

# Cd Gv231 Discouragement on the Mission Field

by George Verwer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and dealing with discouragement in Christian work, and encourages believers to persevere in their service to God by rejoicing in the Lord and seeking His strength and guidance.*

**Scripture:** Habakkuk 3:17-19, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Missionary Work", "Overcoming Discouragement"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the challenges and realities of missionary and Christian work. He shares personal experiences of witnessing the failures and shortcomings of Christian leaders and missionaries. The speaker emphasizes the importance of pressing on in difficult situations, spending time in the Word, and practicing faith over feelings. He also addresses the issue of discouragement among believers, acknowledging the world's problems and the need for compassion and action. The sermon highlights the need for understanding and supporting those who may be struggling in their faith.

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## Transcript

Well, it's an emotional experience to come back to Butwal. I flew into Bombay where my wife and I had been living for four years, the summer of 1968, and to discover that my name had been put on the blacklist. They put me back on the plane and it landed in Bangkok.

It didn't take me long to decide that Bangkok wasn't the place to be since I was supposed to be in Patna. So I flew to Kathmandu. I'd been praying for Nepal for a number of years.

One of our trucks around 67 or so came up with a pile of educational books and to Kathmandu and had a phenomenal exhibition that later eventually caused us to have an educational book work here in Nepal for about a decade. But at that time I was just trying to get together with some of our leaders and it was either that year or the next year I met some of them here in Butwal. I remember because they were working on the power project.

The very beginning days here for some people. I met a Swedish lady at the meeting yesterday morning at church in Kathmandu where I was ministering at one of the Nepali churches who reminded me of the leaders conference we had here at this very guest house in 1974. Between 69 and 70 my wife and I lived

in Kathmandu because we couldn't get a visa to India and we held training seminars for Indian brothers and sisters and then we moved down to the ship Lagos and spent six months a year in various ports of India.

Then that no longer seemed to be expedient. We ended up going into coming up here to Kathmandu to meet with leaders and in fact, we've been up every year for the last four years. Usually in Kathmandu.

Four years ago, we were here in Butwal mainly at the church. And of course had great privilege to minister together with many of the Nepali believers. But it's a special challenge to be back here in the guest house.

I might just explain that. Conference is all taking place in Gorakhpur. Every day there'll be a group of about 15 people just coming over here just for a fellowship.

There's no big conference going on here. We just finished 10 days of intensive leadership conference. We start with our subcontinent leaders, leaders of our work in Pakistan, which is our fastest growing field and then Bangladesh.

Then our Indian leaders. That's all over. So the hardest part which turned out to be a great blessing is over and I'm just here for 10 days to get to meet some of the troops.

We can't bring everybody up to Kathmandu. It's a little bit of a journey. We have over 300 full-time personnel in India, internationals and nationals.

So we felt this would be a good year just to meet some of the ordinary men and women. Some are leaders, but not necessarily. Many of whom I have never met.

In fact, all 14 brothers here today, only one or two had I ever met before. We've been praying for each other. Some cases for four or five years.

So it's a very special day. We went on a walk together, about eight kilometers round trip. I had my first cold shower, I think I've had in a long time and I must be really slipping.

Not having cold showers, but I enjoyed the one here this afternoon. When you're skinny and you take a cold shower, you feel it much deeper than if you have excess weight. But it is a joy to be here.

I have prayed for this work quite often, both for the national churches here and for the work of the Technical Institute. We just really appreciate what you've done over the past years. Quite a change of personnel here over the many years that it's gone on.

So it's a joy to be here. We hope that our short stay can be a blessing. I'll be ministering, of course, to Nepalese mainly next weekend.

We just had three very exciting meetings in Kathmandu. I last year had a series of meetings there as well in two of the churches. And I never cease to be amazed at the response.

These are meetings with mainly all Nepalese through interpretation, of course. But it is exciting to see the growth of the church throughout Nepal, at least since I first came here in 1968. A lot has happened.

We thank the Lord for it. I gave three different messages in Kathmandu this week. I don't know if those tapes are available, but there are English Nepali tapes available if any of you are interested.

This is an evangelistic message I gave last year to a lot of students in Kathmandu. Why I am still a follower of Jesus Christ, which somehow the Lord chose to use a special way. I gave a similar message to Afghan Muslim refugees and also received quite an overwhelming response.

These message tapes actually sell at a very low price. I think it's 15 Nepali rupees. But don't ask us what the prices are on our music tapes.

