

Evening Celebration Cambridge 3.1.93

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the urgency of global evangelism and the commitment required for true discipleship in Christ.

Duration: 1:11:00

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 14:33, Romans 10:15

Topics: "Cambridge"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of little things in the life of a Christian. He shares examples of how he personally engages in small acts of kindness and evangelism, such as making phone calls, writing letters, and giving out tracks and books. The speaker encourages the audience to have a vision for these little acts, as they can contribute to the accomplishment of bigger visions. He also expresses excitement for the year 1993, seeing it as a time of harvest in the church and a time to take the healing and help of the gospel to the world. The speaker concludes by sharing his testimony and urging the audience to persevere and press on in their faith.

Transcript

I'm really delighted and honored to have George Weber with us. I've asked Alan to introduce him in a couple of minutes. We've got a number of us who have come from Operation Mobilization, which is what George has founded and is the director of.

Ed and Aya Bukowski, who, as you know, are in St. Petersburg, Russia, now met in Vienna at OM. There's a number of you. Alan was with them for some time.

We're delighted that George can be with us. Just before Alan comes up, we'd like to take an offering this evening. If you would like.

Great joy to introduce our speaker tonight. George is a man who had a tremendous impact on my early Christian life. He's the leader of a movement called Operation Mobilization, which is a missionary training organization.

I think he told me the other day that they estimate that probably have had about 75,000 people through OM now. So I think that's had a tremendous impact on our world. Probably the things that I picked up from George, two things that came into my mind as I was sitting here.

One was that prayer is real hard work. And the second thing that was really helpful for me in being a part of OM was George taught us to have a love for the whole body of Christ. I'd been raised in a Plymouth brethren home and felt like that was the only people that existed in the face of the earth.

And when we got an OM, George exposed us to the whole body of Christ. And I believe he has a message for the whole body of Christ. And so I'm going to call George up now, and I'd just like Steve to come and we can pray for him and ask the Holy Spirit to anoint him for what he has to bring to us tonight.

Even though George is small, you've given him a big heart. And Father, we just thank you that he is with us tonight. We count it a privilege that you've sent this man of God to be with us.

And Father, now by your Spirit, we just ask you to anoint him with power and with your Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, we ask that you just rest upon him and give him the Word that you have for us, this body, tonight. Lord Jesus, just rise above all of his physical infirmities that he may be feeling at this time and just fill him full of yourself.

Prepare our hearts, Lord Jesus, to obey what you have to say to us tonight. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you. Praise God.

Amen. Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every person. That's burned on my heart now for 37 years since my conversion.

It's good to have the privilege of being with you. I think the first few days of the new year are always important. I know every day is important.

But I was in a fellowship this morning where they seldom give altar calls, but when the Spirit of God was done in that meeting, the pastor just stood there and without even any music, just gave an altar call for people to get right and to make decisions for how to use their lives in the new year and people flocked forward in what might normally be considered a little bit of a staid sort of traditional Baptist environment. God is doing tremendous things in the world today. I don't know if you are just a local person that can't see past your own front yard or garden.

Even spiritually speaking, I don't know you and you don't know me, and if you're skeptical for the first 15 minutes, I can fully identify with you. I would probably be skeptical myself. But God is doing tremendous things all over the world.

A lot of people are very negative. I pick up books that are so negative, you know. Everybody is deceived or about to be deceived.

But in fact, God is doing phenomenal things. Maybe you feel there's a lot of problems. Maybe you're having some struggles in your own Christian life.

If you turn to the end of the Bible, you'll discover we win. That's right. So it's a good place to read.

It doesn't mean there aren't heartaches in the world and our hearts ache for those that are suffering and lost and how sad it is when people seem to be unconcerned about human suffering. Millions in Africa without food. We may not be able to do much, but we surely should allow our hearts to be broken.

I had the privilege of using Alan Remley's office, managed in 24 hours to rake up a \$150 phone bill on his phone. And I was opening mail from all over the world, and I got a letter from a relief organization, and in it was a little packet worth 20 cents. That little packet contains this new formula they discovered.

So simple. That can so quickly save lives of starving children. 20 cents.

20 cents a day, at least for the first few days. Then they have to get proper food. Amazing.

So I believe, as it says in 1 John 3, 16 and 17, in this we perceive the love of God in that He laid down His life for us. So we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. And the Church of Jesus Christ today is rediscovering that the Gospel isn't just Jesus Christ dying for us, it's now we laying down our lives.

1 John 3, 16. You see, we got stuck in John 3, 16. Didn't finish reading the Bible.

The very next verse says, He that has this world's goods. Canada is one of the most well-resourced nations in the world. It's also one of the most evangelized nations.

One of the most church-ed nations. Now you may say, well, a lot of these churches are dead. But a lot of them aren't dead.

And we praise God that Canada has been one of the great missionary-sending nations. I've been fellowshipping the last 24 hours with a big, tall Sudanese. Saved in Toronto from the jaws of Islam.

Amazing. Gave his testimony this morning. Going off to Prairie Bible College to get some more training to perhaps go back if he isn't martyred in the process.

Because I tell you, when you leave Islam to follow Jesus Christ, they put your name on a list. A couple of men in Egypt years ago gave their lives to Jesus. Their wives fed them broken glass and their food until they were dead.

That's why Jesus taught in Luke 14 that as Christians we ought to count the cost. We ought to count the cost. You'd better count the cost before you get tied into vineyarding.

I know about vineyarding. We know more about John Wimber in England than you know in Canada. This guy has shaken the whole nation.

And now, John, and now Mr. Wimber has got even a greater vision for world missions. And he's going to be kicking guys spiritually out all over the world and there's going to be vineyard martyrs. Write it down in your little Gospel notebook.

There's going to be vineyard martyrs. They're going to come back in boxes. We've had them in our work.

