

Fighting for the King - Easter Evangelism 1987

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual fight, cultural sensitivity, faithfulness, and fruitfulness in evangelism and missions.

Duration: 53:58

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 Timothy 2:4

Topics: "Evangelism", "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being a disciple of God. He mentions that since the early days, 400 million people have been reached with the word of God through preaching, personal work, and literature. The speaker shares his personal experiences of evangelizing in the communist, Muslim, and Hindu worlds, as well as working for church renewal and supporting full-time workers. He encourages listeners to persevere in their spiritual journey, acknowledging that they may face challenges and failures but reminding them that their Savior has already won the fight. The speaker also mentions the importance of being a part of a team and continually striving for spiritual growth and improvement.

Transcript

Praise the Lord. Let's just pray once again. There are many, many things on our hearts.

After the ministry of the Word, we're going to go right into a time of intercessory prayer and touch nations and people and government, kinds of things around the world. But let's just pray once again now. I know you have been praying, you have already been worshipping.

Let's just allow that sense of expectation and vision just to keep going as we pray. Lord, there's so much that I would love to share to this beautiful group of committed people. You're just going to have to help me, Lord, to just leave aside things that are secondary.

Though we know there's always a straw factor no matter what we do, no matter what we say, but may there be minimum straw and maximum wheat as we share together, as we pray together, as we seek your face together. Thank you for what you're doing around the world. We thank you for what you're doing right now at Spring Harvest.

We thank you for what you're doing in individual, unnoticed local churches. They carry on their witness. Thank you for what you've been doing in Italy where I've just come from, out in Pakistan and Bangladesh,

other parts of the world.

Grip us with greater vision. We may have a world vision and be committed with action, with life, everything to world evangelism. We thank you now for this time together.

In Jesus' name, Amen. I really believe that somehow I'm in the Lord's purpose as being with you tonight and I'm excited about what's happening here and I just hope that somehow you can grasp something of what is burning on my heart and has been burning there as far as I can remember every day now for 32 years, this passion to just obey the Lord Jesus Christ wherever he leads, whatever the cost, to obey his word, do his will, that self may be crucified, that Christ may be magnified. No, that's nothing new and it's a joy to be in this church.

I've heard about this church probably for 20 years and I think it's my first opportunity to share with you and I know some of you are from this church. You've already had a focus on Operation World, so I'm not going to say much more about it except that I myself am praying through this systematically. Though I've been involved in mission 32 years, I learn something every time I practice.

This is one of the most significant Christian books that has ever been produced in history. There is almost nothing like it and I just commend it to you. 500 pages, not to put it in your library, but to pray through it.

We're going to be using it tonight. The prayer cards are taken from it. The maps of the world go with it, probably at a special price and we've got this whole batch for \$7.30. Is that this? Oh, \$4.50. Wow, all those things for \$4.50. Tremendous and now we've arranged to give this free with it as well.

You know, I just talked to them. I am still praising God for what happened the last time Billy Graham and Luis Palau were in this country. You know, some people say, well, you know, this is program evangelism.

What we need is power evangelism. I tell you, the last time Billy Graham and Luis Palau came here, it was program and power because only the power of the Holy Ghost can save people and sanctify them and fill them and change their lives. I, of course, have a little bit of a bias as I was saved in a Billy Graham meeting 32 years ago and have never been the same one day since.

And I got a hold of some of these recently and was just looking through it and it was just a reminder of what God has done over the years through the visits of this servant. There's so many people thought would Backslider be off the rails years ago. He's still on the move and you can have that as a gift if you purchase Operation World or some of the other books.

Let me mention the writing of Oswald J Smith. On Saturday, I head off to Canada to speak at this man's church that he found. He's the Jesus.

I was with him just a little over a year ago before he died. 96 years of age, still going strong, very weak physically. The only thing he could do was pray.

That church committed equivalent to 700,000 pounds to foreign missions, world missions last year. This isn't the States with a big box. This is Canada with a little box.

Very ordinary people who believe the Word of God. That's all it takes, you know, to believe the Word of God. Men are lost, need to be reached, and it's worth sacrifice, it's giving, it's trusting God for the impossible.

