

Cd Gv499 Prepare for India

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the vital preparation and positive mindset needed for missionaries heading to India to face spiritual challenges and cultural complexities.

Scripture: Nehemiah 8:10, Proverbs 4:23, Matthew 6:33, Romans 10:14, Philippians 4:8

Topics: "Missionary Work", "Spiritual Preparation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of maintaining a positive attitude and lifestyle when going out into a new part of the world for missionary work. The speaker mentions the need for serious orientation and preparation, highlighting the seriousness of the task at hand. They also mention the challenges that may arise, such as the need for basic survival skills and the overwhelming number of needs and people to attend to. The speaker encourages the audience to stay committed to the mission and to rely on God's strength and guidance throughout their journey.

Transcript

Father, we thank you that once again we are here in this place to prepare to go to the giant Indian subcontinent. And we just believe this is going to be an incredibly important period of our training, of our growth. We're not here marking time.

We're not here just to get a few jabs and a few photos and a few visas. We are here to meet with you. We are here to tear down enemy strongholds because our brothers and sisters in India need our prayers.

They need our encouragement. This isn't somehow just preparation. We are in the battle now.

Help us to grasp this with all of our hearts. For we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

As I was thinking of this session, the words just kept coming to me from the Lord. In fact, when I sensed this was from the Lord, and I don't just believe everything that comes into my head is from the Lord. I think about it, what the scriptures say.

Does it contradict anything the scriptures say? Does it contradict the way God generally works? But it just kept coming back to me. And I wanted to just share that with you. That I really believe that you people who are going out to this great needy area of the world are very, very special.

We know there is a sense all of God's people are special. But let's be honest, a lot of God's people, and more of my work is within local churches than it is with OM. And many of God's people sitting in the average church are somewhat discouraged.

Most churches tell me very few are engaged in evangelism. Very few attend the church prayer meetings. That's in the testimony of even the average pastor.

And I believe when people do obey and they do respond, and I meet such people wherever I go, that is special. We're often grieved when we see people backslidden. We're often grieved when we find believers in sin.

And so we should be the reverse of that when we find people going on for God. We find people obeying the Lord, obeying the Great Commission. The challenge of my basic thrust in this first session this evening is in this whole thing of maintaining, gaining and maintaining a positive attitude and a positive lifestyle as you go out into a totally new part of the world.

And I hope you will understand that we are here for serious orientation, serious preparation. Some years ago when we had these sessions, we had an exam, and if people at the end, if their exam was really bad, that's it, they didn't go. I don't know why we don't do that anymore.

Because I just heard in Kerala, down in South India, for the new recruits, they gave an exam, and some who failed the exam badly were sent home. Actually, we had a big, big to-do, because two were sent home. Their uncle is a VIP, or he thinks he is, and he came storming into some of our leaders saying, how can you send my nephews back home? Well, he failed the exam.

I guess nobody paid the bribe, and he failed the exam, and they were sent home. No, we don't, we don't do that. But we don't want you sitting here as bumps on a log, so do take out your notebooks.

If you don't have any notebook, I have one in that briefcase, and it has lots of paper in it, because we want you to write some of these things down. I thought I had a notebook in here. Does anybody need paper? Just pass that around.

Praise the Lord. Turn with me to the book of Philippians. Book of Philippians.

Philippians 4. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. That's one of a number of verses that God has used to challenge me to be positive. And I think it's especially important as you go to India, and remember you're going with OM to India.

That makes it more complicated, because there will be negative factors that you face, because you are in a movement that is overextended, that is attempting something that has hardly ever been done in history. Ongoing, short-term work in this vast land, where traditionally we have only thought of sending people, most missions, sending people who would stay, who would learn the language, who would become proper missionaries, adjust to the culture, and all the rest. When we started short-term work in India, in a sense, it was a big risk.

And we know, we are aware that even as we prepare, each one of you, some of you are young, some of you may feel you're not that strong and mature in the Lord, we know there is an element of risk. I was

staying with a man this weekend, a Christian, and he just, as a complete amateur with almost no training, jumped out of an airplane, of course with a parachute, for charity. I would tell you, he was terrified.

And he jumped out wrong, he turned upside down, all of these cords wrapped around his head, how he ever came out of that, these giants surrounded completely by fields, and he landed on the pavement. And he raised, I think, enough money for charity to give a video recorder to a local children's hospital, or something like that. I don't think he's going to do it again, actually.

Now, I call that a bit of a risk myself. Actually, just recently in Sunderland, an amateur jumped out of a plane, landed in a parking lot, was killed, happens quite often. But it is interesting how the people of the world take risks.

And yet Christians who believe they're going to heaven, Christians who say they believe men are lost and without Christ, seem to be more and more representing the status quo. And I thank God for each one of you has taken the steps of faith, as we have literally told the world, looking for people to go to the subcontinent. And we have come up at the end of another year with just this small group, a number are, of course, missing right now, as much bigger than those who are here.

And I believe, really, as far as O.M., you are special. I wouldn't like to use the word elite, because it's not a word that's very much in my vocabulary. But I think we need to understand, we are here now for specialist training, that you can go to India and do a particular job.

And we know that if you go to India, and you're effective in India the next two years, we know there's a risk that when you come back, you're not going to fit into this culture very easily. That's the risk we're taking. And let us clearly understand that you, at any time during the next two weeks, can come to us and say, look, I've been listening to this orientation, and I want out.

