leadership manual and I've appreciated the renewed emphasis in reading that. And there's a set of five tapes now based on the leadership manual especially dealing with the goals and aims of Operation Mobilization the last couple of chapters the last chapter of the manual.

And you can have a set of these tapes if you listen to them and we're going to as the Lord enables perhaps use them in our leadership training. By the way, one of the greatest contributions OM has been making in Britain has been the leadership training conference for younger disciples, younger leaders. This year, how many came to that? Seven, eight hundred people were turned away.

And that was very, very exciting. So the third thing is the best publicity is a holy life. Therefore we shouldn't be too surprised if sometimes a particular ex-OMer or even OMer is not turning his town upside down for Jesus because holiness often isn't the order of the day and it doesn't come overnight or through just getting an OM summer campaign.

I don't think there's any shortcuts. Number four, I've said under number four no shortcuts and I've underlined the words hard work. I never forget being with a group of OM leaders many years ago.

The Holy Spirit was dealing in a very honest way and I said to this group of leaders because so often the evangelical church has been very, very much from a particular segment of society and therefore unable to understand where so many millions actually are screaming, crying, praying, hoping that somehow they can get a job. Of course, some people quickly write off all these unemployed as people who really don't know how to work. Many of them don't want jobs.

That may be true for some but not for all. And I believe God wants OM to continue to have a work ethic. I think some people should have a year off and often when they've been doing the job of two men for a long, long period of time I think it needs to be kept in balance because I'm not sure how many of our prayer partners working in offices and factories and farms and some of them pretty hard are going to be able to take a year off.

It's a difficult area, isn't it? I wonder how many have thought of taking a year off to do a tough, secular job. Maybe with the miners in England they could use some love and help or maybe even within the work. I remember once challenging a leader to take a year off from his primary vision and work in the warehouse in Bromley with the boxes and the books.

And it did a lot for him. I remember the testimony of Lindsay Brown who after being the big leader of the CU in Oxford went to Lagos and was mainly working in the holds with the books. Now one of the outstanding Christian leaders in Europe.

Hard work, no shortcuts. Plotting the extra mile. So many times I've seen the extra phone call the extra letter, the extra visit.

Going off to the hospital to visit a sick person going off to a nursing home to visit an elderly prayer partner going off to a relative's house when you didn't want to and you wanted to do your own thing and you were tired has produced some of the greatest breakthroughs and victories that I've seen. Number five, in God's work and in the work of spreading the vision we have to continually take our motives to the cross. And in these days, especially when we are under financial pressure false motivation can easily come in.

So easily come in. And we need to acknowledge it and let our hearts be cleansed and then press on. Number six, we need to get to know the harvest.

We need to get to know the facts. Some people can't even share from the pulpit the most basic OM facts without making mistakes. I once saw a slideshow one of these homemade last minute slideshows miscellaneous slides the person is not present and I just couldn't believe it.

You know, slides of Japan and you're talking about Saudi Arabia slides of... it doesn't seem to matter where the slide is from Anyway, I realize sometimes you can use a different slide to say something that's not necessarily wrong but many of this man's facts were just up the creek OM becomes bigger and bigger the amounts of literature grow beyond all proportion a thousand becomes a million ten is a hundred and I get introduced in meetings with such statistics about OM I just wonder that's why sometimes I know some of you feel that I'm a... is it a stickler? is that a word that we still use? when I emphasize that you know, when we count the numbers would you tell how many are children and how many are adults? because otherwise it just gets out that OM has two thousand workers now I know

you feel your little five year old is a real worker for Jesus but it would be better if you know, we could just try to at times define things we need to get to know facts there are so many books this means that in our ministry in our presentation we need to write things down especially statistics forgive me if I've led you astray sometimes in these things but it is you know, I write down far more than people might imagine and I just feel it is important that we know the facts the facts, the figures, the statistics when we get information from the Arab world about security things that we cannot say about the Arab world that just becomes top priority in our thinking you know what's really hurt me in OM in the past couple of years I'll be really honest seeing one leader belittle another