The early missionary work in Africa, they're all dead. You say, hey man, they believe in healing? Sure they believed in healing. Everyone that died was perfectly, completely healed.

And some of those people that died within a few weeks in Africa believed that healing was in the atonement, believed in miracles. But you see, martyrdom goes beyond all of the little miracles that we play with down here. So Jesus said in Luke 14, Count the cost before you build a tower.

I presume you know the passage. We won't open to all of them. Then he said, before you go forth to war, count the cost.

And then he had Luke 14.33. I bet that's your favorite verse. If Luke 14.33 is your favorite verse, you can collect five free books at my book table. Do you know what Luke 14.33 says? Except you forsake all that you have, you cannot be my disciple.

Have you ever seen that on the text? You know, on the billboard in the average church? Except you forsake all that you have, you can't be my disciple. That doesn't mean that somehow you turn into a beggar and start wandering down the street in a loincloth. But it means, as A.W. Tozer, one of the great writers of all times, pointed out, that you give everything over to God.

He immediately will give you back your basic needs. So you won't end up some kind of spiritual weirdo. But it's a heart transaction.

It's a Holy Ghost, mind-bending, heart transaction. I have a great privilege. As I come here tonight, I have a quarter of a million prayer partners.

Now, I'm, you know, I'm just skinny, 140 pound, you know, standing next to Alan, you know, I look like a midget. But I got a quarter of a million people approximately praying for me. So that's what you're facing tonight.

You think you're running into a spiritual tornado as you sit there. You'll know. Now, they're not all praying at once.

I don't think we can handle that. If they all turn on the power at once tonight, you know, some of you would probably just be blown right out the window straight to China to plant churches. So, these people, they don't all pray at once, you know.

They just, some of them sleep, those in China. You may wonder how I get so many prayer partners. Well, I've been going night and day for 37 years.

And I've been in 60 nations. And God gave us these ships. And sometimes I minister to 18,000 people and they, you know, one look at me, they put me on their prayer list.

They know this guy, you know, he needs prayer. I got more than prayer. Sometimes people used to give me money at the door in the meetings.

And that was the way God supplied some of the money for Operation Mobilization. People would hand me money. They'd say, you know, you don't look well.

Buy a meal here. And they'd hand me some money. I remember once in India, a beggar trying to get some money from me.

My money was committed to Jesus, to world evangelism. I wasn't going to give it to just any old beggar that comes along because there's so many of them in India. Some of them are phonies.

And this beggar came along. He really put the pressure on. He lifted up his shirt, showed me he had almost nothing there.

Food, sir. Food. Nothing here.

He was in trouble. I ripped up my shirt. I said, look at this, buddy.

Nothing here either. So, get off my back. And he went away, chasing a fat guy.

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. That's a command of Jesus Christ. That's a command we have to take seriously, even if we don't feel up to it.

Even if you're a Canadian lover. You just love Canada. You just want to stay here.

You love the snow. You love this terrific weather. I guess this is why people are pushing their way into the airport to get to Florida.

But maybe you're a Canadian and a Florida lover. You're not too excited about Mongolia. Right here, north of China.

Do you know this nation is just open? Do you know some of us have been weeping, fasting, and praying for 35 years for Mongolia? And now it's open. You can go there. You can teach English.

You can set up a business. You can preach. You can give out tracts.

You can print books. Mongolia, it was communist. Now, communism is being dismantled.

There are a few communists around. How many of you pray for Mongolia? Raise your hand. Boy, your hands were all going up because you thought I was going to ask how many of you pray.

What do you think, I'm a jerk? I know I don't look good. I don't come to a vineyard fellowship and ask you, do you pray? Do you pray for Mongolia? Raise your hand. You know, one of the things that I just encourage you to do in 1993 is pray specific prayers.

Pray specific prayers. When you're a baby Christian and you pray, you generally just pray sort of general prayers and you repent and you pray and you repent. You ask God to fill you and bend you and break you and send you and use you and touch you and all these different wonderful prayers.

It's great. But there has to come a day when you get beyond that. We're never beyond praying for brokenness and repentance.

You start praying specifically, specifically for nations, for individuals, for kings. We're told in 1 Timothy 2 to pray for leaders, specifically. I often pray for them and then send them a letter.

I was praying for John Major and got the bird and sent him a book. Got a very nice letter back. I used to pray a lot for Maggie Thatcher.

Amazing how that woman kept going so long. And I prayed for her, sent her a book called Faith in the Dark. And shortly after that, she resigned.

I don't know if she read this book or not. It's amazing how any jerk can send any famous person in the world a book. Have you ever done that? Something you may want to do in 1992.

My prayer tonight is you're going to let your creative juices flow. And you're going to walk out of here dreaming dreams. You're going to walk out of here with visions.

You're going to walk out of here with ideas. Not necessarily big ideas. Life isn't all big things.

We often get funny ideas about people that are introduced like me. Founder of Operation Mobilization. 75,000 people.

You know, a couple of ships. Think, all I'm in is the big things. People think, I'm a great man of faith.

I need another ship just down to the ocean. In the name of Jesus. One more ship.

Somebody wrote me, when are you going to get a jumbo jet for Jesus? Somebody else wrote me, when are you going to launch a gospel train? Somebody else did a cartoon in a Christian magazine of me standing on a submarine that I was getting for Evangelism in Depth. But my life is mainly little things. A phone call to encourage a brother who's going through a crisis.

A letter. 20 minutes visiting someone. Giving out a tract.

Selling a book. Giving a book. Life is little things.

We need little visions. We've got quite a few people with big visions. But for every person with a big vision, you need a lot of people with little vision.

How are we going to get the big vision actually accomplished? The Bible says, if you give a glass of water, like I have over here. If you give a glass of cold water in His name, you shall receive a reward. I'm excited about 1993.

This is harvest time in the church. You get some people think we're just holding out to the end. I've been in some of these churches.