We brought these just a few from the West for those of you who are addicted like me to music and are willing to pay outrageous prices. We don't set the prices. In fact, we even give you a discount.

But with Nepali rupee conversion, they're a little expensive. So you can see 15 rupees for those. I won't even quote the price on the music tapes.

We have brought some other books mainly from Kathmandu. Some of these I think were purchased from the ship when it was in this area and are still up in Kathmandu. Here's a great one by a friend of mine who's ministered in the Muslim world for 45 years.

A brilliant book, Into Action. Charles Marsh. Pray for him.

He could be going to heaven at any time. Very, very ill at present. And there's a number of other books.

Here's one that looks like it's been in Kathmandu for at least 20 years. It is an excellent book, however, no easy answers. I've read it right through and it's a book that really helped me, especially to the question of suffering and what seems to be unanswered prayer.

Another book that's brought unity in a lot of churches between people of different backgrounds, different doctrinal positions, especially on the subject of the Holy Spirit. Love Covers. Paul Bilheimer just went to be with the Lord about a year ago.

And there's also some Nepali literature, Nepali New Testaments that maybe you can give away. And then there's just a few of these other ministry tapes of mine from the West. Those prices are also a little bit higher, but not like the music tapes.

I'd like you to turn with me to the book of Habakkuk. I don't think that's how we pronounce it in England. I've been living in England the last 22 years and still can't speak the language.

So any of you having difficulty with Nepali, you shouldn't get discouraged. The Lord just put this message on my heart, not because I've heard anything about your situation here. I haven't been here long enough.

So, you know, this isn't a message dedicated to all of you. It's just a message God has put on my heart and I've given it in similar forms all over the world. In fact, I've been ministering a lot in England.

And I was at a Christian Union in Birmingham. I speak a lot in the universities. They wanted me to speak on evangelism.

I didn't want to speak on evangelism, so I spoke on discouragement in evangelism because I wanted to speak on discouragement. And I gave an invitation, I don't always do that, at the end, to those who are really discouraged in their work and their Christian work, but would like, you know, to see something new happen in their lives. And over half the Christian Union stood up and asked God's about a hundred people to do something in their lives.

A few days after that, I was at Cambridge University speaking to about 400 students. And I gave a similar message. And I guess about 200 stood up.

And it does seem that a lot of people are discouraged in their Christian lives. I think some of my early messages and that I used to preach, and I haven't, you know, I haven't drifted from preaching the same subject, the same message, but I hope I've developed a little more sensitivity in trying to understand some of the difficulties and problems that God's people are in. It's so easy just to write off a church as being dead or the people are all backslidden or they're all lukewarm or whatever, but it takes a little extra effort to discover why some of these people are a little bit maybe discouraged in their Christian faith.

So probably in some of my early messages, I discouraged a few people. And now I'm trying to make up for it by speaking a lot on the subject of how to deal with discouragement. The greater reason for this message is that I myself in the last 10 years have fought enormous battles with discouragement, even to the point of overthrowing the whole thing, Christian faith, OM, family, not so much that.

Never, I never let the sun go down on it because I got this verse, don't let the sun go down upon your anger. So I figured it would be good also not to let the sun go down on my discouragement. That's difficult in the winter in Europe, especially when you're ministering in Scandinavia, sun goes down very early, so you stay much closer to God.

And if you live up in northern Norway or Sweden, then you, you know, there's no opportunity at all for discouragement. Stays dark all day. But I've had some enormous battles with discouragement and I know a lot of my co-workers in Operation Mobilization have had the same struggles.

OM isn't what people think it is. It is not mainly or only a short-term training work. Many of our men have been out for 20 years in very similar situations to what some of you may be in.

Cracking the language, living with the people in Turkey, in Sudan, in Egypt, in Bangladesh. We've seen churches born now of all Muslim converts with all the discouragements and the problems that can begin, especially, bring, especially since the church in Bangladesh, a Hindu convert church has rejected basically this Muslim convert church. The only way these Muslim converts could ever survive is to keep them away from the rest of the Christians.

Sounds wild, but unfortunately, that's the way it is. Many parts of the world, the church, even to some degree in Pakistan, where I now spend a lot of time, very hesitant to receive any Muslim converts. So I've had some real bouts, not just because of those few things, but I've had some real bouts with discouragement, found that quite a few of our people have had similar struggles, some even into depression.