leader I'm sure they don't mean it but let's all of us beware of belittling a leader at his moment of mistake or his moment of failure or his moment of blunder or when he comes into the meeting maybe with two different shoes on I don't think all humor is belittling by the way I'm not saying that but we need to edify one another encourage one another believe the best and when we hear someone speak if we really have something on our hearts we feel he said that is really out to lunch and really wrong rather than gossiping it among your little group because at times in OM we have our little groups we have our closer friends God knows how human we are how weak and how vulnerable we are what a wonderful thing if you go to him and lovingly you know, what you said there I'm not really sure that

was exactly the truth I thank God that Dale Roton has done that to me over the years I'm being perfect but I tell you in the situations that I speak in if you even err a quarter of an inch I tell you you're going to get it because those kind of meetings are just that way and there are people there around so we need to improve in that area and sometimes when we're in doubt about something it's better not to say it number seven get to know your own get to know OM get to know OM better I've been encouraging leaders to spend more time in some of the other offices of the work you know, I realize you already have more to do than you can manage but I don't think we have done that yet and the number of leaders who even just pass through some offices I know at times in Bromley some of our people

have even been offended and I of course always defend the leader who passes through working behind a desk and some of the chore for a particular leader and passes through and sometimes he doesn't seem to have time even to say hello you can be sure Jerry Davey hasn't told me to tell you this but I've been amazed the lack of interest in OM and the fantastic work that STL has done for all of us it's just old hat now and I just don't know where we would be if it wasn't for that service arm of the work I use that perhaps in the way of example but tremendous things are happening I only touched the tip of the iceberg this morning tremendous things are happening this thing is blazing like a prairie fire and we need to get to know our own fellowship by the way you don't have to travel so much to

do that if you can that's good reading through those reports and prayer letters and reading them through at least a second time and just praying through these things yourself I find it such a challenge to pray through the prayer letters and gathering up a file in your mind in your bible in books of these powerful stories that people tell of people being saved on a lamp of answers to prayer let's not over react to some of the silly stories perhaps we once told the laying on of hands of that vehicle in Italy in 1962 or the gasoline that was provided that could be an answer to prayer in an empty tank in Spain in 1963 I never did get totally convinced on that it moved me down cynicism lane one step further but if we over react to some of the stories remember that they came down the hill in

France and the team didn't have much to eat I noticed that Lauren Cunningham used the famous story of the fish jumping out of the sea in Greece I was there that day the funniest thing the only visit I ever had to

Anastasis was the day the fish had just jumped out of the ocean onto the beach and I had some of those fish on the Anastasis and I noticed that's one of the main chapters in this little book but you know it's good to have some of these stories it's good also to find out if they're actually the truth because one person from YWAM shared the story with me and in that story because it had changed the fish jumped out of the ocean onto the ship and you see it just gets a little bit more miraculous each time but a far a far greater a far greater danger is when we overreact to some of

this and we're no we're no longer excited about some of the answers to prayer that God has given we feel well it's really sort of O.M. coincidences again in play or something else and some of the some of the days when people used to really jump up and praise the Lord about some miraculous provision of funds some of us now after living in the financial pressure that we've been in we sort of you know we sort of look at them when they're testifying about this great breakthrough they've had with the Lord providing their funds but you know God is still answering prayer and He is providing and unusual things are happening and I hope you'll take a little extra effort perhaps a notebook perhaps some time study so that when you go to speak in a meeting the last thing in all the earth anybody is

going to say is that you were boring I mean that should be the anathema for any public speaker I mean even worse than making a mistake I'd rather have a guy make a mistake even give wrong statistics anything but boring and you know I admit I'm an extremist you know I really can relate with this fellow Steve Taylor ministering with me at the Christian Rock Festival in Chicago if you think I move around on the stage this guy made me look like an elephant and he's an outstanding rock singer and a communicator that the young people just go bananas by the way that's Keith Green's definition of being a Christian bananas for Jesus talk about semantics and Steve Taylor jumped off the stage and he broke his ankle and they whisked him off to the hospital I do believe he appeared at Greenbelt last

week I don't know on crutches if you don't know Steve Taylor you obviously aren't into the American Christian music scene we won't judge you as being a prune and outdated because of it you know we could learn a lot from people like like Keith Green in the area of communication but that's something for perhaps another message number eight the place of prayer specific prayer do you pray for all your prayer partners that should just be basic it's as basic as having cornflakes on the summer campaign now I my wife and I have quite a few people on that list now not all of our prayer partners because some of them never got on the list how many are on our list now Vera may know about fifteen hundred people and that's only been started in the last few years because my original prayer letter became