They're shrinking. Every month there's less people. They're holding out to the end.

That is not the age we're in. That's deception. This is harvest time, brothers and sisters.

There are more people coming to Jesus Christ throughout the world than ever before in the history of the planet. That doesn't mean they're all perfect. That doesn't mean we don't need revival.

But when a man comes to Jesus Christ and is born again, that is big. That's not little. I know some people, they run down what God is doing in Brazil.

Because there's a lot of superficiality in Brazil. There's a lot of people come to Jesus and then backslide. There's churches that have got a lot of false doctrine.

But I'll tell you, I've just been in Brazil again. Not long ago, it's harvest time in Brazil. We may have 25 million believers in Brazil.

I tell you, in Brazil, it makes what's happening in Canada look like it's really pretty slow. Not exactly spiritual hockey. God is working in Brazil.

God is working in Argentina. I've just come from Argentina a few months ago. This one guy's church, I think, has gone to 20,000 or something in a matter of a couple of years.

People being saved. People being healed. People being blessed.

This is harvest time. And every one of you should go out of here into the new year wanting to be a harvester. Now, we know it's not as easy to win some cold semi-pagan Canadian as it is to win somebody from Brazil or Argentina.

But nothing's too hard for God. Let's win some of these hockey players. They make good missionaries.

Let's win some of these baseball players. Imagine this year the Blue Jays. Last time I was in Canada a few years ago, these Blue Jays were supposed to come and be testifying in a meeting and I was going to preach at.

And they didn't show up. I don't know, I think they had some trouble that day. But it used to be a number of men on that team were really on fire for Jesus.

I pray for the Toronto Blue Jays. It's one of my favorite teams, at least in the top 30. And I believe they would make some good missionaries as well.

So, God is saving all kinds of people. Prostitutes. We have a work in Quebec.

Just talked to the people on the phone last night. Just among prostitutes in Quebec. We've seen prostitutes saved in the streets of Paris.

Begin serving Jesus. Do you ever pray for prostitutes? Do you know in Bombay, India alone, where I and my wife used to live, we have 300,000. They're spreading AIDS across the entire nation.

Who cares? That's what it seems sometimes. Go into all the world and preach the gospel. This is serious business.

Because the Bible says so. And I hope tonight you, if you haven't already done it, are going to make a serious commitment. Don't want to lose the world.

A serious commitment to be a global Christian. I'm not asking you firstly to go. I'm asking you firstly to become a global Christian.

That doesn't mean you have to wear a world jacket. These jackets aren't just for anybody. These are special.

But it does mean that you have to begin to pray for the world. We have some maps. And they're not very expensive.

Steve Hawkins, our Toronto rep. I don't know how he's got out this far from Toronto. He's supposed to be in charge of Toronto.

But Steve is there. And he's got these maps. What do these cost? \$3.50. Is that Canadian dollars? \$3.50. Get this.

This is a beginner's map. It's a beginner's map. We've got other maps.

That's a beginner's map. \$3.50. Okay. Begin to pray for the nations.

Well, we gave you the Mongolian test. That was a little unfair, right? Let's do something easier. How many of you pray for the nation of France? Raise your hand.

You pray for France. We are not exactly improving at this point. What did Jesus say in Acts 1.8? How many know Acts 1.8? Who can quote Acts 1.8? Jump up and quote Acts 1.8. Surely you've memorized that passage.

Give the whole verse. Ah, that was prophetic. That was prophetic.

You can sit down. See, that's the part of the verse we know. You shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has moved upon you.

Has filled you. And that's what we all want. But that's not the whole verse.

And you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria. And where? The uttermost part of the earth. So if you don't even know where the uttermost part of the earth is, how are you going to become a real Acts 1.8, Acts 1.8 spirit-filled Christian? Difficult.

France. We think France is in Europe. Surely that's evangelized.

France does not even have one twenty-fifth of the witness that we have here in Canada. Not even one one-hundredth. I've just been in France twice again.

The past months, it's unbelievable. The greatest work in France has been the work of the Holy Spirit among the gypsies. That's been exciting.

We'd like to see that spread to the French people. How many of you pray for Turkey? Turkey, right here. Right between Europe and Asia.

You can see it better here. Turkey. Right here over my heart.

Fifty million souls. Fifty million souls. They're just like you and me.

They're people. I'm sure we don't believe in Anglo-Saxon-Canadian superiority complex. None in this cosmopolitan country.

That would be foolish. Turks. They need Jesus.

Fifty million of them. All the believers so far that have come from the majority group background. Most are Muslims.

All the believers that have come out from Islam. We've been laboring there thirty-three years. Could fill.

Just fill this room. Among fifty million. How many people in Canada? Is it twenty-seven million now? Twenty-seven million more or less.

What a privilege to be a Canadian. I tell you, I love this country. This is about my 100th visit.

Sorry, I haven't learned the language. But I love this country. I'm not able to say hey properly.

But... Thank you. Amen, glory, hallelujah, hey. But I believe it is in the plan and purpose of God to continue to bless the nations of the world through Canadian missionaries.

You say, well, you know, I'm willing. You know, if God gives me a call, I'm willing to go. I've talked to a lot of young people about this call.

I think this is a mistake. People waiting for a special emotional call. Sort of a zap in the night.

And I believe we need more guidance. Acts 13. Five men prayed.

Five men prayed. God gave them a vision. They waited upon God in prayer.

And then the Holy Spirit spoke. That's beautiful, isn't it? The Holy Spirit spoke. And said, separate Paul and Barnabas.

Sending them out as missionaries. And the church prayed. And the church laid hands on them.

And the Holy Spirit sent them forth. You study Acts 13. In fact, while you're at it, study the whole book of Acts.

I try to read it every year. Certain sections of it. Almost every month.

The book of Acts. We can learn so much. How the Holy Spirit worked.