This is the book that probably as a young Christian made the greatest impact on my life. Different title at that time. Challenge of Missions, Oswald J Smith.

Introduction by Malcolm Whittakam. Take My Life by Michael Griffiths is really my favorite book on discipleship. Very old now, but in my mind, it's a classic on commitment.

And how we would love to have him, he often speaks at our OM conferences, how we'd love to have him for a week. Well, we can't get him. These people aren't easy to get, but we can get his best material.

I've heard a lot of his other material. Doesn't get near what he put into it. Take My Life, if you get only one book, because maybe you're broke, get this book, Take My Life by Michael Griffiths.

A new author on the British scene is Gordon MacDonald, the new president of IFES or of InterVarsity. Ordering your private world and restoring your spiritual passion without a question will be probably two of the leading books of this century. They are making an enormous impact in North America.

The British editions have only just come. These are books that Christian leaders pick up who have read two, three hundred books. They pick them up and read them and they say they're in a class of their own.

I want every single OM leader to read both of these books and I was just so thrilled to find them here on the book table. Lastly, what I call the greatest book of this century as far as an overall spiritual book, covers a wide range of spiritual emphasis. Dr. Lloyd-Jones' Spiritual Depression.

You're not going to agree with every line if you're not of his same theological persuasion. Don't worry about that. This is an encyclopedia on spirit-controlled, spirit-filled discipline.

It's deep. You'll need a year to absorb. But I commend to you Dr. Lloyd-Jones' book, Spiritual Depression.

People thought he would never come to minister on OM because he was so strong in certain ways and OM is such a, you know, mixed multitude, Pentecostals and Brethren and Baptists and Anglicans and those who put their hands in the air and those who sit on the keeper forum and all different types gathered together. Lloyd-Jones surely would never, you know, mix with a crowd like this, but you know, God led him to come and minister on our ship when it was in London. And he gave a message that you can get from Things That Matter, our OM tape library.

You may even be able to get it from STL. But that's a tape of the message he gave when he came to the ship. And it was a message of balance, emphasizing doctrine and a need for revival and a great work of the Holy Spirit.

Absolutely what the Lord has put on our hearts all of these years. Now, I hope you've written a few of those titles down because they are outstanding. And I mean that with all my heart.

If you get any of those books, you don't feel absolutely challenged. And that's just the greatest book bargain you ever had. You write to me.

I mean this. I will apologize. And I will send you 25 free books with my apology because we don't want to lead anybody astray.

We don't want anybody to take any merchandise that they're going to be dissatisfied. Let's now turn to the book of books. This is in a total class of its own.

These are just sermons in print. And if they're not based on the Word of God, we're not interested. But we're here to look at the Word of God.

It's interesting, without knowing it, FFA has asked me to speak on the same subject that they assigned me to speak on at Spring Harvest. And it's the subject of the fight. I'm not going to give the same message because there is so much material.

Maybe a slight overlap if anybody was there in mind head. But I do believe God has called us to be fighters for the kingdom. Now, we need to understand what that means.

It doesn't mean we go out in the road, meet somebody of another religion, boom, we punch him in the nose. And you know, one of our goals during this week is that you may develop cultural sensitivity. I would love to talk on that subject.

I'm sure someone else is. I've just come from Italy. And when you're in Italy, you do it the Italian way.

Last summer, I was in Poland. When you're in Poland, you do it the Polish way. Of course, as foreigners, we'll always make some mistakes.

People will be willing to forgive us. But as much as possible, we need to take the gospel to people in a way that will be culturally sensitive. Why one of the first things we learned, those of us working among Muslims, is that we treat our Bibles, our actual Bible, in a little bit of a special way.

Never allow it near our feet. Muslim would never allow the Koran to go below, generally, his waist. They carry them wrapped in a nice, beautiful cloth.

They treat the Koran with far greater respect than we treat our Bibles. Of course, we may want to avoid bibliology. We don't worship the actual book.

They're a little bit into that, I'm afraid. So we're not interested in that extreme. But we can certainly avoid in a meeting where there might be any Muslim, you know, having the Bible on the floor.