Now, we know there's some depression caused by physical, a physical cause, can be treated even medically, but then there's sort of the spiritual depression, and then there's sort of the mixed depressions, which you don't know what it is, and it is quite prevalent in Christian work. It's not just among missionaries. It's true also among nationals, and I've been greatly encouraged by this passage of Scripture in Habakkuk.

By the way, I've heard that some of you are going back home. Quite a few of our workers find it more difficult to re-enter their own society than they did to go out and live in Bangladesh, Pakistan, or India in the first place. Enormous problems today in missionary re-entry, especially people going back for longer term.

I have another letter this week, lady, 38 years in Africa, now trying to survive in her home country. Scotland, and she's not finding it easy, but I think whatever your situation is in the coming months, these verses from Habakkuk will be a great help to you. The last few verses, start at verse 17.

I'm reading from the Living Bible, one of the breakthroughs we've had in Bangladesh. I've just been there again, is that we have now a New Testament written in Muslimani Bengali. This is Bengali that Muslims can understand.

The original Bible in Bengali is written with Hindu terms for certain religious terms. We now have a new Bible. Church initially rejected it.

Imagine that. They're even going to burn it. But praise God, the Holy Spirit has worked and the church is now sort of at least allowing it to be distributed.

They made us change the cover. First edition, which was the fastest-selling book in Bangladesh, said Injil. Of course, the Muslims understand.

Now we've had to put for keep peace with the church, we've had to put something else on. I think Holy Scripture is something that says Injil down in small print. You can't imagine the meanings for the Bible Society over that Bible.

You just it's amazing. I don't know if you ever see Christians get in the flesh. I know you don't have a lot of Christians in Nepal, but you probably have enough to see them get in the flesh.

It's really amazing. If you ever made a movie of it, it could be a hot seller. But praise the Lord, they often repent.

Kind of things do straighten out and the work of God goes forward. Let me read this. This is the Living Bible.

I know some people don't like this, and if you're against it, then you can read this one. This is the authorized version, but I'm going to read the Living Bible. They're all living, of course.

Even though the fig tree or the fig trees are all destroyed and there is neither blossom left nor fruit. Agricultural people will understand this passage. Though the olive crop all fail and the fields lie barren.

Even if the flocks die in the fields and the cattle barns are empty. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will be happy in the God of my salvation.

The Lord God is my strength and He will give me the speed of a deer and bring me safely over the mountain. Maybe I should read it also in the old English translation. It is sort of beautiful.

Although the fig tree shall not blossom neither shall fruit be in the vines. The labor of the olive shall fail. The fruit shall yield no food.

The flock shall be cut off from the fold and there shall be no herd in the stalls. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation.

The Lord God is my strength and He will make my feet like hinds feet and He will make me walk upon my high places. You know missionary work and Christian work is not what most of us expected when we

launched out of seminary or a Bible college. Perhaps I was more prepared than some because I went to Mexico when I was 19.

One of the first things that happened was one of the local pastors went to bed with the best-looking girl in the choir. This started me on the road of reality therapy to discover that Christian leaders and missionaries are all human. They all fail.

Every last one of them. Maybe not in that kind of a spectacular way, praise God, but in one way or the other Failure is part of the Christian life and it is part of life on the planet. Praise the Lord for Erwin Lutzer's brilliant new book, Failure the Back Door to Success.

The Holy Spirit is using that book in a great way. My friend Mark Sotoquist has been reading it for the last six months. Do you still have that copy or did you pass it on? Did you have it with you? No, I don't have it with me.

I guess you could perhaps rent it out. But it is a brilliant book. Actually, that testimony of my being caught by the Soviet secret police was an example of failure in my life.

It was a premature thing. I made mistakes. There was no such thing as Operation Mobilization at that time.

There were just a few of us, mainly from Mexico, Spain, and the States who were thinking mainly about the communist world. And the Muslim world. We were not thinking about Western Europe.

And yet God had a different plan and it was through that failure in the Soviet Union. God gave his real plan that this was to become a European missionary organization both for training and evangelism to be based in all places, Brussels, and then London, and then Paris, and other European centers. Missionary work, serving Christ overseas, even in your own country, is not generally what you expect.

There's usually far more disappointment. There are far more problems. The work generally goes much slower than you hoped.

There are some exceptions to that. Great church growth areas, Brazil, Korea, Kenya. But in my study of rapid church growth areas, the problems and the discouragements are often even greater.

Our priority field is Turkey. It's been relatively easy because there's no response. There's no response.

I shouldn't say no. There's very little response. We have a few little Turkish groups of believers, you know, maybe six or seven in the nation.