It's not like being pushed out a plane with a parachute. We don't want you to go unless you really believe that you're going to go there in a very serious-minded way. I think in the past couple of years, maybe we have just failed to get it through to some people that this is unbelievably serious business that we are going into.

And if you are still a child, then don't climb in a tank and go out to the battlefield. You go home and be with your mommy or daddy for a couple of more years. But I tell you, this is serious business.

We are going out to a land of tremendous darkness. We know there are areas of London equally as dark. But we are going out to this giant land in which there are great, great forces of darkness, in which we're faced with, seemingly, humanly speaking, such impossible situations.

See, for example, upper caste Hindus in North India surrendering to the Lord Jesus Christ. Up to now, there have been very, very few. There have been some.

I've been praying through the section in Operation World on India. That should be required for all of you in the next two weeks, to pray through the India section of Operation World. I've been reading about India, involved with India and Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh for almost a quarter of a century.

But I tell you, as I open the pages of Operation World, I learn some things. And as I've been doing some other reading, and it is overwhelming that in India today, such a vast percentage of the Christians come from just a small number of people's groups, and many of them from what originally were outcast people.

You have to go back quite a way.

The same is true in Pakistan. The same is largely true in Bangladesh. We in turn are trying, we don't despise that, but we are trying to reach Muslims and to reach Hindus, and we are really attempting the impossible.

And I hope that you will make each day count, this week. Some mission societies would say we need not two weeks, though you've already had many weeks of preparation from the day that you wrote in for that application, and started through the tapes and the books, and the June conferences, and the summer conferences, and the summer campaign. All of it is an ongoing preparation for this spiritual advance into the subcontinent.

And I hope you will realize that in some ways we try to do, really, in about six months, what many mission societies would say you need at least a year to do, or two, in terms of orientation. There's quite a course of discussion on that point. So I believe, in many ways, you are special.

You are chosen of God for this particular task. I know, as clear as I was born, that I was chosen of God to be part of his plan for India. I knew when I went to India, only as a research, exploratory project, and to meet with those first teams that we sent out.

We sent them out. I flew on to meet them the year after that I went out overland. That first year, I think, I flew most of the way.

I had to visit other fields on the way out. That's the year that Ray Mayhew was converted through the team. The film strip I saw, where was that, in Ulster, actually gives a false idea about that first team.

They had that trouble in Switzerland. They had some difficulties going out, but when they got out there, they were not, as far as I've ever heard, Gordon was on the team, they were not wiped out and discouraged. They were absolutely, you know, ready to turn India upside down.

So I don't know where that bit of information from our new communications people got into that interesting slide set, but I guess that will minister to somebody, even if it's not exactly the truth. So I flew out to New Delhi and I met people like Greg Livingston and Gordon Magney and Ron Penny and others. Ron Penny's been out there ever since.

Gordon Magney's been out in that part of the world almost ever since. Greg Livingston's gone on to be the pioneer founder of Frontiers, who are now involved also with us out in the subcontinent, and a lot of other exciting things have happened. But I knew as I went to Delhi and then Bareilly and then Lucknow to that very place that is now the OM base, it was controlled and used then by WECC, and then over to see dear brother K.M. John in Benares and on to Calcutta and Madras.

And as I gave out literature and as I met people, there was just a tremendous sense of destiny, a sense that this was God's purpose. I wrote my wife almost immediately and I said, I believe God is leading us to go to India. Those were the days when I didn't have to discuss things so much with her.

I just told her, boy, the good old days. Anyway, she agreed to go even though at the time she was pregnant with my daughter Krista. We decided to let her be born before we launched out.

Within a couple months of her birth, we moved out to India and lived in Bombay. The word of God indicates that we are prepared as His children before the foundation of the world. I don't want to get too Calvinistic, might frighten some of you.

But it's an exciting concept. And we are a people of destiny. We realize today there are less than 1,000 missionaries in India according to Operation World.

Of course, there are many Indian missionaries. We have one right here. And many Indian missionaries are launching out cross-culturally to Rajasthan, to Bihar, many young brothers from Tamil Nadu.

We want you to get to know Indian geography. Tamil Nadu used to be Madras state down in the southeast corner. Really, the real stronghold of sending churches, sending workers out cross-culturally.

Kerala, when they speak Malayalam, they send out workers and they have to learn the language. Some of these brothers as they go north are effective. Some of them are not effective.

I don't believe the great divide today is between nationals and internationals. I believe the greater divide is between those who are willing to walk in daily obedience to Jesus Christ and those who somehow fall back along the way or get caught up in their own sins or their own ego. I believe when you look back on the India experience and Pakistan-Bangladesh experience you have in the next two years, as you look back on it as I look back to more than 20 years ago, you will consider it one of the greatest highlights of your entire life.

When you get my age, you do. You do look back. You look at the old photos.

You try to think, wow, what were the mountain peaks? You really sense that something extra special was happening. In my life, it was when I lived in Bombay for a couple of years, when I traveled to almost every state of India, when I sometimes found myself preaching four or five, six times in a day, counting ministry in the open air. When I had the privilege of working together with men like Bhakt Singh and others and saw just many, many, many hundreds come to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a great privilege I counted to have been involved there. Some of you know my story. Probably through my own stupidity and God's providence, I was eventually blacklisted.

Might as well tell you that story because it's an important part of history. They may ask you out there, why doesn't George Orwell visit India? Well, back in those days, we were always selling our possessions. When I discovered how easily you could sell your possessions in India, I got an idea.

Let's all bring a few extra possessions. It was right here in this building that I organized the purchase of extra things and we gave everybody their quota. There was no smuggling in terms of trying to sneak anything in the country.