That is just a horrendous thing. And I share that, just in way of example, that there is incredible complexity in the work that God has called us into. Reaching our friends from abroad, here.

There are tremendous obstacles, tremendous problems. And I just pray that you will understand, we need to have our L-plates on this. Maybe this isn't the week when we're going to turn Manchester upside down for Jesus.

We want to do that. We don't want you to feel inhibited or intimidated with your big prayers. We always get little people on OM with big prayers.

But it may be that this week, God's big event is for laying a foundation that's going to last 20, 30, 40 years in your life. That may lead you into a lifetime in-depth series of relationships with people from other countries, people of other races, people of other backgrounds. It was a great joy in my seminar at Spring Harvest to have an English woman ministering with me, a very gifted woman, and a dear West Indian preacher ministering with me, or I within the three of us in that same seminar.

One English woman, another man from the West Indies, and one sort of migrant immigrant American speaking together on very, very hot issues. And the Lord just gave us a team spirit as we did that. We

hope you will feel welcome to the team here.

We at OM are just learners. We are strugglers. We are failing every day in some area, little areas, some days big areas.

We have our L plates on. Do not think, you know, you have arrived and OM is going to show me exactly everything I should do in my life. I've witnessed things in cross-cultural evangelism.

We may actually show you some things not to do. But one thing is for sure, if we are going to do this kind of work the rest of our life, we are going to have to develop spiritual fight. We are going to have to develop stickability.

Turn with me now in your Bibles to Timothy chapter 4, 2nd Timothy chapter 4. Paul was able to say, I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith.

Isn't that beautiful? I once gave a message comparing Saul and Paul, similarities in their life up until a point, and totally different. Saul chose to live for himself. Paul chose to live for his Savior.

Paul was able to say, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live yet. Not I, but Christ liveth within me.

And so at the end of his life, Paul could say, I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith.

Saul had to say, I have played the fool. I have played the fool. You can make an interesting comparative study.

Look at 1st Timothy 1.12. 1st Timothy 1.12. Further word from the mouth of Paul. I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who hath enabled me in that he counted me faithful putting me into the ministry. God has put us into this.

I believe God has led us to be. Maybe after a few days you may even wonder why am I here. Maybe you'll feel your motives aren't 100% pure.

Total purity of motive is something we work for all of our life, not something we just pick up as a baby Christian in a meeting somewhere. And so if there's any motives that are not 100% pleasing to God, just deal with it and leave it and get on with obeying him. The Lord knows that sometimes as we go into the streets, we don't have a great emotional love for these people.

I've just been reading John Hagjai's brilliant new book on leadership. He talks about the vision. He talks about the mission.

He then talks about the goal to make the mission a reality to fulfill the vision. And he shared how, you know, so often he doesn't have that emotional love and what real agape love is. And it's agape love that we're going to have to demonstrate to this community and to this city in going the extra mile and reaching out when we don't maybe feel like it, and going to that one more door and talking to that one more person.

I will tell you, I believe we are going to see lasting fruit as a result of coming. God wants us to go forward with a spirit of expectation. In OM we strongly believe in faithfulness.

We emphasize perhaps faithfulness as much as we do fruitfulness. But we must have a spirit of faith. We must have a spirit of expectation that we are going to see fruit.

God has called us into this ministry. God has led us to this place. We come in weakness, we come as learners, but we come in the authority and power of the Holy Spirit.

Let's not forget that. Paul also mentions the word fight in a different phraseology in chapter 2 verse 4. No man that wreath entangleth himself for the affairs of this life that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. That of course is tied in with verse 3. Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Sometimes this week it's going to be hard. You know as I haven't been to Italy for a number of years, it was a great joy to go back there this weekend. It was a very special meeting.

It was a very great privilege to be invited there. That's why I traveled so far to be there. But I will tell you, I met so many young people who got their training on an OM team that I came back convinced.

And I constantly need reconvincing. I've got this deep cynical skeptical streak that I battle with. And I just became convinced what OM is doing in Italy though it's one of our weakest smallest deals.

We had a spontaneous meeting of ex-OMers and you know 30 people came out of the trees. I don't mean literally, but they came to the meeting. I don't want to give you any wrong ideas about Italy.