That's after 24 years of work, and not with guys like me. I mean some of the best men we could get in Europe. Dennis Alexander led the work there for many years, graduate of Oxford University, London University, doctor's degree, fluent in Turkish, working for nine years in Ankara, all low-profile, in-depth, personal evangelism approach.

When he left, there were eight believers worshipping. When he left Turkey, by the way, he chose to live in Lebanon. He's been there the last couple of years with, you know, bombs literally landing in his, almost in his back garden.

That's the kind of person that we have in Operation Mobilization. They're not, you know, all just skinny loudmouths like me who sort of blow in one day and blow out the next, and some people perhaps hope it

doesn't happen, at least for another decade. Great secret of Operation Mobilization has been that I've been able to get men more stable than myself, more mature than myself, more patient than myself.

That isn't much, actually. Certainly more intelligent. Not that I feel left out.

I have a deep conviction that God uses all kinds of people, so I feel very much part of the, part of what the Holy Spirit is doing. The Christian life is a battle in itself. Missionary work is a triple battle, because in a sense you move right into enemy territory.

Leaving your own culture and adjusting to another culture is no small thing. Some people may revel in it, but that doesn't mean it's a small thing. They mean the Lord's giving great grace.

They even have prepared you for living here since you were a little baby. My wife and I lived in Bombay for four years. In a sense, we're also here as a result of another mistake.

You may wonder why I'm blacklisted in India. It's actually quite simple. I just practiced Luke 14.33, and I got everybody in O.M. to practice Luke 14.33. The only problem is when everybody forsook the possessions, we put them all in one apartment, and somebody who didn't like us spread the rumor that we were smugglers.

When I was preaching in Andhra Pradesh, somebody raided that apartment, the customs, found all these materials, typewriters, and things that all these young people had given in. It was all declared legally. Anyway, the customs raided this flat.

I eventually went back to Bombay. When I wanted to leave to go to the funeral of two of our men who were just killed in Poland, they decided that I should be arrested as well. And they wanted a quite a heavy bribe.

We didn't believe in paying bribes, so they gave our name, my name especially, to the CID. And I was declared, I didn't find out for two years, persona non grata. We had an outstanding lawyer who defended our case in the Bombay courts, and we had pleaded guilty of the technicality of the law, which is what it was.

You're not allowed to sell your possessions when you come into India. That's really why I've been coming to Nepal almost every other year since 1968. It was an enormous setback for my wife and I. India was our first love.

We'd been there four years, always just on a short-term visa. Although I've been in Europe and especially Britain for the last 25 years, we're Americans by birth. And that city I was converted to Christ in, it was only a one-night meeting by the way, was New York City, and Billy Graham was the speaker.

By the way, that lady, and that was a very accurate interruption really. That score is almost the best I've heard in several years. I don't know where you got all that information.

My secretary. I thought you had some inside job. Because some of the interruptions I've had of myself at OM, I mean they really bend the mind.

But the one thing that I've just add to it is that this lady who'd been praying for me was praying for that high school for 15 years that people would be saved and sent. She wasn't just praying for people to be saved or to come to Christ, but that they'd also go out as missionaries and that happened literally after I went back to the school. One meeting alone where I shared my testimony, 125 students professed Christ.

And about 75 more came to Christ in the next year when Billy Graham did come back for a campaign in that area. So over 200 found Christ in a year or two. And a number of them made their way to the mission field.

Quite an amazing story. One woman. And what her prayers have done, and really it's true, the whole of OM can be traced back to that one woman.

I wasn't from a Christian home. My grandfather was an atheist. He was from the Netherlands.

My father, also an immigrant from the Netherlands, was not a believer. My grandfather, my mother's side from Scotland, he was a drunkard. That marriage blew in two.

So it was really this woman that brought spiritual reality to our home. What about discouragement? I wonder if any of you are discouraged in your work or are discouraged in some aspect of your prayer life. Some of the brothers who shared with me today seem to be discouraged in their quiet time.

Indian brothers especially, perhaps more than foreigners, they want to have a good quiet time. And when they don't have a good quiet time, they feel a little guilty. It's hard to find the balance in that.

But I wonder if there are some of us who though our situation isn't really like Habakkuk 3, 17 through 19, somehow we're discouraged, we're down, we're finding it difficult to really press on with joy. Joy is important in the Christian life. It's nothing like going out and meeting one more unhappy, depressed missionary.

You know, I of course am into that. Part of my ministry is visiting missionaries and speaking to missionaries wherever I go. I've been doing it actually for about 27 years.