Each person had their quota. But when they got into India, they turned their quota over to my little sales force in Bombay. They all ended up in the apartment of one brother, Mike Wiltshire.

Somebody was wanting to get back at Mike Wiltshire for something he had said or done. It's a long story. They went to customs and they said, this group, they are smugglers.

They raided the OM flat in Bombay. My wife was there. I was already off preaching in Andhra Pradesh.

They raided that flat, just like they were a bunch of smugglers. It was a frightening experience. Mike Wiltshire spent the night in the local lockup.

I came back to Bombay. At that time, Keith Beckwith and John Watts were killed in a motor crash in Poland. I wanted to leave the country, so they arrested me.

I thought I was trying to escape, so they arrested me. I guess that was good because I was to blame. Anyway, it went through quite interesting hearings.

All we had to do was slip some money under the table in the Bombay customs and it would all be over. Both men involved in Bombay at that time were later convicted of corruption, but we didn't believe in bribes, and so they gave us the book, so to speak. Those goods were confiscated.

I eventually went to court and had to admit guilt because technically at that time it was illegal to sell your personal possessions. So we broke the technicality of the law, pleaded guilty, and somehow at that time, probably, we don't actually know, but probably at that time, Mike Wiltshire, my name was submitted to the blacklist, and so I had been exiled from India for 20 years. But you know, God overruled that.

The ship vision probably never would have become a reality without that because I was so intoxicated with India and so committed to India and found it very difficult to know my limitations. I took too many meetings. I traveled too far.

I got involved with too many people. I was still the international leader of the work. So in God's providence, he moved me to Nepal where I did a lot of the praying and the planning and the dreaming about the ship ministry and yet at the same time could be involved in teaching Indian brothers who came up in leadership training courses, something that later in a sense was shifted to Lucknow.

So I lived in Nepal for a couple of years. That's when I especially became very exposed to Pakistan and to Bangladesh, especially Bangladesh. Then I came back and we launched the Lagos and within a year I found myself sailing into Cochin.

I don't think I ever wept so hard in my life as an exile. It seemed a long time, a couple of years since I've been back in India. And to sail into Cochin on the Lagos, Ron Penny came out in a little tugboat and I just walked around the Lagos trying to hide, weeping and weeping and praising God.

Even today it's hard to believe not only Lagos has been around, I don't know how many times the coast of India, but Dulas has been there and is going back again soon. So I just share with you that you are going into a great and privileged experience and I hope that you will be willing to prepare for it in these coming weeks. I know you already have.

And then as you go out there, it will not be the long overland trip. Don't be disappointed by that. Disappointments can be God's appointment.

You'll save an entire three weeks. Yet these horrendous tales about culture shock. Don't be intimidated by some of the things you hear about culture shock.

Someone just shared with me some orientation that's gone on even within OM about that. That concerns me a little bit. I never experienced any culture shock in India.

I personally never experienced any when I went back to my home country or came to live in England. Maybe I'm just not the type. But I know one thing, Satan is the accuser of the brethren and he wants to get you all tight and all nervous.

You're not going to make it. You're going to get ill. How are we going to relate to these people? What's this smell coming around the corner? What's this under my bed? I just got somebody's prayer letter.

Harry Charles. His wife found something under his pillow. What was it? Did you read that? A scorpion.

Don't be intimidated by those things. We've never had hardly any O.M.s in 20-some years bitten by a scorpion. Scorpions take one lick on these soldiers with a cross and they just scatter.

So it's a great privilege. But with this great privilege comes a great responsibility. And one of the important aspects of that responsibility is to maintain a victorious and positive attitude in the midst of the battles and the struggles and the heartaches.

That is not going to be easy. You're not always going to have the kind of special music we've had over at the conference in the Netherlands or even here. There are going to be battles with loneliness.

There are going to be times when you wonder what you're doing there. You're going to have times as I did on my very first trip in which I struggled with the lostness of people. How could all these people be lost? Do I think I'm better than these people? As you meet Indian people who are more pleasant and seemingly more friendly and a lot nicer than some of the characters you've met even back in your own home church, you have difficulty thinking the ones in your own church are going to heaven and these dear friendly people are lost and going out into eternity without Christ.

There have been missionaries who have gone to India and actually overthrown their Christian faith. We've had just very few in O.M.'s history. One Oxford student who came back from India and his experience there, because of a lot of liberal theology, he turned away from biblical faith.

We haven't had many. And I would just say that if out there you're struggling with those things, don't be afraid to talk about it. Don't be afraid to write Gary or even myself or some other leader and share your struggles and your doubts.

You've all heard me say that great faith is not in the absence of doubt and questions, but it's as we battle through. And in a sense, we are gamblers for God. I don't like the terminology.

We believe that the Word of God teaches these people are lost, whether they're good Hindus or good Muslims or good Jains or good Sikhs. They are lost. The Bible is true.

We must reach them. If somehow we are completely wrong, I don't think we are. We have to leave that to God.

And I just feel it's so important to realize that you're going to be tested and not be surprised by that temptation. What are some specific areas where we need to work to be positive and victorious and joyful? The Word of God says the joy of the Lord is our strength. We all know the verses about the fruit of the Spirit.

Number one, let's be positive about the next two weeks. This isn't India. This is London.

It may rain every day. It may get a little cool, seems a little cool today. And maybe you feel some of the things we say here, you've already heard.

It's not possible to have orientation without the straw factor. You know what that is? If you and your marriage never get any straw, please write me how you do it. The straw factor is going to be there.