And you know a number of those ex-OMers are long-term anointed church planters and church workers. Some of them are elders. The other visiting speaker, the Italian speaker, we're ministering together two main speakers.

He was on OM for a number of years. And here we were two of us minister together. I believe God wants to lay foundation in your life this week.

I know some of you already have foundation. But I'm speaking especially to those of you who are younger, those of you who may be somewhat new to intercessory ministry, to moving out in evangelism, to becoming a fighter in God's army, enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. I know that in my life I'm still learning and I'm relearning.

What a privilege to be in God's army. One of the things that really concerns me about people in ministry, and I'm often ministering to Christian leaders and to pastors, missionaries. I've just come back from Bangladesh and Pakistan and Nepal.

A lot of the meetings were Christian leaders and pastors and missionaries. You know what really disturbs me is when those of us in the ministry start to groan, we get the murmurs, we get the groan. People aren't loving us enough.

People aren't sending us enough money. People aren't caring for us enough. People aren't encouraging us enough.

This person doesn't appreciate my ministry. This person, that person. Pretty soon we get into a sort of mud puddle of self-pity.

We are chosen people. Whether anybody is showing you enough love or not should not determine your spiritual climate. Your spiritual climate must be and should be determined by your fellowship with God himself.

That is what produces fighters. That is what produces spiritual runners. That's what gets people to the end of God's marathon as Oswald J. Smith at 96 years of age or Keith Beck was the first British director of OM in his mid-20s.

Paul said later on in the book of Philippians that he ran the race. He wanted to finish the course. I'm sure you're aware of other similar verses, of other phrases like fight the good fight.

I love chapter 4 verse 12 in 1st Timothy. Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believer in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. OM, very, very criticized movement when it was born in Europe or reborn in Europe.

Didn't have that name when it was first born in Mexico. Just this summer celebrating the 30th anniversary of the birth of the work in Mexico. But it was really very tiny until that great fiasco I had in the Soviet Union when I went there in 61.

Many of you know my friend, Brother Andrew, God's smuggler. Tonight you have Brother George, God's bungler. I also, you know, went into the Soviet Union and was going to give out Bibles and I got arrested by the secret police due to my own stupidity and they accused me of being a CIA agent in the Soviet Union.

Spy? Really? Do I look like a spy? You're the first audience that's ever done that. Usually they just look at me. It's sort of a skeptical look.

But I came back from that failure and it's good to face up to failure especially since so often it's a springboard to success. And I spent a day in prayer. It was during that day of prayer that these two words came to me for the first time in a spiritual context.

Operation. Mobilization. Before that my main burden was the communist world, closed countries.

I was living in Spain under Franco and the Muslim world. But through that fiasco I realized something had to happen in Western Europe. Something had to happen in Britain, in France, among God's people.

We couldn't just import a few Americans but something had to happen in Europe and that would spill over into the communist world, into the Muslim world and the rest of the world. And as you know that has happened to some degree. Since those days 400 million people have been given the word of God face to face in preaching or personal work or literature.

400 million have been faced through these armies of people that God has raised up who had this great passion to be disciples. A disciple is a disciplined one. A disciple is a soldier.

A disciple is a fighter. The terminology we wanted to stress this evening. Let no man despise thy youth.

You see one of the reasons we were criticized was because we were so young. And maybe you will feel criticized or maybe when you get back home from this week someone will intimidate you or maybe you will be intimidated by the fact that maybe the week hasn't been all that you expected and maybe you didn't win anyone personally to Christ or maybe you even had some struggle or failure. How many of you young

men, I want to be honest, ever have serious struggle with pornography? Just raise your hand.

No one's going to remember. Just put your hand up. Does anyone have a struggle with pornography occasionally? Raise your hand.

Well, I can relate to you because I have battled pornography all of my life. At 16 I was a pornohawk. Started to peddle it.

I was saved. I was able to put a match to those magazines. My mother didn't even know I had them.

They're nothing compared to the magazines today. They're just mild back in the 50s. And God gave victory but the temptation can come just like an alcoholic.