I went to the mission field when I was 19 and learned Spanish. And it isn't that much difference when you're speaking to national pastors. I would speak to far more national pastors than I would to missionaries.

Some of them, quite a few of them do get discouraged. Local church work, being a pastor isn't what these young seminarians think. Tell you, if there's any area of unreality, sometimes it's in what people are being taught in seminary.

I speak at many seminaries all over the world. All these bright-eyed academics studying their Greek and Hebrew, looking forward to their first church, and they don't always get all the facts. Story of the one elder who's often existing in most churches, whose one major gift seems to be to give the pastor a headache.

No matter who he is, no matter where he comes from, that elder has an unbelievable gift to make life miserable for the pastor. Next to doctors and psychiatrists, the number one group in America seeking psychiatric help, in fact, are pastors. It's not what they thought when they launched out of seminary.

With all their lovely little notes, hermeneutics, homiletics, messages, spirit-filled, you know, all the equipment that they got. And I will tell you, in my ministry with pastors, and I'm talking about at least two to three thousand pastors, these men are under enormous attack. And quite a few get discouraged in the battle.

Many. All over the world, it's the same in every country out of the least of 50 nations I've ministered in. The similarities are greater than the differences.

People. People, their lack of love, the lack of reality, the lack of common sense. I wish that somehow common sense were a gift of the Holy Spirit.

But it's not. It's supposed to be basic ingredients in the brain developed through life. And the lack of just common sense sometimes among God's, supposedly God's chosen people, often God's frozen people.

And they can freeze the most on-fire pastor fresh out of seminary that anybody can ever produce. So we're all really in a similar battle. Remember the book of Acts when 40 men pledged they wouldn't eat till Paul was dead? What if you got home tonight, and there was a note on your door signed by 40 of your neighbors? You know, some of you perhaps are praying for better neighbors, but thank the Lord you don't have this experience.

A note from 40 of your neighbors, all signed. We're not eating no rice, no chapatis till you're dead. Dare to say some of you might head on up to Kotlandu for a little bit of a break.

Maybe apply for reassignment. I think I would. But in the book of Acts, there was a conspiracy against the Apostle Paul.

Forty men pledged they would not eat until he was dead. I preached about that conspiracy to pastors and Christian leaders all over the world. Because I believe it's true.

And I believe there's a subtle conspiracy for every person who's really committed to God, who's really trying to do God's work, trying to see people come to Jesus Christ. But it's generally not that bold. You know, it's not that crude.

That's really a crude method, isn't it? 40 people deciding not to eat. Satan's methods seem to be more subtle today. What are some of the reasons, in my research, that people are discouraged? I might just say, maybe you're encouraged.

All of you, right out of your shoes. Wonderful. But I tell you, when you go back to your own home country, and I've been in most of your countries in the last few months, certainly few years, you're going to find a lot of people in the church discouraged.

And you know, it's a sad thing when a missionary goes back and speaks in the church and is totally out of contact where people really are. And makes a lot of statements to just make people feel more guilty. Why aren't they giving more? Why aren't they praying more? Why aren't they sacrificing more? Why are they forgetting to write the missionaries? Why are they so caught up in their materialism trip? You know, sometimes missionary speakers can really make people feel miserable.

And especially if they're fairly boring, non-gifted speakers, it makes them feel doubly miserable. Both the message is hard to listen to and the content is depressing. And I hope when you go back on a furlough, that you'll be sensitive to that culture, just as I hope you're sensitive to this culture.

You know, I don't think you go around just punching the Polly's in the nose just for, you know, or saying negative things about the culture and about the country. And just as we have to be sensitive in communicating cross-culturally wherever we are outside of our own country, so when we get back to our own country, we have to re-identify. We have to try to sense where the people are, why they're discouraged.

The church may have just been through a split. Seventy-five percent of the churches in Britain have been through major splits in the past decade. That's why some of them don't support missionaries anymore.

The church split in two. The new section has to build a new building. There's no money to sometimes support missionaries.

We have more people who want to go to the mission field in Europe now than you can find support for, unless they go with their own denomination. And even then, not always, is there support. This part of this message is linked more with the people that I meet back in the home churches.

What are some of the basic reasons people are discouraged? Number one, the world situation. People are getting increasingly depressed about the world situation. You may go back and infer, you know, why aren't people giving more money to Ethiopia? The Ethiopian famine is, it's just unbelievable.