Something that maybe wasn't that important or something that maybe you already knew. I don't think that's necessarily the straw factor. Just maybe repetitious.

There are always some that just want to get going. We've got a lot of things to work out in these two weeks. There are visas.

There are maybe more jobs. There are interviews. It was very sad that someone, not to India, but to another part of OM last year, launched out into our year program with really a lot of things, a lot of darkness in his life.

And in the middle of the year it came out, and oh, the heartache. We're still paying the heartache of this particular situation. And you know, if there's some heavy thing in your life, you're leaving back some heavy situation, maybe you should share that with us.

And we can just pray about it, not for forgiveness sake, just for practical organization. Unless one month after you leave we've got your mother on the phone about something, or we've got your girlfriend on the phone saying this or that has happened. And we just think that these two weeks, maybe a little longer, are vital.

So let's have a positive attitude even when some things may go wrong. It's not possible for people to come together anywhere without something going wrong. And especially as you get to live life in the fast lane.

OM, unfortunately, is a fast lane operation. Now it's not always in the fast lane, isn't that relaxing? Sometimes it's completely off the road, passing all the other lanes. And when you're living in the fast lane, we're already involved in intensive recruiting for next summer, we're already in heavy advanced planning for 1989 Love Europe, and we're hitting some interesting complications.

And as we go forward, you know sometimes without question mistakes are made, there are misunderstandings. I've heard we've already had an accident with one of the vehicles perhaps traveling here. And I just think it's important to rejoice evermore.

In fact, that's what this book is partly about. Chapter 4, verse 4, rejoice in the Lord always. And again, I say rejoice.

I think the greatest, most practical thing I'm rejoicing about tonight is that Alan shared with me that really the final obstacle to the international coordinating team moving into this conference center has probably been overcome in negotiations with the fire safety people. And it does look like the international coordinating team within the next couple of months will move into this historic and great conference center and church. The other side of the building has been traditionally the conference center.

We've often had conferences on this side, and the conferences, of course, have gone on using all the facilities. At present, the church especially uses this side of the building, and our offices will be on the other side. But they're even going to bang a hole in that beautiful Holy of Holies prayer closet over there in

that corner to just give us a little more office space.

And when I think of this whole thing of rejoicing and praising God, I'm reminded of this beautiful garden right behind this building. And in the next two weeks, I will challenge you when you can, not during the meetings when you're supposed to be committed to go somewhere, but other times to just go out when the weather's good and just worship the Lord in that garden. And as you do, you will walk where Buck Sing walked.

You will walk where Watchman Nee walked. You will walk where Austin Sparks, the founder of this movement, walked. More than that, you will walk with Jesus.

And I just pray that these will be two great victorious weeks with a positive attitude, with a forward look, and a realization that what we learn here is incredibly important when we get out there. Some of the mistakes we are making out in the subcontinent are very simple. They're small.

They can be avoided. You'll get mistakes that can't be avoided, the biggies. But some of these little things can be avoided.

For example, one of our problems is people work in India, and they get all excited and all over the work in India, but they're in Eastward bound. So soon, they're headed over to Pakistan. So when they get in Pakistan, they start to get a bit negative.

Because, oh, it's not like India. It's not this, or it's not that. But we did it this way in India.

This is childishness. Have you read Dr. Seaman's second book? Give up your childish ways. Of course, Pakistan is not India.

Of course, they're not going to operate in Pakistan the exact same way they do in India. For a number of reasons. India is traditionally OM's strongest national work.

It's a work of mainly people from within that country reaching their own people. So you'll probably, in some cases, be the only extranjero, foreigner, expatriate, international, whatever you want to call yourself, on the team. And you may get to really love that.

Then when you get to Pakistan, you may only have one Pakistani on the team. When we pushed forward in the work in Pakistan, which is relatively recent, we did not have the financial resources, and we did not want to jeopardize the work in India by going into a large-scale effort of supporting Pakistanis. We felt that in Pakistan we would work with internationals and slowly with Pakistanis that were sent and supported by their churches.

In fact, that has not worked very well. So we are taking a few baby steps in Pakistan also for some Pakistanis to be supported as we do in India out of the general fund, though many of our Indians, of course, also see personal support and gifts come in. So the work in Pakistan, the work in Nepal, the work in India aren't distinct.

We cannot afford people arriving on the team in Karachi or Lahore and just starting to be negative because it isn't like India. Now this kind of adjustment is quite normal in life. This isn't just OM, where you adjust to different situations.

I don't know if any of you have ever been in the military, but military people have to learn very quick adjustment. People in the Navy, the men who are on those ships in the Gulf are making some adjustments these days, and there are many people in the secular world, there are many people in the sports world that have to make adjustment to totally new situations. Don't see it as negative.

See it as a challenge. I can assure you, my dear sisters, the day that you get married and you discover that you're pregnant and you're going to have a baby is a much bigger adjustment than going from India to Pakistan. And further on in life, there'll be other big adjustments that have nothing to do with Operation Mobilization.

Like some years from now, you're working in a nice job in Leeds and your boss says you're fired. And the only way you can get a job is to commute to London. I got on the train this morning at 6.33 with men who commute from Leeds to London, because they want a job.

And I will tell you, in the world today, people will do for money what most people won't do for Jesus. And it's a rebuke often. It's a rebuke to me.

So we need to be positive as we face some of these adjustments and some of these changes. We have tongues in our mouth. We can ask questions.