That temptation can come back at any time. Some of you know the story of how I bumped into one of these magazines in the woods and didn't exactly win the battle. So let me give a positive story that yesterday morning running as I go out running in the morning as I came back to this conference center where I was ministering there was a piece of pornography just right in the tracks because of God's grace and because he's taught me how to fight against this, how to resist it when it comes on.

Even though the temptation was there, it was small compared to the grace of God. I just grabbed it. I thought my arm was going to ignite and put it in a rubbish tin without giving a second hardly any look whatsoever.

How do you do when you get that temptation, young man? It's interesting how ignorant women are of what men battle. To set the record straight, of course, men are ignorant of what women battle. So it would be good if we could all have a little more sympathy one for the other and realize we are weak and not presume and understand that you may have a crisis in your life.

I've had many crises. I believe in deliverance. I believe in prayer.

But if that crisis is not followed by a process, it will become an abscess. I know I probably say it every year. Too bad.

A lot of you are new. Every week I hear of another major Christian leader who gets his marriage blown up, his ministry blown up and decides to go out and fornicate. I'm just being blunt again.

I'm talking about Christian leaders. I'm not talking about young people on an FFA ministry week up in Manchester. I'm talking about the big boys.

Now, the Apostle Paul said, I'd buffet my body. That's Paul. I don't hear too many people talking about this buffeting of the body.

Sounds a bit aesthetic. You know, do you really think asceticism is the big problem in the English church? Asceticism is the big problem in the English church. Asceticism.

Or maybe you feel the big problem is enthusiasm. People are too enthusiastic, too much love, too much faith, too much prayer, too much excitement for God, maybe in this church. But it's not the problem of the average church.

A.W. Tozer, another one of my favorite quotes I like to give every year. Probably missed it last year. But Tozer said to think that too much enthusiasm or anything along that line was the greatest problem in the average church was like sending a squadron of policemen out to the nearby cemetery to guard against a major demonstration by the residents.

I love that quote. If it gets you upset, then you can talk to Tozer when you get to heaven. If you're allowed, even in his presence, when you get there, you'll be so close to God.

I'm sure you will, too, by the blood of Jesus Christ. We are called to fight. No matter what blessing you get, no matter how many scriptures you memorize, no matter how many O.M. Summer campaigns you go on, no matter what experience you have, conversion, the fullness of the spirit, different people give different names to different experiences.

Whatever. If you don't follow it up by developing the ability to be a fighter for God, you will probably end up a casualty. Because we are in total war.

Satan is out to destroy us. Even today, I've heard of another white man, God, who has been wiped out in the con. I might just say to bring that into balance that for everyone I hear that does get knocked out.

First of all, some of them do recuperate and repent and get back. And there's a brilliant book on that subject now by Erwin Lutzer. We don't have it here, but you can write down the title called When a Good Man Falls.

And if you know anybody that's fallen into moral sin, you get that book into their hands, When a Good Man Falls. So some of these people who fall, they experience God's cleansing and they get up and they run the race again. And God uses them at least to some degree.

Here's the exciting news. As far as I'm concerned, for everyone that falls in my feeble evaluation, there are 10, there are 20, there are 30 who are going on. In our own movement now, in the marathon race for 30 years, we've had very little of this kind of thing.

And it is a testimony of God's keeping power. It is a testimony to the fact that discipleship works. If you will get into a program and in which you are trained in your body, in your mind, in your whole being, you will become stronger in Jesus Christ.

You will learn how to resist temptation. And God is no respecter of persons. So even though you may be young, God can do a deep work.

Let no man despise thy youth. And I hope that will be true here this week. That we will be spiritually sensitive.

That our goal as we go out in everything we do will be to do it 100% for God. If it's to wash the dishes, if it's organize the books or sweep the floor or give out tracks or go door to door or drive a vehicle. It's not just the personal work that we want to be quality.

We want everything to be quality. Six of us who represent the whole OM world as OM is divided into areas. Six of us meet for the next three days, 10, 15 hours, 10, 12 hours a day with one great passion to make OM a work of greater quality, to bring more glory to God, to deal with any sin, with any error.

We'll spend much time praying, looking over memos and letters that come to us from our leaders. Keep hitting this mic. I'm sorry about that.

