

Bibelschule Brake (German)

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon calls for total commitment to Christ and emphasizes the urgency of engaging in world evangelism through prayer and literature.

Scripture: Romans 8:28, Romans 11:33

Topics: "German"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of taking action in response to the preaching of the word of God. He encourages the audience to not just make emotional decisions, but to engage their minds and wills in following Christ wholeheartedly. The speaker shares a personal experience in Germany, highlighting the discipline and punctuality of the German people. He also mentions a humorous incident where an older gentleman in the audience wanted the sermon to end by holding up his wristwatch. The speaker recommends a book on dedication and world evangelism, particularly for young people, and promotes the use of Christian literature in spreading the message of the Gospel. He concludes by reminding the audience of Jesus' call to action and challenges them to imagine the response if he were to ask them to put mud on their eyes, referencing the biblical story of Jesus healing a blind man.

Transcript

I had an experience here in Germany that I've told people all over the world. Because all over the world, German people are known for being disciplined and punctual. I was in a meeting in Germany, and because OM had organized the meeting, I felt free to speak as long as I wanted.

And the young people were listening, even if it was past an hour and a half. But one older gentleman sitting in the back, I think, was getting nervous. He wanted to go home.

And I was preaching about dedication and world evangelism. The need to forsake all to follow Christ. And about that time, he held up his wristwatch.

As a signal that I should finish. And I saw this watch in the back. And I said, praise the Lord, here's a man donating his watch for world evangelism.

Now the fact that many of you laugh after I say that in English, indicates that you either know English or have mental telepathy. And we hope that you'll take a look at our large display of English books, over 200 different books. Now in the morning, I talked about this fantastic book.

But I realize that this book is really more for older people. Who know how to read. And I have another book, especially for young people.

And it's one of the strongest books on the subject that we're speaking about tonight. This is the title. And I strongly recommend this to every young person here tonight.

You will remember Michael Griffiths as one of the main speakers at the large missionary conferences in Lausanne. Again, I notice this book is a little bit expensive. And so everyone who buys one will give you another book free.

Praise God for the ministry of Christian literature. God is using literature all over the world. This little book is in about 40 languages.

Calvary Road by Roy Hesschen. And tens of thousands of people have had their lives changed through that little book. We know God uses tracts.

There was a man going door to door, just giving out tracts. And at one door, nobody came. But he heard somebody inside.

So he knocked again. Finally a man came and opened the door. And he took the tract.

Slammed the door in his face. The man went back, this is a true story, to that house. And the man welcomed him.

He said, come up to the top floor in my house. And there was a little box. And there was a rope, a noose, over that box.

And he said, when you knocked on my door two weeks ago, I was standing on this box and was going to hang myself. But through your little tract, instead of standing on this box, I knelt next to it and gave my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. And I could tell you hundreds of true stories of how God uses Christian literature.

So I hope you will visit these two different bookstores. And get some of these great books. You know, when we speak about dedication.

To Christ. And to his word, as we are tonight. We have to include the challenge of world missions.

Because that was the final command that Jesus gave before he ascended into heaven. Now we don't have that much time. So I would ask you to get one of these little sets of prayer cards.

And just read through these cards. About how many nations still do not have hardly any witness whatsoever for Jesus Christ. And perhaps buy one of these maps of the world.

I noticed one in Doyle's office. I was very encouraging. And you can get one of these maps of the world.

At a special price. So you can pray more intelligently. People say, well where should I put this lovely map? The homes here in Germany are so beautiful.

They're like little mini museums. And you know, where are you going to hang this map? Well, one place would be in front of the television. So we'll let you think about that as you look at this map for the next... Jesus said, pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he'll send forth laborers into the harvest.

And that's what we want to do. And the decisions we make tonight. And we need to remember that Jesus preached for a decision.

He was calling people to act. He told one man to put mud on his eye. Can you imagine if at the end of this message, I asked you to come forward and put mud on your eye.

I'm sure that would make an interesting newspaper article in the local paper. Englishmen puts mud in German eyes. But Jesus called men to action.