And we can, of course, and will, of course, struggle. And we may have personal preferences. You know what the Bible says in Proverbs, one of my favorite verses? I only wish I practiced it more.

You know what it says? Even a fool, when he keeps his mouth shut, is esteemed wise. Now there may be others here who work in Pakistan first. And then you go over to India.

And it's incredibly important as you go from Pakistan to India to leave Pakistan behind. You say that's hard. A lot of things in life are hard.

Even as you leave your own country, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, USA, to some degree you need to leave that behind. Not in a legalistic, totalistic way. But as you go out to India, it might be good to take a little bit of interesting cricket, rather than always talk about baseball.

No, an Indian may ask you about baseball. Fine. But you know when people ask you something, often they would prefer that after you answer the question, you ask them something that they can speak about.

You know, basic psychology tells us that generally speaking, we would rather talk to people about what we're doing, than listen to people about what they're doing. Did you know that? Of course, sure, more spiritual people are better listeners. And some, of course, who are frozen by shyness, just don't like to speak, but in general.

And that leads me to one of the most basic, simple rules that I would plead with you to get into your heart and mind. Take an interest in people. It bothers me when I get a report back, I haven't had one in a couple of years, I'm not as involved as I used to be, and a foreign brother's on the team, and he writes, nobody on this team I can relate to.

I wonder how hard he's really tried. Because I have worked on these teams, also with brothers who don't know English very well, also with brothers who have a very different background from mine, and who are fairly shy, and if you don't ask them questions, if you don't dig a little bit and take an interest, they may not

say much. You get others who are talking all the time.

But I believe we need a positive attitude toward those teams that we work on. And toward even the brother or sister that seems so quiet or so shy. Take an interest, look for the magic chord.

It may be farming, it may be music, it may be their family, it may be something they've suffered, it may be something else that even I haven't thought of. Look for that chord in that person's heart. That area where he's able to talk, he likes to talk, where you may find a common denominator.

Maybe, because in Pakistan as well, they're just fanatic on cricket, and maybe you'll just find rapport by going out to a field and playing some cricket together. You'll be the one that doesn't know how to do it. Some of you have read about bonding, some of you have read about this whole thing of incarnational witnessing, and a lot of other high-sounding words, but it all goes back really to loving people.

And a lot of missionaries had these things before anyone ever wrote a book on it, because it's in the Bible. And listening to those people. It's a beautiful experience in this part of the world, because generally people are willing to talk about religion.

You can sit on a train, you can sit on a bus, you can open your New Testament. I've had people on a British train curse me when they heard me even mention the name of Jesus in my dictaphone. But in this part of the world, generally speaking, you can talk about religion.

Generally, this was the thing that really hit me about the subcontinent, generally you can find someone who speaks English. You may go out witnessing, and you'll sell books with your Hindi or Urdu phrases, but if you pray, Lord, lead me to someone today in the midst of my literature work that I can talk to, most times you'll find someone who knows English. Especially if you sometimes look in the right part of town.

I remember selling books in Pakistan. Within the hour, there I was in one of these typing shops where they type letters. You go in there, you may not be literate, and he'll type up a letter.

And I went in, sat down, cups of tea, and of course this man was quite well-educated. He spoke English. We corresponded after I left.

Being positive about that team. And then being positive about the nation in general. You know, one of the reasons some people get a little bit negative, and some of the books that are circulated around are negative, it doesn't take much intelligence to write a negative book about any nation in the world.

There's lots of negative books now about Britain. One came out recently about the beaches of Britain. It just tore the country apart.

And there's plenty of negative books about the United States. Unbelievable books. It's no big thing to be negative.

As God's people, we want to communicate love. We want to win people. We want to be sensitive.

We need to try to make the extra effort to be positive. I think one of the problems is quite a few people who come on OM come from a middle-class suburban situation. If you could all live in the back streets of the East End or the back streets of New York City for one month before going to India, you'd probably be playing a different tune.

I know in some countries like Switzerland and Sweden where you have a small population and where you are well organized and you really don't have much poverty, you couldn't find the same thing you could find in New York City or even in London. But you'll still find plenty of ugly things. Plenty of drunkenness.

Plenty of immorality. Plenty of drugs. And you know today no longer can we go to these countries where the idea that we are from the civilized lands and they are from the backward countries.

Whatever you do, get that out of your head. Because in our countries we have proven to some degree a great ability to go backward. In a sense with our music and our drugs and our drunkenness we have gone back to the jungle so to speak as these people have come out of the jungle and in any case the jungle is often a very beautiful place in some ways.

Being positive. Not comparing the back streets where all the prostitutes are in Bombay with your little lovely suburban home in Michigan. It's not a fair comparison.

You have to compare that street with a similar street in London or New York City where I hope you have not spent much time. So don't make the comparison at all. Don't give the idea that India has ten times as many demons as USA or America.

We've had some very very strange things being stated at times that certainly perplex me. I was asked by someone by the way to always warn people about going into Hindu temples. Now I have been in quite a few Hindu temples and never felt any effect.

Maybe because I'm not easily intimidated or I'm too stubborn or what. But I think if you are a very sensitive type of person who has had struggles in the area of thinking about evil spirits and evil things that probably it's better to avoid going in these temples that often are dark places. We don't have a policy on that.

But I know that some people have found themselves just really uptight after spending time in some of these temples. It's difficult, isn't it, to find the balance. Where do we draw the line in India between culture and sin and darkness? There are parts of Indian culture that we want to appreciate.

It is very difficult to know in Indian culture, especially linked with Hinduism but also Islam, where you cross the line from what is culture to darkness. I recommend that perhaps you see the video, Passage of India. I saw this film.