Not the right place for me. Who write to us all over the world saying, look, this needs discussion in OM. This needs improving.

This is an area where sin may be getting in. So we meet because we want this work to be quality work. We want you to be a quality disciple.

We want you to be a demonstration of the love of God. We want you to be a marathon runner in God's race. We want you to be that 1 Timothy 4, 12 young person, an example.

You can be an example back in your own church. And one of the most important things, as we in a few days will leave here and go back to our own churches, some of course go to college first, one of the most important things is to be able to contextualize what you receive here, to adjust it or adapt it on a simple, to contextualize it back into your home situation. That's going to take a lot of wisdom.

You don't run home and say, well, in OM we did it this way. Why don't we do it this way in our church? No, that is being completely foolish. That's how not to communicate.

And I will tell you, if we would learn more about communication, if we would learn more of when to speak and when not to speak, if we would realize more that it's our example that's going to make the difference in our own church, or fellowship, or Christian union, or wherever it may be, then we could see a greater foundation. You know this part of me that's actually opposed to these big events like this? This is big for an evangelistic effort in which everybody is out witnessing. It's big.

And it's part of me that opposes this. But I believe that the good outweighs the problems. Everything in life has the straw factor.

A campaign like this will have its straw factor. That's life. When you get married, there'll be the straw factor.

If you think you're marrying an all wheat woman, you're crazy. They don't exist. I got the last one.

Somebody doesn't believe it. She doesn't actually. But the reason I say it is because our burden is not evangelism as a campaign.

Our first burden in OM is evangelism as a lifestyle. You write it down. Evangelism as a lifestyle.

That means it's seven days a week. It means it's 365 days a year. It means it cannot be separated from your life.

Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness. Any group that can combine dynamic strategy, as Mickey will be teaching, as others will be teaching, any group that can combine dynamic strategy with dynamic lifestyle is going to win in this decade in terms of God's work. And we are committed to that, even though I'm sure it's a long road.

That's why if we are willing to walk out in the streets and talk to somebody about Jesus Christ and bang on their door when they may not want someone to bang on their door, they may be making their chips or wiping their little, taking care of a little baby or something, and you bang on the door. If you're willing to do

that and go out in that kind of evangelism, but you're unwilling to invite anyone into your home. Oh, someone of another culture in my home? What if they forget to wipe their feet at my little mat on the door? Have you ever seen these little mats that happen in America? It says, welcome.

It's a joke. But if we're not willing to open our home to people of other backgrounds and other races, then something rings foul in my ears. I know that needs wisdom.

I know that needs balance. I know getting involved with people is something which you must understand your own limitations. I'm not asking you to go down to the pub and bring in a whole crowd, you know, 50 people, bring them all in, make your first Indian curry and probably destroy them.

You may want to start with one person. That wouldn't be too big a challenge. And I stand guilty because I have a Hindu man who runs a little shop around the corner from my house, and I have thought of asking him in for tea so many times, I'm hardly ever there, and I haven't got around to it yet.

I've talked to him, got my other neighbor in, I haven't got that dear Hindu man to come in yet for a cup of tea. And I'm without excuse. I fail.

Let's not just be those young people who are willing to run off to a foreign city and go down the streets with a few tracks and bang on a few doors as much as I believe in that, but let's be those people who make this week a week of laying foundations in our lives, getting some things sorted out, getting our priorities sorted out, and determining that for us evangelism will be a lifestyle. Now to do that, to be involved in that, you're going to have to have a lot of spiritual fun. Quite a few people ask me, how can I pray for you? This may sound strange, but I would ask you to pray that I may not, in my 40s where I am now, it's supposed to be midlife crisis.

I never felt it because to me all of life is one horrendous crisis. But I just would ask you to pray that somehow in my 40s, as OM has become so big, so complex, so many, that I will not lose my fight as far as I know. I've never lost it for a day, a few hours.

I battle a lot of discouragement. I'm way too idealistic. I need spiritual balance.

Pray for that. I don't like to speak on that so much anymore because my daughter told me some years ago that I'm extreme now in this whole area of balance. I'm trying to get the balance and not speak about balance.