How world missions had its beginning. So I believe we need people who are ready tonight to seek God's face about becoming missionaries. Then you wait upon God in prayer.

And then the church confirms. The church and the leaders of the church may say, hey, we're glad you got this vision. We think you need to prove yourself a little bit here at home first.

And then maybe we'll send you out. So I believe we need basic guidance. One of my close friends who went to glory rather quickly after I met him, I hope it wasn't my fault, was a guy named Keith Green.

And Keith Green, he's a little bit extreme. I guess that's why we got on so well. We don't mind him.

Maybe she's volunteering for mission service there. Let the children come. But Keith Green said if God hasn't called you to stay, you ought to go.

That's a bit over the top, isn't it? Maybe the truth is somewhere in between. Do you have a passion to go? Is your heart concerned for the nations of the world? Jesus looked at the multitudes and He began to weep. It's my experience in Britain and many other nations that too often as God's people, we're mainly in it for ourselves.

We want to get a blessing. We want to be healed. We want to be helped.

I want all that. But that isn't where it ends. We then want to take the healing and the help and the gospel to everybody in the world.

Let me put this over here for a bit. And let me at this point just share my testimony. The bottom line I think for what I want to say tonight or what I want to do is I want to encourage you to press on.

I sense there's some people here probably wrestling with discouragement. Ninety-two hasn't been exactly your boom town turn the world upside down year. And you're sort of wondering what does 1993 hold, especially since you don't have a job, you owe a little money down at the bank, your girlfriend's not really quite sure you're the right one yet, and a few other things aren't just working out exactly the way you'd like.

And I would ask you to go into 1993 with a spirit of faith, with a spirit of expectation. One of the things that marks your movement, you know, I read widely, I travel widely, you're a widely criticized movement. There's whole books, half books about you people.

Well, whenever a movement gets criticized like that, I know God must be doing something. If nobody is criticizing you, you are in big trouble. You better get a spiritual check-up right away, because you can't do anything.

I've had so many people criticize me. One of the beautiful things, I thank God, in my own feeble, struggling life, I've never had any bitterness about all the people that criticized and assassinated me and O.M. all over the world, sometimes because of our own mistakes. I remember when Billy Graham was attacked.

He's my spiritual father, and I'll get to my testimony in a minute. But I remember when the more extreme fundamentalist people, that was more known back in the 50s, turned against Billy Graham. He had letters from all over the country, just, I mean, attacking him.

Some of you are too young to know much about all this. I'll give you a little history lesson tonight. He laid all the letters on the bed, and he said, God, I'm not going to sleep until I have nothing but love for all these people.

What's your attitude toward people that don't like you? What's your attitude toward maybe a church you used to go to where you got walked on? What's your attitude toward maybe even people in your own family that really have given you a raw deal? One of the greatest works of the Holy Spirit is the grace awakening. And every night we can go to sleep with a clean conscience and a sense of wholeness and a sense of forgiveness toward all people, even those who may have criticized us. So I hope I can encourage you to press on.

I hope that if some of you are battling discouragement and you've had a rough year, that you'll go into 93 with a spirit of faith and expectation. My message isn't mainly or firstly world missions. My message, I would like to be as apostolic as I read in the book of Acts, to preach and declare by the grace of God the whole counsel of His Word.

Now, I can't do it all. I don't get that many opportunities in one sense. When I go to a church or in a fellowship for the first time, I don't give a message 388, which I do have.

I just start sort of in the beginning. So let me share my testimony because my testimony isn't so important, but I'm hoping that some lessons about encouragement, perseverance, discipline, reality of the Holy Spirit will come through. I'll let your own ministers expound the Word of God.

I haven't come to expound the Scriptures, though I fanatically believe in that. I've come perhaps with exhortation. I've come with a word from the Lord that will have some verber dirt mixed in it for this treasure's in earthen vessels.

And I come hoping that I can encourage you to just keep on running. It says in Romans 10, verse 15, how shall they preach, how shall they go unless they are sent? Have you seen that verse? That's a hot one, isn't it? I get so excited about the Bible. The Word of God.

The Bible is the Word of God. Romans 10, verse 15. How shall they preach? How shall they go unless they be sent? There's a book on the table.

There's only a couple left. Serving as a sender. What in the world does that mean? That's what your fellowship here is becoming.

It already is. This ain't a sleeping fellowship. This is a sending fellowship.

This is not a fellowship just for the magnifying of your own problems so that you can get involved in operation introspection and be one more gospel weirdo. This is a fellowship for seeing people change by the power of God and then seeing those people reach out to others and even across the world. It's a sending fellowship.

Serving as a sender. So God sent Billy Graham to New York City. I feel God sent him for me.

I was from a nominal Christian home. It's just like a non-Christian home. It's really almost worse because religion... Religion is often the enemy of spiritual revolution.

And this church I went to... You need a lot of discernment to understand churches. There are churches that are a bit sleepy, but they're faithful to God's Word. And there's a starting point there.

This church was apostate, departed from God's Word. Salvation, the blood of Christ, departed. It was a social club.

So I was religious and lost. And God sent Billy Graham to New York City not for a crusade. He just came for one night because he heard New York City was so tough.

Two years or a little more before he came, a lady... I know some of you heard part of this at God's Rock on Friday night, so I'll sort of jump ahead. Then I'll condense a bit. Two or three years before Billy Graham came, a woman put me on her hit list.

You might call it a prayer list depending on what you're doing. She not only prayed that I would become a Christian. That was bad enough.

She prayed that I would become a missionary. There wasn't even any discussion. Imagine that.

I don't know if any of you have a grandmother or grandfather or uncle or aunt praying that you're going to become a missionary. You might as well just go as soon as possible. Save yourself a lot of hassle because God answers prayer.

And then that woman sent me a Gospel of John through the mail. And I began to read this Gospel because I was seeking. Now my life was sports, women, New York nightclubs, money.