It's a very famous book. A book that exposed British elitism in India. A very devastating book in its day.

But when it got into that whole sequence in those caves, in those immoral pictures there was a darkness that of course as Christians we can have no part of. Pornography is thousands of years old in India. And that's where we have to draw the line between what may be of value in terms of cultural study and that which is darkness.

That we must flee. The word of God says we are to hate that which is evil and we are to cling to that which is good. Another area where we need to try to be positive is concerning the kind of work that we are doing.

If you're involved in quite a lot of literature work, sooner or later you're going to feel, you know, boy, what are we really accomplishing? How many people are really coming to Jesus through these books or through these tracks? And sometimes you can feel, you know, you can feel like a machine. You know, a lot of people in the world today are working in factories. You know that? And they are often doing a job that

can be replaced by a machine.

And though track distribution and literature distribution may at times be a bit mechanical and we have to keep, you know, finding the balance, we have not found any machines or robots that we could afford that are going to go out in the streets and give out gospel tracks and distribute New Testaments and books and Bibles. You're not going to be doing this all of your life, very few of you. So why not give it a try? Mass evangelism, literature evangelism, track distribution, book distribution, that will not be the only thing you are doing.

You will have personal contacts. You will have interreaction in the church. Some of you will be using your ministry of music.

You will be doing a lot of different things, but probably quite a few of you will have a good part of the day of basic, hard, slogging it out evangelism. I thank God that I've had hundreds and hundreds of hours in India doing this because I think I can understand what some of you are going to face. We have seen God use the printed page.

At the same time in North India, there has been no method that has brought big results from educated Hindus. Thank God for what radio is doing and we are linking in with radio and advertising and making known the radio programs. Thank God for those who are involved in in-depth church planting and one of the purposes and goals of OM India is to prepare and train men and women who will go into church planting.

We feel that generally, not exclusively, generally this is more effectively done outside of the international conglomerate of OM by our graduates in an indigenous and national situation. One of the goals of OM India is to continue to help and encourage our graduates in their ministries and some of them are finding it hard and we are trying to help. More will be happening through OM India and OM Pakistan, much more than you will see on your little team.

As you are working in your little corner of Karachi or Delhi or some village, keep the big picture. Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Some of the teams have had very few contacts, not much book sales, hard going.

I read a lot of these reports from the subcontinent, hundreds of them over a period of months. Other teams, phenomenal book sales, people accepting the Lord, Christians helping them. We have almost everything happening in OM subcontinent simultaneously.

Heartbreaking things, overwhelming and wonderful things. It's important to keep the big picture in the midst of sometimes what may seem a small situation, taking a meeting in a small church with just a few people there, going out into a town with your team, maybe being chased out of town with your literature being burnt. It doesn't happen very much.

We don't have reason in India to be all caught up by fear of physical harm. You'd be in far more danger working in Detroit or even Brixton. Generally these people are peace loving people.

The fanatics are still a tiny percentage. Sometimes our teams have asked for trouble because they haven't asked a few simple questions about the town before they just start preaching. What's happened here lately? Have there been any riots? Is there any tension in the town between different groups? And some of the difficulties we've had could have been avoided by a little dialogue even with the police.

But sometimes we just roll into town, jump on the back of the truck and turn on the loudspeaker and away we go, about as sensitive as a bull playing chess. And I just pray, you know, I just pray that God will give you great wisdom. Another area where we need to try to be positive, and this is going to be the toughest for some of you, is if you get on a team where the team leader really doesn't know what he is doing.

I've had some of the brothers, both Indian and international, report to me that even in the past year we have had some people who got put into team leadership and we could not figure out exactly how that happened. We have quite a changeover of personnel. We never have enough leaders.

And we have an awful lot of vision. If you think you're going into a movement where the vision is dying down, you're in for some big surprise because these people have a lot of vision. They have as much vision as I ever had when I first went there.

And because we have a lot of vision, we get overextended. Now we are working on that. We have tried to cut the numbers back.

We have increased leadership training. But it always seems in India, try to sympathize, we are fighting ten different problems at the same time. And our leaders are often hard-pressed.

The state leader may have made a mistake in appointing a particular brother as a team leader. We may not have realized that he was a very insecure person who certainly could not lead a team properly. This is where you must find the balance.

Don't withdraw and say nothing as if you're just some kind of stooge. Don't withdraw and say nothing. But don't become aggressive and hostile in trying to pull off a coup in the middle of a campaign in, you know, some town.

But try to demonstrate to that leader that you love him, you appreciate him, I'm sure you can find something good in him. Get your binoculars out, get your telescope out, I'm sure you can find something good in him or her. Some of the women leaders also have been very, very, you know, out of their depth in trying to lead a woman's team.

We don't have any spiritual *Indira Gandhi*. She is dead by the way. Moving out, leading the teams.

And I would also just urge you to keep at all times your sense of humor because you are going to see some of the funniest things in the history of Christian missionary work. Now don't laugh right in front of, you know, the fellow's face. But, you know, have your own little chuckle around the other side of the bunion tree.

And believe, believe in the most difficult situation. When things are going wrong, that God can overrule. I will tell you in the work of God in general, apart from OM, the things that I experienced even this weekend, the things that some of the churches in Bradford and Leeds have gone through, just unreal, unreal.