It's getting more confusing by the week. But pray for me, pray for my wife, very well right now, that we may not lose our spiritual fight. I tell you sometimes, if someone had asked me this morning how I felt, I would have said, rock it, you're in round 14.

Obviously you don't go to films. I don't recommend that film, but it was a great challenge when I went to it. Because I will tell you, in my Christian life, trying to evangelize the communist world, the Muslim world, the Hindu world, trying to work for renewal within the church, trying to see 1,600 full-time workers fed and clothed and given the tools to do the job across the world, while simultaneously recruiting another 2,000 to join in the summer, and a few other problems on top.

Sometimes I feel a little bit like Rocky in 13th Rent, but he got up and he won the fight. And my Savior has already won my fight. And so though I may get knocked down, and I may feel miserable, and I may feel discouraged, and I may sense enemy intimidation, and I may be mystified how God could ever use such a

worm as I, I am going to get up and get back into the battle.

And if there's any of you that are on the mat, or you're out of the ring, or you're in the grandstands, even though you're sitting right there, you're running. Emotionally, mentally, spiritually, you're running. Just like Jonah.

And I pray you would renew your commitment to God, to God's Word, and to battle. He has called us to here this week and for the rest of our lives. It's a battle in prayer.

It's a battle in evangelism. It's a battle against lust. It's a battle against discouragement.

It's a battle against all sin. We haven't got time tonight to give you a Bible course on the theology of spiritual warfare. You're going to have to do that on your own in the months and years to come.

Meditating and memorizing passages like Ephesians chapter 6, and many, many other very important passages on this subject. Corinthians 15, 58, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain. Satan is going to counter-attack what takes place here.

Be ready. Be warned. Get back home.

Maybe even during the week, Satan is going to counter-attack anyone who professes faith in Jesus Christ. And you know, we have a little policy on OM, I'd like to mention it to you, is that when people make a decision for Christ, we do not consider that a conversion. We do not say seven people were saved, six people were saved.

We say he professed faith. If you want to say something else, say we're hoping, we're praying it's a real conversion. It seems to be real.

You can say even that. But let us not just count decisions as conversions, because history shows that 90% of them are not, whether it's Billy Graham or anybody else. I will tell you, you can get a decision in a couple of minutes, but to get a disciple takes much longer.

It is my view that sometimes when a man makes a decision, he is saved. He is soundly saved at that moment by the grace of God, because he had true faith in Jesus Christ. I believe in other cases, that decision is an indication of something.

He's interested. And if he's followed up, and especially if he can get into a living church of compassionate people, and he's followed up, often within the next few weeks after making the decision, somewhere in the mystery of God, he will cross over from life, from death unto life. That's why follow-up is so important.

I had someone come to me and say, does OM engage in any follow-up? What? 98% of all we do is follow-up. 98% in one sense is follow-up, because even the young people who come on our summer campaign, and they may give out tracts, they may begin to witness, they may learn different things, and God uses them. That's the amazing thing.

What is our first goal in having them for a summer? Guess what? To see God bring into being a generation of spiritual revolutionaries. That's just evangelism, just church planting. We would not use summer people.

But because we have the combination of seeing people's lives radically impacted, through getting involved with them in prayer together, in nights of prayer, in Bible study, working together, trusting God for miracles, praying in finance, standing against enemy fiery darts. We can teach them this, they can learn this, and at the same time be used to win other people. It's not one or the other.

Often we get in arguments on different biblical principles and we say, you know, is it this or is it that? And often it's both. Am I coming on OM to be trained or am I here to turn Manchester upside down for Jesus Christ? It's not either or. We don't need to argue over that one.

It's both. Is it personal evangelism or mass evangelism? Both. Is it sending a team in to witness or is it planting a church? Both.

This is why it's so beautiful when a local church has this and an outreach agency raised up by the Holy Ghost like OM can work together because we need each other. The local church is the key to evangelism. But if they don't learn how to work with the outreach agencies that God has raised up ever since the book of Acts, they will throw away part of the key.

Because God raises up people like OM and gives them expertise in languages, in culture. Our men have been church planting in Turkey for 20 some years. We've been working among the Afghans for 20 years.