And tonight's message is a call to action. But I want to tell you this right in the beginning. Because I'm not here to firstly appeal to your emotions.

An emotional decision is not enough. I'm here to appeal to your mind. And I'm here to appeal to your will.

And it is my prayer that many tonight will will to follow Christ with all their lives. This happened to me 29 years ago. I know, of course, I don't seem that old, especially if you're sitting way far away.

But I do have a 23-year-old son. Born to my wife and I in Spain. When we first came to Europe.

And God is so merciful. And I just believe that tonight is an important night in your life. Let us again turn in our Bibles to Romans chapter 12.

I did not know that Doyle had it on his heart to read those verses. But they were the verses God had put on my heart before talking to him. Let us just look at the first two verses again.

But first let us pray. Father, this is your holy word. We are your people.

We thank you for your love and grace and mercy. We thank you for all you're doing around the world. And for what you've been doing in these two days together.

And we believe that for many this is an hour of decision. We have thought about these things for a long time. We have seen them in your word.

Help us, Lord, by your grace to make decisions and to take steps of faith and action at this time. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Just read those first two verses in German. Let us pray. Now these two verses come after eleven great biblical theological chapters.

I hope you'll study those chapters. Not only I hope you'll study them, I hope you'll memorize some of the key verses. When I became a Christian, I had many struggles in the mind.

And I found that memorizing the scripture was a way to help renew my mind. And I think of Romans, chapter 8. It's one of the chapters that I memorized or almost memorized as a young Christian. And if you look at the last five verses of chapter 11, you'll have five of the greatest verses in the Bible about God and the greatness of God.

And as we think of theology, we long in our hearts for God-centered theology. And I think it's so good when young people have the opportunity to go to Bible college. I, as a young Christian, did not know what Bible college was.

All their life, my parents dreamed to send me to university. And I went to university. And I was getting very satisfactory marks.

But during the first year of my university studies, more and more, I felt that God was leading me to become more knowledgeable about his word. And I made the most important decision in my life next to my conversion or my marriage. I left university in the second year.

And I went to Bible college. Now, among the people that we mixed with, if you said you were going to Bible college, Bible college, what are you going to do in a Bible college? What kind of degree will they give you? What kind of job will you get? And so, it was not a popular decision. My parents had just come to begin to know Jesus personally.

They had become religious people. But they had not yet experienced the joy of full surrender and personal salvation. How I thank God for my parents.

That even though they didn't understand me, they somehow stood with me in that decision. That led me back to Mexico. Where I studied in different universities in two summers.

And where the work of Operation Mobilization was born. And I believe it's a great privilege to study for two or three years the word of God. Because this book is the most important book in all the world.

We believe it is God's inspired word. And as it says in Colossians, in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And during those two years at Bible college, I got to know God.

And I got to know his word better. And it just made an enormous impact on my life. And it has never failed me these 23 years since I left and got married and have been ministering around the world.

Then we come to chapter 12. An enormous shift suddenly these heavy practical exhortations. And I hope you'll learn that chapter.

But the beginning of this practical reality is an act of total commitment to Christ. It's presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. It's very much linked with that verse we have already spoken about, Galatians 2.20. We spoke about the crucified life.

Now we're speaking about presenting our body as a living sacrifice. And it speaks of, in verse 2, not allowing ourselves to be conformed to this world. One Bible scholar said, don't be squeezed into the mold of this world.

Now many of you, as we saw, are under 25. I love to read books. And I have to confess, during the first part of the meeting, because I don't understand German.

And I didn't want to take up a valuable seat. I stood in the corner reading a tremendous book. And this book is written for those over 60.

Now I'm in the so-called middle years. And there's a new book in English called The Midlife Crisis. And when I became 40 years of age, I picked up this book.

I was feeling wonderful. And as I read this book, I got more and more depressed and discouraged. All these things that are supposed to happen to me now that I'm in the midlife crisis.

But it is my experience that no crisis is too big for Jesus. And I'm so glad now that I'm in the middle years. Because when I first came to Germany, I was only 21.