That was my life. And this woman comes meddling into my life with her prayers. Many of you have had the same experience, right? Somebody praying for you.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty unto God to the pulling down of strongholds. I'll tell you one of the most encouraging things in this Canadian visit was when I was with you people on Friday night and after the meeting was over, you spent time in prayer. I tell you that's where the battles are won.

I've tried to spend a half night in prayer almost every single week of my life. It's not always easy. And there's no brownie points for just sitting in prayer meetings.

But the Bible says that we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and against powers. And if we're going to get in spiritual warfare and there's going to be a lot of it in 1993, we've got to get down to prayer. We've got to get down to specific prayer.

And we need to make sure our own personal prayer life is sorted out. That takes discipline. That takes faith.

It takes accountability. So this woman that came into my life was a powerhouse for God. Later on, after my conversion, I met some of the other women that used to follow Billy Graham around just praying for him.

Just praying for him. Absolutely amazing. In fact, Billy came back to New York City two years later.

And I was privileged to be in some of those prayer meetings behind the scenes. People on the floor weeping, crying out to God for revival in New York City. Anyway, I went to this Billy Graham meeting.

And I heard the Gospel that Jesus Christ died on the cross for me. There may be someone here tonight that's new to these things. Jesus Christ died on the cross for you.

And Billy, at the end of this meeting, did something I had hardly ever seen. He called people forward to repent. To be ministered to.

I initially wasn't going to move out of my seat. I didn't need that much. That seemed like heavy dosage.

I had this blonde with me. Proxide blonde. Didn't have a great reputation.

I was secretly in love with her. So I bowed my head and prayed for her. Maybe she could use some of this hot religion.

I was already the president of my church youth fellowship. I was about to receive the God in Country Award in the Boy Scouts. I tried to get in the Girl Scouts, but that door was closed.

Do I need to repent? Do I need to repent? But as I bowed my head and prayed, it was a long time ago, the Holy Spirit hit me like a fast train. Isn't it great when the Holy Spirit just really opens up on you? Oh my, oh my. Be ye filled with the Holy Ghost.

D.L. Moody. You ever read about D.L. Moody? You know what the secular encyclopedia says about D.L. Moody? Overweight American evangelist who depopulated hell by two million souls. So much for Weight Watchers.

D.L. Moody, way back more than 100 years ago, he would emphasize the need to be filled with the Holy Ghost. And he would emphasize the need to be filled again and again. One day a lady in the front row said, Mr. Moody, why do you keep going on about being filled again and again? And he looked her in the eye and he said, Madam, because I leak.

That ministered to me. I've had very special meetings with the Spirit of God. I've often spent whole days in prayer in mountains, in caves.

It was when I came back some years after my conversion from being arrested by the KGB for Bible smuggling in the Soviet Union. I went for a day of prayer in the mountains of Austria. I was in the top of a tree.

And God, just like that, gave me a picture of millions and millions of people being reached throughout Europe. And then He gave me two words that I had never hardly pronounced in my life before. Operation Mobilization.

And that led to the birth of OM, which 75,000 people have taken part, which tens of thousands have gone to heaven, which over 100 organizations traced their birth roots back to. One woman prayed for me. Billy Graham let the Holy Spirit send him to New York City.

I forgot to tell you that I got to the meeting because a businessman gave me a free seat on a bus. Praise God for people using their money for the kingdom. I tell you, if God has entrusted you with any money, quite a few of you from your eyes, you look broke.

But if God has entrusted any of you with any money, that is a serious thing. That is a serious thing. Even as a young Christian, I had this little business.

I sold firefighting equipment and fire alarms and a few other things. And I owned a little philatelic agency, a stamp business. That wasn't really so good.

You'd buy a stamp for one cent and sell it for a dollar. I sometimes felt bad about that. I gave those businesses to God.

And one of the greatest joys I had as a young Christian was giving money for World Evangelism. Before God ever sent me. Before I ever went to Mexico.

I was 18 when I went to Mexico. So Billy Graham gave the invitation. I went forward.

I was saved. The Holy Spirit came to live in me. Began to fill me.

I went back to my high school with the anointing of God. Do you know what it is to have the anointing of God on you at 16 years of age? It's dangerous. Because you can do stupid things.

Because the anointing doesn't mean you're smart or clever or educated or know Greek or can preach the Word of God. But I went back to my high school and I began to speak of Jesus. We organized prayer meetings.

We got into the Word. And fortunately, we got some good Christian books. If you don't buy some of these great Christian books we have there tonight, even if you give them a post-dated check, we take up to the year 2000.

You need your head examined. Because it's a privilege to get a hold of Christian books. Get some things sorted out in your own head.

We started these prayer meetings in this high school. This school where a third of the students were drunk on the weekends. It's just outside New York City.

People are wild. We had one meeting. 600 people came to the meeting.

And when it came time for me to give an invitation for people to repent and believe on Jesus Christ, 125 of those students, some of them the school drunks, stood up. Before that, we had a campaign to distribute the Word of God in an amazing way. 1,000 students in that school promised to read the Gospel of John.

Can you imagine students, high school students, reading the Gospel of John? Most of all those people that stood up in that meeting were young people. Some of them became missionaries. You see, that lady had prayed for a revival for that school for 15 years.

Are any of you discouraged in your prayer ministry? I love it when Christians are honest. Don't you like it when Christians are honest? Stop playing games, tear the mask off, and really be real. That's one of the things that's kept me going all these years.

Be real. And be accountable. I hope you've got somebody you're accountable to.

How many of you ever struggled with your sexuality? Raise your hand. Let's see how honest you can be. Whoa! Look at that.

Almost everybody. That was my big struggle. I tell you, from age four, these little things that God created with little different kinds of eyes and faces and hair and knees.

Age four. I fell in love at age four. I remember because I wasn't going to school yet.