If I didn't believe that God could overrule, that God has a master plan, can overrule even our folly and our sins and our mistakes, I don't know how I'd function. And so I would encourage you to develop a positive attitude toward that leader and remember that expression that as you think a person is, often he becomes. And we have seen in India some of the weakest, most frightened, unprepared leaders over a period of years become mighty men and women of God.

And if you can leave behind some encouragement, some love in some dear India brother, Indian brother or sister, that would be a greater contribution than even the hundred thousand or one lack of tracks that you might distribute in your mass evangelism. Being positive toward the team leader and of course then being positive toward the other team members. In a sense, each nation has their national sins.

The Netherlands, certainly one of the national sins must be smoking, many dedicated evangelicals smoke. It's quite amazing, we don't have many Dutch people there, we need more Dutch people going to the subcontinent, not smoking, we can't afford that. But within India, within India there seem to be some national sins and maybe Shanker could share on that.

But certainly I have found, certainly I have found that many times some of the brothers seem to have a rather ease of telling lies. They have not in their culture had it stressed that it is absolutely wrong to tell something that is not the truth. And some of you in your background also have a similar thing because in the West now we are collapsing.

There is a major article about the fact that in the United States now lying is just absolutely standard procedure. Full article in one of the leading magazines in the United States. So in a sense this is probably a national sin in every nation now.

But don't be shocked on your team if you find someone has told a lie as if he has just gone and murdered somebody or committed fornication. Maybe this is something he has just not yet learned in his Christian life. Many because of their background are afraid to just come out with a blunt truth.

And this is where we need to be sensitive and we need to be positive and not just jump on people so quick. And you know one of our great problems as Westerners often as we go to India is we lose our tempers. Now let me just say to any of you sisters who have trouble with your temper, you are going to have to get a hold of your temper more than ever before in your life because in Indian culture it is not acceptable for a woman to lose her temper.

One of the first women we ever sent to India, we didn't really want her to go. She wanted to go. She was very strong minded.

She had been backslidden ever since she came back. But she lost her temper a number of times and people really had difficulty believing that she was saved. I mean how could you? See just as we would, if somebody did certain kind of sin in our culture we would have difficulty believing they were saved.

So if they see some woman screaming and shouting, though you will see that in India, as certainly among the Christians, and there is a twitch of legalism in the Christian Church often in India and other parts of the world, they find it very very difficult. So dear sisters, if you are going to lose your temper, you are going to have to do it privately. And that is extremely difficult.

So I would recommend that you get greater victory over your hot head, your temper, and learn how to supplement, supplement, learn how to work that out in other ways which also is difficult. In general I think most people would say, Linda can bring it into balance when she speaks, that India is more difficult for women than it is for men. It's a men's world.

And Pakistan is more difficult. May Way, my former secretary, went with great commitment to Bangladesh and really she found it quite impossible to relate to the women of Bangladesh and to have a ministry there and feels, I believe, a lot happier now working for me based in Zobington. She was on the phone with me

this evening.

I think it's of course a fantastic open door we have in OM that we have younger women on teams who do get open doors, who do have a ministry, with nurses, in churches, even door to door, which, you know, don't think that's a small thing. Before OM it was hardly ever done, women going door to door, Indian women carrying books. And I think it's just important to develop a spirit of thanksgiving over the open doors we do have and not get too depressed about the closed doors.

And I know you're going to find some very, very exciting experiences. Keeping a positive attitude even toward that weakest team member. God wants to do something through him.

Yet not being afraid if someone is really sinning against the Lord and they're really going against the principles and the policies of the work, to go to that person in love, not with accusations, but to go with questions. Esteeming him is better than yourself. Say, look, I'm new here to India.

I'm just learning. But, you know, when I see you doing what you've just done, punching people in the street when they refuse to buy the books, I just wonder what is your philosophy behind that? And, you know, what is the scriptural basis for this approach? And it's just so much better to ask questions rather than make accusations. If you think someone has stolen your watch, probably you'll have the watch stealing experience or stolen your camera.

Cameras go quick. You're not even out of the airport. They're gone.

So those of you who have these big, expensive cameras, you know, I don't know, better get an insurance policy. But, you know, if your camera or your watch disappears and you just happen to find it under a brother's pillow, I don't know what you're doing looking under your brother's pillow, you don't accuse him. Someone else has probably hidden that there.

Believe the best. Has anyone seen my watch? And maybe give a little story about how this watch means so much. Try to tell the truth.

And you may discover that within a day or two, the watch will come back. No problem. Nobody loses face.

Nobody has to repent except privately. And you've got your watch back on your wrist and you're off down the road driving your truck. And that leads me to another point.

To somehow be positive about the OM machinery. Two kinds of machinery. The machinery that rolls on wheels of various vintages with various combinations of engines and wheels and tires and steering wheels.

And the organizational machinery. We don't get thrown off course in India when we get a telex one day. Proceed to Delhi immediately.

And as we pack and go to the station, someone comes running down the road or bicycling down and saying, we just got another telex. Proceed. Special meeting.

Bombay. So you rebook the tickets which is equivalent to a mini nightmare. And you proceed to Bombay.

And as you arrive in Bombay, someone of course fails to meet you. But you eventually get to the headquarters, be dragged and worn down and discover the meeting has just been switched back to the

town where actually you just came from. It takes two more days to rebook you.

You manage to get in the wrong compartment on the wrong train and end up in Kerala. Now of course probably exaggerating a little bit. Bomb.

Linda doesn't think so. Somehow with all that we are trying to do, because remember we're living in a country where many people have only one basic thing in life. They have to survive.

They have to work. They have to get some food. They have to get some education to get a job to get some food so that they can survive.