And I preached a very strong message in a church. It didn't go over very well. I think it was in Wuppertal.

And people said, oh, he's so young. What does he know about life? Where is he from? And when OM was born, many Germans went on OM, even in that first year. Oh, there was so much criticism.

Because we were so young. And there was a theology in some of these churches. God does not use young people.

Young people are to sit and to listen and to do what they are told. And they certainly should not go off to France or Italy. We all know those people don't love Germans anyway.

So there was much criticism. So now when I come back, I can preach in the same church as you. And they say, oh, he's got much older now.

We can listen now. Oh, he has three children. It's really quite funny.

But God uses people of all ages. And though my special burden is for young people to commit their lives to Christ, that God can use you, I don't want to exclude anybody. And I've seen people in my meetings, even 70 years of age, standing to their feet and committing their lives to Christ.

And more and more older people are writing to our office in Mosbach in Brussels wanting to join Operation Mobilization. Some of you know my testimony that I was from a non-Christian family, but an elderly lady prayed for me for three years. And that led to my conversion.

She's now over 80 years of age. I just got another letter from her. She's still praying.

God is using older people. They often are the prayer warriors. They often have more time for prayer.

And if you don't have a ministry, a vital ministry of prayer, then perhaps tonight God is calling you to a deeper commitment to Christ, which will result in a powerful prayer ministry that will connect the whole world. Now some young people are afraid of strong messages about dedication. Because, of course, young people, they want to have a lot of fun.

There's nothing wrong with smiling. In some churches, you would think it was a sin to allow a smile on your face. I don't believe that Jesus Christ was a sad person.

And if you read the teachings of Jesus, you will see the beautiful balance that our Savior had. And it's a great mistake if we think following Christ with all of our heart is some kind of Christian purgatory. And we're no longer going to enjoy life.

We'll become very serious about life. And we won't have any more enjoyable times. This is a great mistake.

And because of this, I want to speak to you about the reasonableness, the logic of total commitment to Christ. You see, the Lord is not going to force you to do anything. And the Lord isn't going to change you so that from now on you will feel miserable.

Our God knows that which is best. God wants the best for you. And he knows better than we know what is really best for us.

This is very important. The mercy of God. The love of God.

The righteousness of God. This is a foundation for our being able to trust him completely with our lives. And we must understand this is a reasonable, logical road that God is calling us to.

Now let me give you some reasons. Few people are writing these things down. This is very encouraging.

Or maybe they're writing to their girlfriends. I don't know. In the OM conferences, we see them writing.

We're never knowing what they're writing. But here are the reasons. First of all, all that Christ has done for us.

That's wonderfully outlined in Philippians 2, verse 7. We won't look at it. Christ becoming a servant, becoming a man and giving himself for us. It's so logical.

If Christ gave his all for us and now we are saved. We're on the way to heaven. It is only logical that we give our all to him.

And secondly, the need in the world. Before coming to the meeting, I was listening to the news. And there was a newspaper commentator speaking from Beirut.

And you could hear the bombs falling behind him as he was speaking. There are over 20 places right now in the world where there are wars or small revolutions going on right now. And as we look at the world situation, if we really believe God's word, then we want to commit ourselves.

And if we really believe God's word, then we want to commit ourselves. We want to do something before it's too late. For God, for his kingdom, for helping others.

1 John 3,16 is a very important verse. It says if we have this world's goods, we see that other people have needs. If we don't do anything about it, how does God's love dwell in us? Please look at that verse when you can.

So strong those words have been to my heart. God has given us so much. In England, here in Germany, we have Christian books.

In English, we have 40 different versions of the Bible. And we have so much. And yet we look out across the world and we see many people do not even have their first Christian book.

In many of the countries where I have been living, many do not even have a New Testament. I've just come a few months ago from the Soviet Union. Even many Christians don't have a Bible or a New Testament.

In other countries where I've lived, it's even more difficult than the Soviet Union. In Saudi Arabia, the Bible is an illegal book. We were traveling through Saudi Arabia in this same 15-year-old bus that I'm living in right here.