And I waited outside this primary school for this girl, this one girl, to come and sharpen her pencil in the window. By the time I was 16, there were 32 different girlfriends in my life. And after I was saved, for a while I thought, deliverance.

All this is going to be taken care of. Don't make that mistake. I remember leading this girl to Christ there by the Washington Memorial.

I think I told you that on Friday night. And then for the next three hours, necking with her. This is not in the personal evangelism book.

I don't even know what word you use for that anymore. And then I had a major failure. I'm embarrassed to share this, but I want to share it.

Because thousands of young people have written me over the years. I mean thousands. 22,000 have written me just from one of my books alone.

And many of them have said, look, it's been your openness, your honesty about your struggles as a Christian in the area of sex that have totally changed my life. So one or two years after being a Christian, I thought I was doing alright in my Christian life. That's dangerous.

Beware if you think you're doing alright in your Christian life. Why? Because the Bible says, take heed lest you fall. I was at this little sleepy Presbyterian college.

God was working. There was an anointing. I went down to the jail.

Most of the people got saved there. I went into the streets. People were coming to Christ every week.

I thought I was doing alright. Not much problem. I wasn't even dating girls anymore.

I went into this fast against dating. I think when we're first converted and we've got struggles with sexuality, we tend to let the pendulum swing the other way. No more women.

No more dating. Touch not. Look not.

Some guys put their necks right out of joint just trying to look the other way. And I hitchhiked hundreds of miles from this college to visit a friend, a relative. And she was busy.

So I went out in the streets giving out tracts. Indianapolis. Young Christian.

Now let me just jump back and say at 16 I was into pornography together with all my girlfriends because in that day in my community you wouldn't sleep with these girls. We didn't do that so quickly back in the 50s. And so you got confused and you fell easily into the kind of mild pornography we had.

And of course I knew this was wrong and as a Christian I turned from it. But that day in the streets of Indianapolis I was giving out tracts and I was starting to get confused. The lights, the women, the pictures.

And to my amazement I walked. Stopped giving out tracts and walked right into a burlesque place, striptease place, girly place. I don't know what they call them anymore.

Can you imagine as a Christian sitting in there watching? Well, I discovered I really was a Christian that night because I was miserable. This was not me. This was not what I wanted.

And I was out of there like a flash. And I walked into the telephone box in the Indianapolis bus station and picked up the phone and started to pour out my heart to God. They used to have these nice phone booths.

They're great for prayer. I was pouring out my heart to God, repenting of this lust of the eyes. But I felt condemned.

Have you had the devil try to condemn you in 1992? Try to say you're finished? You're no different than you were before you were saved. You might as well go back to the pit because you're still living as if you were there. The accuser of the brethren tried to hit me in that phone booth.

But I stood on the Word of God. A verse I learned as a baby Christian. Confess your sin.

He is faithful and just to forgive you and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. And I walked out of that kiosk, that telephone box. I didn't feel forgiven.

But in raw faith, I turned from this lust. And as I walked through that bus station, it's as if it happened last year, a man walked up to me and within a moment, he said, what must I do to be saved? I mean, have you had this experience in the bus station? People ask you, where's the bus to Winnipeg? People say, where's the bus to Ottawa? They don't walk up to you in a bus station or in a train station. They say, what must I do to be saved? Within an hour, after sharing from the Word of God, we walked up to the Indianapolis War Memorial.

He gave his life to Jesus and was born again. Often when God wants to use you in a mighty way, you will be tempted. I remember once, another bus trip years later, I was going to speak at the biggest meeting in my life, the Urbana Convention.

I was to be the youngest person ever to speak at the Urbana Convention, the Great Missions Convention, with 10,000 people. And on a bus, away from my wife, a bit lonely, I saw the most beautiful woman I had ever seen in my life up to that time. And I thought, there's only one thing I want in life.

Can you imagine a Christian? Only one thing I want in life right now. I want her. Of course, it's so ridiculous.

She probably would have just clobbered me with her pocketbook. But when Satan is turning on the heat, we do stupid things. In five minutes of stupidity, young man, you will regret it the rest of your life.

But I knew spiritual warfare. I knew prayer. I ran into the telephone booth.

This was years after the Indianapolis crisis. And I repented. And I cried out to God for help.

I was all alone. I walked out of the phone booth. I saw her again.

I used to get angry with God about this. I said, Lord God, why do You create things so beautiful? Why aren't there more ugly women in the world? It would be so much easier. I ran back into the phone booth.

It's the truth. And God just took it from me. The amazing thing is I found out the next morning I slept real well that night that that woman was behind me in the bus seat the whole time.

It was all over. It was all over. I was again another extreme temptation.

The Lord just took me through. Infatuation. How many of you are married? All married men at this time can raise their hand.

Let's see who is married. Okay, all the married women. Raise your hand.

Infatuation. It happens. There's a book on that table called Eros Defiled.

I think it's there. John White. Everybody should read this.

If I were a pastor of a church, you have to read this before you get in a church. It's so basic. It's so important.

John White has been one of my favorite authors for 25 years. He comes from Lancaster where the ship vision was born when I lived in a converted pub not far from where he was born. I was up in Sweden.

And again, it happened. I thought, I'm finished with all this now. I'm getting older.

I've got a couple of kids. I've got a good marriage. We've got the normal marriage.

We're making love. We're doing what needs to be done. I'm up in Sweden and I see this woman.

Suddenly, I'm sitting in the back of a car with this woman and I'm feeling like I hadn't felt for a long time. Because as marriage goes on, sometimes the feelings aren't so condensed. They're there, but they're stretched out.

And I was infatuated with this woman. And it was tormenting me. I want to tell you, if you ever have this experience, it is not from God.

It is not from God, no matter how nice it seems. We had a man in London years ago who got a prophecy. Praise God for wisdom these days in testing prophecies.