the international monthly and only got into my head that I needed something and of course it's not my wife insists a prayer letter but a Verwer family newsletter what a joy even though that's a lot of people to pray through that list to just immediately dash off letters you know I know what people say the moment I mention that oh yeah guy's got his secretaries type six thousand words a minute I mean sure he can but you know I'll tell you a postcard written with your own hand will sometimes go further than a dictated letter and some of you don't have secretaries and some of them don't always appreciate typing all your personal letters anyway though I think for leaders it's impossible to separate personal from spreading the vision so I would hope they would help you type them but there's

just so much can be done but prayer for those people for their needs for their situations specific prayer and when you write a person this again is just so basic when you write a person saying you've just been praying for them and how are they doing tell me do you think that means anything to the average guy how many letters do you think he gets each week saying I'm praying for you I'm interested in you let me know

what's happening people are so bombarded with people give me I want send me when someone writes and shows interest I'm in the midst of reading another book right now about communication and I have it over there and this book emphasizes that today if we really want to get somewhere in communication it has to be as personal as possible a vast percentage of people are not reading

very much at all that doesn't mean we're not going to use books or tracts because of course we are if there's only 20% reading let's go for them but I tell you to pick up that phone and talk to a man and ask him how he's doing did he get the prayer letter and what's his situation I was I phoned the pastor of one of the girls very low support and I got some phone numbers before I left Europe and I phoned that pastor and it was a church where it looks very unlikely they're going to support her denominational situation and I didn't talk at all about finance but when I asked him if I could pray at the end of our conversation for two things I said can I just pray for two things for you one for the church and one for you personally you know what he asked can you believe that he said would you

pray that we'd increase our missionary budget didn't say anything about that and I really believe that we have I'm not saying we can't change our policy and improve of course but we have now enough freedom to get on with the job and then leave the results with God and I hope that we will do that and that it will involve specific prayer for others number nine to love serve and encourage people try with all your heart not to see dollar bills and pound notes in people's eyeballs it can really put them off on the other hand you're a human being if you're under tremendous financial pressure and you're talking to a millionaire who could slip you a check for a million as quick as he could sneeze you know you're going to have a few ripples in your financial diaphragm but somehow somehow we can we

can find the balance and we can commit ourselves to people the rich the poor those who give those who don't give we love people that's the principle that O.M. was built on I was reading one of the first prayer letters I ever wrote just reading it the other day that you know I asked people to pray for the ministry we had in a garbage dump in Mexico O.M. has been a movement that has for all of its history a bias toward the poor the forgotten the neglected the lost but sometimes we need to realize that that man who may be rich is more poor than the poor and we have been guilty of overreacting and running away from people simply because they were on the side of the tracks with the big houses and the big car and the Rolls Royces and we were afraid if we gave them a copy of True Discipleship it

would be the end of the line well one of my closest friends who has poured many tens and tens of thousands into this work when he first had True Discipleship the book so the myth goes he tore it up and threw it away I think he later changed his view I don't know maybe when they changed the cover but to love people to serve people to encourage people true personal friendship a great indictment I had against the Christian leader who was an O.M.er now an X.O.M.er a brother came to me and he said you know this guy said so many tremendous things to me about how he loved me appreciated me and all this and he went and he said to me at that point I haven't heard from him in three years we've got to be careful what we say it's all great to say how we appreciate people and this and that but then if

we forget them somehow something rings wrong now they need a message on spiritual balance the human factor judgmentalism you know but I don't have them here I have you here and we need to be straight we need to be straight let's say what we mean let's mean what we say let's not expect people to read between the lines and I know that's a battle and I'm a learner myself number ten our burden is the whole counsel of God don't you find that people just push one thing to bug you maybe I'm people just always push the same thing and I know and I've made funny mistakes there are situations where I don't

talk about O.M.