And they found a Bible. And they had to put it under special customs lock and key. In other parts of the world, like India, there is complete freedom to preach the gospel.

We praise God for German young people getting involved in India because there's a new open door, especially for students. Some of you know young people who have gone from OM out to India. There's no time to elaborate more about this.

The need is so great. Whether it's the physical need or the spiritual need, both demand that we commit ourselves to the kingdom of God and the work of God with all of our hearts. Anything less than that is a subtle form of selfishness.

We basically say by our practical lives, I want to live in my world. My house, my car, my garden. As long as I have my three meals and my six cups of coffee or England, 25 cups of tea, then what do I care about the rest of the people? And one great man of God said something that on Sunday morning you can see the difference between sometimes a Christian and a non-Christian.

And sometimes on Sunday in some countries you can see that little group going to church and the rest are on the golf course or they're in their garden digging up their plants. But on Monday you can see no difference at all. We return to the basic materialistic lifestyle of our unconverted friends down the road.

The world situation demands a deeper commitment to God and to Christ and to his kingdom. The third reason this commitment is so logical is the teaching about the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now this is a difficult subject and different Christians have different ideas.

But almost all true Christians believe that Christ will return. In fact the Bible speaks more about his second coming than it does about his first coming. And when we think of this great truth we want to make use of our time.

The Bible says redeem the time for the days are evil. To me this is one of the great challenges. It came to me when I was 17 to give all my time to God and totally revolutionized my life and eventually led to the birth of this world.

Now even if Christ does not come immediately many of us will be dead within the next 10 years. And when you die that's the second coming of Christ as well. Because you will suddenly be in his presence.

And if you are a believer in Christ you will be evaluated, you will be judged for what you have done as a believer. If you are not a believer in Christ the Bible says you are on the broad road it may be a religious road but if you are on the broad road there is no hope. There is outer darkness and what the Bible calls hell.

And this is very important. I never found this very easy to understand. But the more I studied the word of God the more I studied the teachings of Jesus Christ I found it more difficult to understand heaven than I did to understand hell.

That a holy righteous God would have mercy on me that is such a motivating factor in our lives. And then fourthly, the fourth reason are the commands we find in the Bible. Now there are many good books that you can read.

A book is only a sermon in print. We're not just reading verses here together now we're preaching the Bible. That's what they did in the New Testament.

And we are commanded to preach and to teach the word of God. And a Christian book is just a sermon in print. That's why every day I try to read firstly the Bible and then secondly some strong sermons.

I myself, I need a lot of strong messages. I'm sort of a natural backslider. I naturally easily go back downhill in my Christian life.

And so every day I need a touch from God. That's why almost every morning for 29 years I've started my day for an hour or two with God on my knees and my Bible and prayer. Now maybe some of you are different.

Maybe there's some you just automatically become more and more and more victorious in your Christian life. You don't go back easily. You just go uphill for God.

Now that's amazing. And if there's anybody like that I would really like you to autograph my Bible. I have a special page here in the back.

I put for the autograph of hypocrites. Because the fact of the matter is nobody is like that. If you are living a real Christian life you know what it is to battle in prayer, in witnessing, in demonstrating the love of Christ, in handling problems and criticism.

You know what it is to battle against discouragement. There was an evangelist named D.L. Moody. Even a secular encyclopedia even a secular encyclopedia said he depopulated hell by two million people.

He was a mighty man of the word of God. And he started the Moody Bible Institute. And he would always emphasize the need for being filled again and again with the Holy Spirit.

Once somebody said why do you keep saying it's necessary to be filled again and again? And he just looked this person in the face. Here is a big fat man who said because I leak. I have leaks in my Christian life and so I need to be filled again and again.

And I find it so important to read books and to spend time in the word of God. And I don't just read the newspapers. I pray through the newspapers.

And as I read about a certain war or a certain country or people starving I pray. Then sometimes I cut out the page. And I send it to the O.M. leader in that country and I say do something about this as soon as possible.

That's why we have O.M. teams right now among those refugees who have come out three million of them out of Afghanistan. Not only preaching the gospel to them but helping them with their tents helping them in their physical needs as they are in great suffering those people. Now there are many verses I would love to look at.