He got a prophecy that he had married the wrong wife. So he divorced her and got one. Of course, she was also more in line with his theological changes.

We've got to have the power of God, but we've got to have the Word of God and those two things in balance. I remember what old Bob Mumford used to say on that. It was a great help to me.

So I knew that wasn't from God and I fought it. I think I even shared it with my wife. I've always kept an open book with my wife, not in every detail, but in a basic way.

And an amazing thing, this woman joined Operation Mobilization. And an amazing thing, she moved into the same headquarters where I was living. And I tell you, I had to battle that.

You see, it wasn't a matter of just doing anything with this woman. We have to guard our minds. We're not to run lust trips through our film track in our heads.

That's lust. It's wrong. I kept praying and I kept battling.

We believe in deliverance, but God sometimes lets you wrestle with something for a while before you're set free from it. You must understand that. Eventually, within some months, God set me free from it.

When I saw her later on, nothing was there. But before that deliverance was a time of struggle, a time of testing. Later on I met her and she got real fat.

So I said, even as a human being, I said, thank you, Jesus. No, I shouldn't say that. That's not right.

I quoted from Billy Graham the other night and somebody came to me this evening and said that quote from Billy Graham has just been on their heart and is so ministered to them. Billy Graham speaking at an Urbana convention. By the way, I did go to Urbana.

I had to take Billy Graham's place that night at Urbana. And when I gave the invitation, it was an invitation for people to repent, especially of moral sin. And 4,000 people stood at Urbana and repented.

And I meet them in every nation almost of the world as missionaries and soldiers of Jesus Christ. Do you know what it says in the book of Proverbs? The wicked woman hunts for the valuable life. Why are we seeing so many Christian leaders? Did you read John Wimber's article about fallen leaders? Everybody needs to read that.

Why is that happening? Because the wicked woman under the inspiration of Satan hunts for the precious life. And again and again as a young Christian, as my life was being formed, as God was preparing me for India, God was preparing me to help start this movement, the enemy again and again tried to destroy me and trying to make use of the greatest, greatest weakness in my life. The whole sexual area.

Now, maybe that's not your problem. Fine. You can contextualize what I'm sharing to whatever your problem is.

For many women, and many women don't understand men, and our marriages would be a lot better if we did understand one another. But many women, their big thing isn't lust. Their thing is insecurity.

Fear of never getting married. Worry. Those three things.

And those three things often set women up to commit immorality when they have no interest in the sexual side of the whole thing. At least at that moment. But they're afraid and insecurity comes in and worry comes in and other pressures and then you have that sort of cooperative effort.

All the time I'm having to deal with people on the phone. I can't do all the counseling I want to do. None of us can.

Some of it I have to do over the phone. One of my friends in Chicago, her husband, just walked out on her to go off with another woman. Do you realize how devastating that is? Brothers and sisters, we do not have to have that kind of thing in the body of Jesus Christ.

In our own movement, we've been going 35 years all over the world. We have had very little. We keep short accounts and close accounts.

We walk in the light. 1 John 1-2. Very little of that kind of thing.

I don't think we should be intimidated by this program that Satan has going. I think we need to stand on God's promises and know that we can walk in purity. We can deal with infatuation.

We can deal with problems in our marriages. And God, I believe, wants to do a new thing in this area. But let me go on a little more with my story.

I saw some amazing things happen, but more and more, my focus was the unreached people of the world. I began to read. I thought I had brought a copy of Operation World up here, but it's back there on the table.

It's a book that shares prayer requests on almost every nation in the world. And I began to read books like that and missionary prayer letters and go to missionary meetings. I went even 75, 80 miles away to go to a missions conference.

I'd never been to one. I couldn't believe it. All these exhibits, all these different missionaries, all different groups, seeing what God was doing.

I recommitted my life. I said, God, I'll go wherever You want me to go. I guess in some ways I'd already prayed that.

I prayed it again. And as I studied, somehow some literature about Mexico fell in my hands. God's providence.

Tonight, you have to face the reality of God's providence. Being in this meeting Sunday night talking about the world, hearing this testimony, being exposed to some of these countries we've referred to, this literature, God's providence. I am only able to accept one out of every 20 invitations to minister in Canada.

People will pay my air ticket from London to Vancouver almost any time I want. I'm not saying that to boast. I'm only saying that to drive home that in God's providence, we're here tonight.

I leave at 6:45 in the morning out of the airport. And I believe it's because there are some people here that are just like where I was at 17 years of age when God was turning on the heat for the unreached people. And God was saying the nations of the world, the people of the world.

Well, what can I do? Eighteen-year-old kid still struggling with lust. Not very disciplined. Still a hothead.

Still a big mouth. These things don't all change overnight if you've got these kind of problems like I had. Have.

How's God going to use me? But I learned how to pray. I experienced the fullness and the baptism and the reality of the Holy Spirit. I learned how to memorize Scripture.

I learned how to hold high the shield of faith to stop those fiery darts of the enemy. I learned how to deal with discouragement. And I had plenty of it.

And at 18, after reading about Mexico, I said I'm going to go. I didn't have a church. I probably made some mistakes.

I said I'm going to go. These people need Christ. I had read that many people in Mexico didn't have the Scriptures.

I was interested in raising money for Scriptures before I was even saved. You can imagine what happened after I got saved. I believe everybody in the world should have at least the Word of God.

I wrestled with this. I prayed. I didn't have any money much.

God supplied an old van, 10,000 Scriptures, and two other brothers that I recruited to go to Mexico. That was the first birth of Operation Mobilization. I was 18.

I saw people fight to get a hold of the Gospel of John. I saw people, even though my Spanish was so weak, we'd play Gospel records and we'd see people just repent and come to Jesus. When that kind of thing happens to you and you're just a young Christian and a teenager, your life is never the same.