We've had fairly first-hand reports. It is unbelievable. I was just in Thailand when the refugees were pouring out of Kampuchea because there was another major, you know, assault by the, by Vietnamese.

And a girl who works among the refugees there, she explained to me that the people are surviving and the people basically have enough food. That is not Ethiopian. That is not Sudan.

There are a couple of million people right now who are dying of famine. This is probably one of the greatest burdens on our hearts. OM may not, in its initial thrust, seem like we're interested in social work, famine relief, but I don't think anything has made a greater impact on my whole life than human suffering.

Sometimes I think it's almost equal to Christ's suffering on the cross for my sins. It's more, I can feel it, you know, to be honest. I can feel human suffering more than I can feel Christ's suffering on the cross.

Now, you're more spiritual than me. You feel Christ's suffering on the cross on a deeper level than I do. Fine.

I never have any trouble. Relating and appreciating people more spiritual than myself seems to be quite a large group. But human suffering, when I first saw it in Mexico, people living in a garbage, literally in a garbage tip, eating garbage, just, you know, it's overwhelming impact on my life.

One of the burdens of OM from the earliest days was to train people, to get people started, young baby Christians, which is where an awful lot of people are. All those tens of thousands converted through Billy Graham and Luis Palau in Britain, you know, last year. Where are they now? Baby Christians.

They easily backslide. They easily get discouraged. They easily get put off by the church.

And our burden was to get young Christians. Most of these brothers all with me here today came in OM when they were all young Christians. And they stayed with OM usually three years, four years, five years, quite a few after their time in OM go to Bible college or seminary.

Then the church is ready, often to take them to be the pastors and the church planters as thousands of OM graduates are doing all over the entire subcontinent. It's a long road. It's not one year or two years.

It's four years, five years, ten years. Think a little baby Christian. I remember Brother Resham now up there in Pokhara.

When he first came on OM, a little baby. Now he's an evangelist in the Nepali Church. Takes time.

Takes a lot of patience. But I think a lot of people are getting discouraged by the world situation. It just seems to be getting worse.

Seems to be overwhelming. Do you know, it took until 1830 to get the first billion people on planet Earth. We say in England 1,000 million.

1830. The next billion took a hundred years, 1930. The next billion, I say billion because it's easier than 1,000 million to say, 30 years.

We now have that many people, 1 billion, just in the subcontinent. We always include Nepal. Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, Nepal.

1,000 million souls, the same population of the whole planet Earth in 1830. See why some of us out here, who have been committed out here for a couple of decades, get a little overwhelmed. Because we don't only believe that everybody should be eating and that everybody should be treated as a human being.

But that they should hear the gospel and have the privilege of knowing Jesus Christ. Big news broadcast just came out on television in the States. One major food group for Ethiopia was proven to be a complete fraud.

What do you think that does for relief organizations? I will tell you there are many people will not give a penny. People who have millions, I mean millions, will not give a penny. Because somehow they have been convinced that it's all a bunch of crooks.

I tell you, that's how you get him. Because there's plenty of money to handle all the relief projects in all the world. But the enemy is always working.

It just takes one false group, one liar, one cheat to ruin it for an awful lot of other people. Now praise God, there's still a lot of people who are not going to be put off by one television broadcast. And they are given.

Money is coming in for Ethiopia. They now have more money than they know what to do with. They need people.

They need people like some of you willing to go out and actually live in these places and work and work and work. Even though you see people dying in front of you just every day. And part of the work has to be involved in burying the dead.

I talked to one of our brothers in Kathmandu who was involved with OM when we did relief work among the tidal wave victims in Andhra Pradesh. The main job was just burying the dead. Unbelievable.

One of our young men had a mental breakdown, never recovered from the Andhra Pradesh tidal wave. Now he had the roots of this problem before he went. And he's recovered to some degree, but it was just so devastating for him.

Some people in some cases are discouraged and overwhelmed because of the world situation. I could give you at least 25 major overwhelming crisis situations in the world today. We've been laboring for almost 15-20 years among the Afghans.

There's been no real response to any large degree among the Afghans. There have been a few among the blind, a few here, a few there. Pray for 50 workers in Afghanistan right now, mainly in some kind of social work.

Very little news we get about them. We shifted our work from Kabul to the Afghan refugees. We started a new organization outside of OM called Serve, so that any mission group could send people to serve.

They didn't have to go through Operation Mobilization. We work together. It's a mini United Mission to Nepal.

Serve. Would you pray for that work? There are two and a half to three million refugees. And it's really quite overwhelming, especially since there's very, very little response up to now to the gospel.