But the time is late. And I have another opportunity in the morning. But there are many strong verses in the Bible.

For example again and again Jesus said if any man come after me let him deny himself. Take up the cross. And follow me.

In Matthew, Mark and Luke same words. And let's be honest. Unless we're willing for the cross and to die to self we'll never live for Christ.

We'll just play little religious games. And we'll just get enough religion to try to salve our conscience. But we will be deceived.

Because the only Christian faith we find in the New Testament it's a living faith. It's a loving faith. It's a dynamic faith.

And it produces action. Changing lives, changing churches. And sending men and women out even to save and help others across the world.

And many many other verses. Don't take my word for it. Many of you will never see me again.

I haven't come here with any false motivation. I'm not getting paid to do this. This is my life.

I haven't even got a bank account. So what would I do with the money? And I haven't come here just to talk about operation mobilization. Not that that would be wrong.

But I come here because I believe that God is alive. And for 29 years I've seen what God can do in people's lives when they commit themselves to Him. Now let me just give three other reasons.

The fifth is the reality and the joy of this full surrender. This is the secret of a happy life. Not ha ha ha ha happy.

But a deep sense of purpose and conviction that God is alive. And joy that runs on and on and on. There was once a clown and he went to a psychiatrist.

But he didn't tell the psychiatrist where he was coming from. He poured out all of his problems. The psychiatrist said you must go down to the circus and you watch that clown and you will feel much better.

And the man said I am the clown. Oh my how we need to face God's word. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is joy.

Not just playing around. Not just doing the things that we think are so interesting. Some of those things you can still do.

It's not a sin to play sports. Many of the things we do are not sinful. But doing them too much allowing them to become little gods in our lives so that there is not self-control and moderation then it becomes a snare and it becomes a sin.

And then number six the love of Christ constrains us. The Bible says if Christ gave his life for us we should give our lives to him. Do you love the Lord Jesus? That's been the greatest need in my life.

Just to really get to know Jesus. To read his words. To walk with him.

To think about him. To let him be the controlling person in my life. And that's the biggest thing over these last years.

Not me. Oh, I'm getting old. I'm running out of energy.

But I discover when I go to God he renews that strength. And the secret is Christ living in us. And then the last reason is found in the book of Luke chapter 17.

You know what that says? It says after you do everything that you're told to do you're still an unworthy servant. What a strange teaching. You mean I work for Christ? I give everything I have to Christ? I leave my friends and my country and my loved ones? And I spend my life out in some villages in India or Africa? And then at the end of my life God says you're an unworthy servant.

That's very strange. But you see the Bible says we are bought with a price. When we were yet in sin Christ died for us.

He gave his precious blood. And when we come to Christ we are forgiven. We're cleansed.

We're put on the road to heaven. We belong to him. So if he tells us to do something and we do it that's no big deal.

That's just a normal Christian life. Missionaries aren't special people. A lot of young people they're waiting for some emotional missionary call.

They'll be waiting all their life. Because oftentimes there's no big emotional call. Many of our workers who have been out there 20 years they speak the language.

These are longer term experienced people. They've won hundreds for Christ. They never had a great missionary call.

No, they committed their life to Christ. They made a full surrender of their life to Christ. And they were ready to remain at home or they were ready to go.

The Lord led some one way and the Lord led others the other way. He leads us. He guides us.

But it isn't firstly emotion. It's the mind. It's the will.

And the church is involved. And other Christian leaders are involved. Because we are all one body.

I want to ask you as we come to a close. Are you 100% committed to Christ? Can you say that you have presented your body as a living sacrifice? You have put your hand on the plow as Jesus spoke about? And by his grace you will never turn back. Whether it's Germany or India.

Whether it's Austria or Afghanistan. Whether it's in a secular job or it's preaching the gospel 10 hours a day. You belong to him.

You're bought with a price. And it's an act of your own will. Because created in the image of God you have freedom.

And he will not force you. Have you done that? There may be someone in this great meeting. You've not only never experienced this.