I went out to a garbage dump, worked among the garbage people. They lived in the garbage. Imagine going to the local garbage dump for a meal.

I picked up a little baby and held the little baby in my arms. One third of her body was covered with flies. I saw people getting their meals by picking little bits out of the rubbish, out of the garbage, and making a little garbage soup and drinking it.

I walked into the sunset that night and I completely again broke before God and recommitted my life to be an ambassador of Jesus Christ. Though it was very much against my peers, my relatives' thinking, I went back to this university where I was studying and I quit. And I tell you, that was not done.

I threw the opportunity for a degree. I had no degree. Can you imagine in modern society not having even a bachelor's degree? I mean, idiots have a bachelor's degree in the United States.

I left this university and I went to Bible college. I didn't know what Bible college was. I largely went to Bible college in Chicago because I was burdened for the cities.

Let me get some water. I was learning by doing in the jails, in the streets, literature distribution, preaching, and yet I was in a little sort of out of the way place near Knoxville, Tennessee. So I went to Chicago.

I went to Bible college and I started going door to door with Spanish books and into the streets and working among drunks. It changed my life. Your life isn't going to change just going to meetings.

Your life isn't going to change just in praise and worship for an hour and I love that. Your life is going to change. That's part of it.

When you start practicing what you're singing about, when you start trusting God in specific ways, it's too much general kind of faith, survival faith. You start trusting God in specific ways. God taught us in those very early days that He would provide money through prayer.

You didn't have to go on a big fundraising. I'm not against fundraising, but you didn't need to go on a big fundraising thing and waste a lot of money on glossy literature and all kinds of things in some of our organizations. 50% of the money is spent to raise the rest of the money.

It's ridiculous. I'm not going to give any of my money to those groups. I'll tell you that.

We had prayer for finance and we saw miracles. Again, I could go on too long. I think I shared with you on Friday night.

I'm the longest preacher in Europe. A lot of doors closed to me because of that because a lot of our churches like short meetings. I preach a lot among the Anglicans and there are a lot of spirit-baptized, spirit-filled Anglicans in England where I'm from.

But some of them, some of the more traditional churches, they like short services. I was in a church and the man wanted me to speak 20 minutes. I said, hey, what about 25? He said, take 21.

But I think I told you about the meeting in Germany many years ago. I was preaching about discipleship and commitment and world missions and the need to forsake all and follow Christ. Young people were listening.

It was mainly an OM meeting so I felt free. We organized it. A man in the back was trying to get me to stop.

He held up his watch. I said, folks, praise be to God. Look at this man.

He's donating his watch for world missions. From Spain and from Chicago and from that Bible college, God sent me to Spain under Franco, Nazi Spain. We saw miracles.

From Spain, I launched a thrust into the Soviet Union, a little bit premature. I wasn't really ready. How many of you know my good friend, Brother Andrew, God's smuggler? He's a wild Dutchman as well.

Tonight, you've got Brother George, God's bungler. It's the truth. I went into the Soviet Union.

I had these Gospels hidden in the cornflakes boxes. I had a printing press under the dashboard. And due to my own mistake, I got caught on the second or third day there near Love in Ukraine.

What a devastating experience. They interrogated us for two or three days. They first thought we were American spies going to send us all expenses paid vacation in Siberia.

Then after a day or so, they decided we were religious fanatics. Gave us a submachine gun escort back to Austria with the help of the Czechoslovakians. Devastating.

Failure. Any of you had any good, juicy failures? 1992? Let me tell you some good news. Failure can be the backdoor to success.

And you're not hearing the testimony tonight of Mr. Success. You're hearing the testimony of a failure who again and again has had to crawl back to the cross and ask God to redirect me and help me and fill me

afresh for His service. There's a book out now.

You ought to read it. It's brilliant. It's called Failure, Backdoor to Success.

I haven't even read it. Just the cover broke my heart. Some of you don't read much? Just go look at the covers.

Just look at the covers. It'll break your heart. Think of that book.

We're all sold out. Grace Awakening. I believe it's the greatest book of this decade.

Grace Awakening. Amazing. Amazing message especially for characters like me.

Failure, the backdoor to success. Let's make 1993 count. Let's go from here with a spirit of expectation.

Let's get these maps of the world and begin to pray for the nations of the world. Let's realize that if God can use an old lady and a struggling lusty holic to begin a mission society that has given the Gospel to 500 million people never done before on this planet, then you don't have any excuse. Get with it.

In the name of the Lord Jesus. Your prayer life. Your evangelism.

Your walk with Jesus. The purity. The reality.

I already told you what happened after I came back from Russia. I went back for a day of prayer on the mountains and God gave me those two words, Operation Mobilization. He said I was to mobilize Europeans.

I wasn't a European. How am I going to mobilize Europeans? I was a nobody. Our group called Send the Light previous to this new name, Operation Mobilization.

It's unheard of. But an answer to prayer and the nights of prayer and a work of the Holy Spirit. By the next summer, God gave us 200 Europeans.

By the next summer, 2,000. A couple of years later, an ocean-going ship that could reach tens of millions through the Gospel. A few years after that, a bigger ocean-going ship that has a staff bigger than most mission societies.

300 people on MV Dulas listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the oldest passenger ship of the world would soon launch out and touch nations across the whole world. Around that same time, another movement was born that you're more familiar with, Youth with a Mission. I remember meeting Lauren in California when Youth with a Mission was being born.

Within minutes, there was a bonding. And Lauren said, Hey, I'd like to come over to Europe and see what you people are doing. This very humble man came to Europe, not for a great position.

I didn't know what God was doing. Youth with a Mission was just being born. I said, Lauren, you can be in charge of the literature.

I got pictures of Lauren Cunningham carrying boxes of books around the OM warehouse in Paris the year between the two summers that we gave the Gospel to 25 million souls. God works in different ways in different people. But God wants to work in all of His children.

Nobody is excluded.

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