I don't talk about O.M. and I don't talk about missions it's not the time God has got to open the doors I take an interest in people's children take the dog for a walk mow the lawn just chat just shoot the breeze don't come down heavy on everybody you meet you know are you an Acts 1.8 disciple? are you into the prayer cards? where's your map? there can never be a substitute for true honest down to earth love and friendship that goes a long way especially in the world today and I think that's linked with us sharing and living and preaching the whole counsel of God number eleven we're interested in other people churches organizations God has led us again this year in our leadership training conference to take a large offering give it all away to some other group and as we go into churches

and want to communicate with our churches and we put these things down in memos and we need to re-read some of these tremendous memos we must take interest please please get this today rather than just thinking how can they become interested in us and what we're doing it's just basic it's very important and then number twelve these are some very practical things really making use of these tapes and slides films books you know the people I've talked to obviously a good gospel tract has not yet been written I find so many people who say well you know there's not really any good gospel tract yet and then sometimes you hear the same thing about books we don't want to kill any creativity keep pressing on to write the best gospel tract and if you can write stuff better than Charles Colson and

Charles Swindoll some of the books I've been into lately you're welcome to just blaze the trail but as for me and my house we will be distributors of other people's material you know I just find it so exciting to take some of these great books the Lord gave us the privilege this summer of selling thirty two thousand dollars of Christian books sometimes I had to weep it was like taking candy from children but I believe God uses books I believe God uses books we've got a warehouse of books in Waynesboro that is staggering we've got free literature we hope we can have better free literature more free literature but I have seen for twenty eight years the Lord using some of the silliest things some of the silliest things so my philosophy is never all the eggs in one basket you're from many

different countries go to it get your strategy if necessary have a retreat together on this subject get your strategy get your materials and go to it and next year let's hear what you've done and I believe we'll hear things that will cause us to jump up on the chairs and praise the Lord number thirteen get people involved people want to get involved with OM they want to help they want to give their used cars some I believe even want to give the new cars I haven't met any of them yet but I'm sure they're there people want to help people want to help you know one of the greatest problems in OM the lack of initiative people aren't going to call you they're not going to call you do you have any problems in your family that I can help you with you need to get the word around and there are many

ways to do that without breaking any great OM policy and get yourself in trouble with the powers to be or the finance committee or whoever else is carrying the club in the next decade get people involved there are many ways to do that I'm taking what I need a week for and giving it to you in an evening esteeming the local church OM has been given much credit in this area it's won us many friends let's keep working on it it takes a high degree of sensitivity we need to understand these different streams and different denominations we don't go running into a brethren assembly or sitting in a Pentecostal church and sometimes people thanks Dale I needed that number 15 we need to follow up letters phone calls remembering people's birthdays making sure your have a letter or a card at their



Get on your face about this. Stop thinking this is the other man's job. The task is huge, the doors are wide open, but the Macedonian calls are coming.

And you and I are called to spread this vision on every level. It will also vary from country to country. Let's spread the vision in Germany in a German glass.

Let's spread the vision in Canada, not in a USA way, but in a Canadian way. And there's quite a difference. This means, of course, a lot of study, a lot of wisdom.

Praise the Lord for the wonderful way He can use us, sometimes even when we blow it and fail. That never ceases to amaze me. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for this time. You know that this is a seven-day course that we've crammed into a little more than an hour. Help us now to go and do our homework.

Help us to go to our own countries and our own teams, and to really develop a strategy for spreading the vision, for communicating powerfully the message of your word, the holiness of life, world missions, your whole counsel. Different people we know will be led to emphasize different things. We thank you for that.

And we're trusting you that as we honor you in doing this and in providing the information and the vision and the materials that you will hear from heaven and you will touch people's hearts to join us. We need workers to send of their sons and daughters, and you will put it on the hearts of others to become intercessors, and you will raise up prayer groups because there's no greater need in this area than for more prayer groups that really do pray. And then you will touch some hearts to give, and to give funds that will astonish every one of us.

We come with a spirit of expectation. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Coffee is now available downstairs. Let's try and be back at 9.30. And we won't attempt the agenda on your paper. We won't move into new grounds at such a late hour.

But we'll go back over unresolved issues earlier in the day and try and bring them to some conclusion. So if you can be back at 9.30, it'll be for no more than one hour. One hour maximum, commencing at 9.30.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21148.mp3>

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