But perhaps you've never even started. Perhaps you've never experienced salvation which is the beginning of all. And you've never known the complete peace of forgiveness of sin.

The joy of being indwelt by the Holy Spirit. By the love of God. What do you think about this? It's the most important decision in your life.

What will you do with Jesus Christ? You've got to answer that. I believe God has brought some of you here. That you may find this so great salvation.

He loves you. He gave his life for you. But he will not force you.

You must make the decision. Let us pray. All across the meeting I'd like us just to be praying for a few moments.

I believe there are some who need to make an open commitment of your life to Jesus. Either the first time for salvation as you trust and believe that Christ has died for you. Or perhaps with many others a recommitment of your life to be a hundred percent to go anywhere he wants you to go.

And to live this kind of life of love and faith that we've been talking about in these days together. You've seen that you can't do it in yourself. But I believe as you commit your life to Christ with all sincerity as you present your body as a living sacrifice that God will fill you with his love, his Holy Spirit.

And you will become more of a true disciple in his kingdom. We know that making an outward commitment as I'm asking you to do is only the beginning. But we have to begin somewhere.

Because so easily we hear a message and leave the meeting and speaking with one another and we forget it all. So I want to take this moment as we're all praying that if you'll make this decision this commitment or this recommitment to Christ and his kingdom then I want you just wherever you are as an act of faith and an act of witness an outward expression of an inward transaction I want you to just quiet to stand up as an act that you're believing God. For a greater work in your life and a deeper commitment to Christ.

If you're already standing then I'd like you to put up your hand. Most people are sitting. So if God has spoken to you to your mind this is a time for your will.

You don't have to be looking around. Let's be praying. But if God has spoken to you you want to make this Romans 12.1 commitment then I want you to just stand up right now.

Some have already stood. God bless you. Just remain standing.

Just pray your own prayer as you're standing. Maybe there's a special burden. Maybe a special worry.

The Bible says cast every care upon him. He cares for you. He's not calling you to some punishment or some purgatory but to a life of joy and purpose and power.

This is a moment of decision. Christ has spoken and you must now respond. God bless you.

Anyone else anywhere in this great room if you're already standing against the wall you can just put up your hand. The main thing is your heart. God bless you and you.

Different ones. Young people. Any age.

This may be the door to a whole new revolutionary prayer line. Ever know what God plans for the purpose of the person who takes a deeper step of faith. So it's not just for young people.

Anyone. God bless you. Let's continue in prayer.

Some are wrestling with this. Maybe you're not accustomed to this kind of invitation. I don't always do this but I've had many people write me especially from Germany and they said thank you George for giving me an opportunity to stand up and demonstrate that I was following God all my life.

If you want to make the same commitment remaining seated, that's fine. We want no false guilt. We only want conviction by the Holy Spirit.

And I believe many of you will be greatly helped by this simple step of faith. To stand and to look and to allow me just to pray for you instantly. Anyone else? Before we close the meeting in prayer.

God bless you. I know there's some other people that are just very close. Let me just say this one word.

Faith. It's not what you feel. It's not what you're thinking.

All of that's involved. But are you willing to trust God with your whole life? Because he knows best. Anyone else? God bless you.

Continue. Praise the Lord. And even as I pray if someone else wants to stand up I won't see you.

But God will. Father, you know our hearts. You know that some of us stand in fear and tremor.

Perhaps we have done something like this before and then we failed. But we thank you, Lord, that we've seen today that you use failures. And we know you have forgiven us and so we forgive ourselves.

And we will not be discouraged anymore because we're going to stand on your word and we're going to do your will. And we're going to go where you want us to go and do what you want us to do. And we know it'll be a way of love and peace and encouragement.

So our God, we stand before you to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to be your servants whether it's here in Germany or the ends of the earth. We have seen the reasonableness and the logic of this way of thinking and so by your grace we take this step and we'll give you all the praise and all the glory. And Lord, if there's someone that does not yet know you personally as Savior fill their heart with faith right now that they may know they are forgiven and that they are part of the kingdom.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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