In that of course are some pleasures in life. Sexual pleasure. Cinema.

Don't think that everybody is just working and not having any pleasure or enjoying life in India because these people have an amazing ability to enjoy life. But a lot is basic survival. We come to there.

We come there with our mega idealism and our western way of thinking. We like to think of survival as just a couple of hours a day, right? Shave real fast. You know, you hear a message, always be doing three things at the same time.

You're shaving, memorizing scripture and you're using a Gandhi, you know, making spinning with your legs. I've got that Gandhi video. Do you have any space to watch that? I certainly need to watch some videos here to stay sane.

But as you go there, you're going to have to spend more time just in survival. In some places you may have to boil your water. In some places it just takes longer to do the basic things in life.

Don't get frustrated and upset by that. Also because OM is over committed, we're trying to do too much, we are also faced with so many needs, so many people coming up to Alfie Franks' door, XOMers, this person, that person. Now they have a ministry to prostitutes, ministry to lepers, ministry to street people.

I mean, I can't believe all the things they get into. No wonder at times because there is a lack of committed people in our work to organization, to management. And sometimes changing something last minute is a good thing because what we were doing originally wasn't going to work.

So I'm glad that sometimes last minute we change things on Operation Mobilization. But I know sometimes it's frustrating. I decided many years ago that I was going to have my policy, my little hidden policy.

I never told anybody, but I'm going to tell you just tonight. Don't trust anybody. Now that sounds like a real contradiction.

It is. We have two levels. There is a level in which we trust and we have to move out on the basis of that trust.

That's plan A, but always keep plan B in your pocket. Because there is a chance that this person or that person, you know, what they said is not going to work. The car is going to be there at 2 o'clock to pick you up and take you from point A to point B. Okay, you have to go.

You may want to just double check and say, did you say, was that 2 p.m. or 2 a.m.? All kinds of little things cause confusion in the work of God, not just in O.M., everywhere. The more people, sometimes the more confusion. It wasn't Operation Mobilization that turned that ferry upside down in the channel.

They were the professionals. They were the top of the line. And so we don't need to be intimidated by our mistakes and our problems, but we want to keep a positive attitude.

We want to keep trying to improve the situation, and it's good to have plan B. A little bit of sanctified imagination. What if you do get stuck somewhere? Someone doesn't show up. We got stuck once in the Patna railway station.

We discovered these railway stations have little rooms. You can rent a room in the railway station. And David Hicks and I had the best fellowship we'd ever had, stuck in the Patna railway station for, I think, two days.

I got stuck at the border between Iran and Pakistan because I left, just a minor detail, passports and all the money in a restaurant 1,000 kilometers back the road. And I will tell you, when I discovered that, I was really, really mega depressed. But I battled through it.

I got on the phone to Tehran, and I got someone on the plane, and he got to that restaurant, and they managed to get the money and the passports. Meanwhile, I got a lot of letters dictated on the border of Pakistan. Well, I hope that you're going to work hard at developing a positive attitude toward not only these things I've mentioned, but many, many other things that you're going to have to face.

And perhaps, lastly, but the most important of all, try to keep a positive attitude toward yourself. In the midst of the struggles and the failures, don't start getting down on yourself. That isn't going to help anybody.

You get discouraged, you're a failure, your quiet time's not long enough, you don't have enough love, you don't have enough zeal. None of us have enough of any of these things. This is why we're in God's great training program, to grow in love, to grow in zeal.

We keep repenting, we keep learning, we keep bouncing back. Don't get down on yourself, even when you have perhaps what you may feel is a significant failure. We've had some pretty heart-breaking things.

One of the ex-OMers who's now headed out into long-term missionary service, once slept with a prostitute when he worked out in a sub-committee. I tell you, the regret he had through that, which of course these days could easily give him AIDS, I think more than eight years ago, so I guess he's all right. But the remorse and the regret he went through because that one foolish thing in the middle of a lonely night in a city with a very, very seductive woman.

We've had our failures, but we've seen God overrule. That young man, happily married today, is headed back to long-term missions with one of the well-known denominations. That kind of thing doesn't happen much.

It's not usually the big things, is it, that knock us out? It's the little things. Day after day, the little irritations. Somebody on our team just bugs us.

And the more we pray for victory, the more somehow the thorn seems to get in the side. Have you ever read Joyce Landorff's book, Irregular Person? Quite an amazing book. Well, let's pray.

Father, we just thank you for the privilege of going out to this great area of the world. We believe you have chosen us for this. Though we feel unworthy and sometimes we feel overwhelmed, you have chosen us for this, and we are going to go forward with a positive, victorious attitude.

We are going to develop a greater love for these people and our fellow team members. We're going to bounce back when things go wrong. We're going to keep our sense of humor sharp and use it at the right time as spiritual therapy to make us combat-ready.

Father, we thank you for all that's been done this quarter of a century through these teams that have gone out from London and Belgium year after year. We believe this year is no exception. You have a great plan.

We look forward to meeting together with the Indian brothers and sisters, the Pakistanis, the other internationals that we will be working hand in hand with in the coming months and years. And we believe out from this, there will be a great harvest of precious souls. There will be many new churches born as we have already seen that happen.

We believe many more Indians and Pakistanis and Bengalis will become leaders in the church. And if we can be servants of these people, if we can encourage them, if we can just give even a little to the evangelization of this great subcontinent, then these weeks and these years will be well worth it. We thank you for each one you've raised up.

And we're trusting you for great things as we go forward in your precious name. Amen.

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