Another very big discouraging factor for many people, and I'm going to have to just rush through this now a little bit, is personal failure. Relationship failure, family failure. I've had 14,000 letters just as a result of my first, I think it was my second book.

First book didn't sell very well. It's called Literature, Evangelism, Manual. At least the Germans reprinted it with a different title.

They sold more editions than the English. Leave it to the Germans to do that. But my second book was called Hunger for Reality.

It's probably a copy in here somewhere in this amazing little library. Quite a few of those books were sold from someone with a book table. We have a book table back there.

I think the brothers are sitting on the books. Try to get a deeper blessing. But of these 14,000 letters I have received, people have often shared failure.

Failure in the family. So many. I just had phenomenal meetings in Singapore and Malaysia.

You know, very large crowds. About 250 young people stood up to make deeper commitments of their life. I was just praying.

They all give me feedback papers with prayer requests and burdens that I can pray for as I leave. And I was just praying for some of those before the meeting. So many of the Singaporeans and Malaysians, these are often people of Chinese background, family difficulties.

We had a meeting of XOMers. We don't like the term, but we haven't found a better one. We feel graduates is a bit much.

We have 37,000 graduates. That sounds even too much. But we have these meetings of XOMers and there are about 700 of them in Singapore and Malaysia, one of our main recruiting fields.

We'd like to see a few more of them coming up here to Nepal. But about 70% of them raised their hand that they have parents who are not converted. It's just overwhelming to think about that.

Some of them have been praying for many, many years. And sometimes, have you ever had this experience? The more you pray, the worse the situation gets. It really encourages your prayer life, doesn't it? Others are discouraged because of physical illness and tiredness.

It's an enormous amount of physical illness seemingly among God's people. The leader of our work in India, if we don't get a bypass operation on his heart, may be in heaven within the next year. Maybe two, maybe three.

Think of David Watson, the great British evangelist. The whole nation was so mightily blessed through and suddenly, relatively young age, dies of cancer. Think of Keith Green.

No musician in history has made a greater impact for world missions than Keith Green. It's amazing. It's probably 30,000 young people praying seriously about world missions as a result of Keith Green.

3,000 through the Keith Green Memorial Concerts that just took place in England. Mark was in all those concerts. I only preached at six of them.

3,000 young people stood up at the end to say they're willing to go. They'll go at least short term this summer to pray about going longer term. Keith Green, just after he got his vision for missions, took his airplane up and was killed with 11 others.

Seems crazy. I could give you many other similar examples. I never realized when I launched out from Bible College how much suffering I would see with my own eyes.

I never realized. And among praying, committed, dedicated people who believe that Jesus heals and that he's all sufficient and all the rest. And I'm sure most of you would agree with me.

I hope so. There are not so many simple easy answers to suffering as perhaps we were taught. It's a great mystery.

Eugenia Price talks about it in this book. No easy answers. I arrived in Kathmandu when our two workers responsible for our little fellowship there had a baby born to them.

Two days later on their driving to the hospital in Bhutan, the baby dies. Not easy. They're committed to Christ.

They love Jesus. People were praying all over the world. The baby seemed healthy.

The nurse the day before said the baby is healthy. It's come out of hospital. It's gone.

It was quite a moving two days we had there in Kathmandu. Pray for Sheila and Wayne. As they laid their little baby in the grave just three days after he, Dale Wayne, was born.

One of my first experiences in India was the exact same thing. One of our best men sort of in and out of O.M. He was with the Swedish government most of the time, but sometime he's with O.M. The day after Christmas, Ingemar Encke, the brother-in-law of Gunnar and Eva, killed in a road motor crash in Sweden, just going to visit his in-laws. Small piece of ice on the road.

They didn't see it. Car flipped over. He was crushed to death.

Irma, only married two or three years, watches the whole scene. That's not going to be easy to get over. Somehow as Christians, God wants to give us a mature, realistic view of life.

And that means we face the reality that suffering is part of life. Malcolm Muggeridge, an amazing man who went through unbelief and communism and agnosticism and became a follower of Jesus Christ, said

something about suffering that really helped me, and I wrote it in my Bible. He said, by avoiding suffering, people deprive themselves of one of the glories of existence.

The dignity of suffering goes to the heart of human existence, of literature and of art, of everything that ever happened. That is great. I pray that none of us will allow ourselves to be discouraged by failure, by the world situation, by suffering, by illness.

Another reason that people are getting discouraged that I meet is the state of the church. That's linked with unrealistic views about the church in the first place. We've had terrible divisions in Great Britain in the church.

I mean, it's unbelievable. Families split in two, churches split in two, people screaming at each other, stomping out the doors, and yet we have seen again and again God overrule. Instead of one church, there were two churches.

They repented and forgave, and the two churches went on, and soon there were four churches and eight churches and 16 churches. And that's one of the reasons in Britain today, we're seeing some of the greatest church growth that has been seen in the past 50 years. You see, the Holy Spirit doesn't eliminate the human factor.

We are human beings. We do fail. We do say stupid things, except those who repress it all, and they develop any one of 52 illnesses.

But somehow, God overrules. Somehow, God is still God. This treasure is in an earthen vessel, and I personally don't get discouraged by these things anymore.

I get the temptation, but somehow, whatever problems happen in the church, whatever illnesses and difficulties and deaths and tragedies happen among the Lord's people, Billy Graham once said, life at its best is filled with sadness. I have determined that my becoming discouraged, and I live within inches of it often, is not going to help any of those situations. And I have also decided that if the enemy manages to get me discouraged, I may in fact, in the moment of low motivation and discouragement, end up doing things that will actually hinder the gospel, and actually cause many other people to get discouraged.

There was a crazy guy once. He wrote a book, and in the book, he said he didn't believe anybody should ever get discouraged. And he would never get discouraged no matter what, because when he got discouraged, it got his wife discouraged.

And when she got discouraged, it was really bad news, and that discouraged him even more. And when he got discouraged really more, then his wife went down even further, and that was the end. So he decided the best thing was just to not ever get discouraged at all, and he never did.

His name was Charlie Tremendous Jones. Bit of a wild name. We cannot help being tempted.

We cannot help being tempted. We cannot help going through some emotional lows. That's linked even with our physical being.

But we can determine whether we are going to put into practice a Bacchic Chapter 3. That was the most impossible situation. That sounds like a boutoir to me, a total wipeout. There's nothing left.

There's people seemingly, if something like that happens, the people also are going to die. No food, no flocks, no animals, no nothing. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord.

I will joy in the God of my salvation. Did you get a lot of news up here about Bhopal? I'm sorry, Bhopal. Forgive me.

Bhopal is where I am. Bhopal is what I'm trying to talk about. Bhopal, when that happened, I think some of us just wanted to scream, just wanted to scream.

I think it's only normal. You hear about something like that, industrial accident. So many people devastated.

You just, you know, there's perhaps a place for screaming sometimes in your Christian life. Don't scream too late at night. Just wake up the neighbors.

Perhaps sometimes it's just good to scream on the inside or to weep. Many of us were weeping in Kathmandu just ten days ago. In closing, I'd like to just share a few practical things I've practiced to try to resist discouragement as it comes from many different sides.

Keeping in mind the foundation of Habakkuk, the Lord my God is my strength. He will make my feet like the feet of a gazelle. He will make me walk upon my high places.

And I just add to that just these few practical things. Number one, get a deeper knowledge of God. The purpose of suffering.

Books like Paul Billheimer's book, Don't Waste Your Sorrows. C.S. Lewis's book, The Problem of Pain. Wilder Smith's book about pain.

There are brilliant books. Not total answers, not easy answers, but praise God some answers. I need some answers if I'm going to press on in my situation.

And then secondly, more time in the Word, especially in the Psalms. And then number three, faith not feelings. Putting into practice Philippians 4.8. Thinking on that which is good and positive.

And you know, it is so easy to see the bad things, the wrong things, the sufferings. But there are tremendous good things going on all the time in the world. Every day.

They don't always make the headlines. And it's true that this world as A.W. Tozer once described it, is a gigantic emergency area. Nothing is right nor will be right until put right by the redeeming work of God.

Let me read it direct. The fall of man has created a perpetual crisis. It will last until sin has been put down and Christ reigns over a redeemed and restored world.

Until that time the earth remains a disaster area and its inhabitants live in a state of extraordinary emergency. To me, it always been difficult to understand those evangelical Christians who insist upon living in the crisis as if no crisis existed. They say they serve the Lord, but they divide their days so as to leave plenty of time to play and loaf and enjoy the pleasures of the world as well.

They are at ease while the world burns. Billy Graham wrote a book, World Aflame. That's why we're here.

I believe most of us. We know the world is a crisis. And we want to do something about it.

And if you're going to keep on keeping on in that ministry, you're going to have to live by faith.

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