That's why the leader of our work among the Afghans is also the leader of a new movement called Serve of many different mission societies working together to penetrate the Afghans. Why? He knows the language. He's got 15 years of experience, almost a senior missionary among all the workers among the Afghans.

Why should we make the same mistakes again and again? Why should we bypass existing godly gifted men on the field? We should not bypass these OM leaders on the field any more than we should bypass a dynamic local church if we want to penetrate a particular area of a city. Well, that's a separate subject. I have to leave because I want to get to it.

We are called to fight on many, many levels. I pray that you will understand that you must have a specific follow-up program in your life to follow up blessings on the crises of deliverances, of whatever experiences God has given you, the great worship times, hallelujah. You have got to have God-programmed discipline in every area of your life for standing against enemy attacks, for bouncing back when you sin or when you do fail, for dealing with difficult emotional situations.

That is not a matter of one summer or one year. I have said for years it generally takes a decade. It takes generally a decade to get a man's spiritual intensity.

Place where he can have an apostolic ministry and move into a Muslim land and see a church established in the power of God. A lot can be happening during that 10 years. A lot can be happening the day after you're saved if you'll open your mouth.

But in terms of the kind of apostolic cutting-edge ministry we need in the Muslim world and the communist world, for the average person, needs a plan on a decade. There are no shortcuts to the kind of missionary work we read about in the Book of Acts. We are living in a hostile and you're going to feel some of this.

We are living in a day in which false doctrine has invaded the church and we now have churches that even deny, we've had them for many years, the very basics of the New Testament, who don't even believe

people are lost, who do not even believe that Jesus Christ is the only way, the only truth, the only life, who want us to all sort of get together, all different religions and sort of all acknowledge that basically the Buddhist God and the Hindu God, which is actually a billion, and the Muslim God is basically all the same. So if you want to go out and preach the gospel and see people converted to Jesus Christ, even in some churches, you will be considered as fanatic and as a bigot, as extremist, and you have more opposition than you'll get from people of other religion. Problems within the Christian church are often within our own house because we haven't cleaned up our own house.

That's why as much as we want evangelism, we want revival, we want restoration, we want renewal, we want to go back to the Word of God. That means sometimes we have to fight even as the Book of Jude, as defenders of the faith, standing for the full inspiration of scripture, standing for the full deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, standing for the atonement, standing for the doctrine of heaven and hell, and all the other biblical principles. There's no way we can obey God and just throw doctrine to one side to be defenders of the faith.

Our God and Father, we thank you for gathering us here to engage in this ministry of prayer tonight. This is a vital aspect of the spiritual fight that you have called us into. Some of us may not feel like it.

Lord, we come to you and we, by faith, allow self to be crucified tonight. That we may give ourselves to intercession, and we may start thinking about other people and other nations, and we may take on some of these enemy strongholds. For as your Word says, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty unto God, to the pulling down of strongholds.

And so we are looking to you for some of those strongholds to come down tonight. We thank you for the privilege of being your soldiers, being in your battle, and we put on all armor in order to engage in spiritual combat. Lord, you know our hearts.

You know some who are very young in these things, very new. Don't allow them to be intimidated by their youngness. Don't allow them to be intimidated by anything.

May they stand firm on your promises tonight. May they realize they are your child. We are kings and priests, the youngest among us.

We are heirs and co-heirs, and oh God, we want to live by you. So we look to you. We praise you.

Look out at the harvest field. We realize the harvest is plenteous, but the labors are few. And we are praying, we are believing, that labors are going to be sent out.

They're going to be sent out of this sleepy city of Manchester. Even to the uttermost parts of the earth where many people's groups, the church, does not even exist. Oh Lord, increase our vision.

Help us determine our mission and enable us to work out in the weeks and months to come the goals that will make that mission a reality and bring it into being. Thank you, Lord. Praise you now.

Lord, I pray for those that may have special needs here tonight, that they would not wallow in introspection or think they have to wait for some special meetings a year from now, but that they may appropriate grace for that special need right now. They may spiritually breathe by confessing any sin and receiving forgiveness and your cleansing blood in that area. Oh Lord, I thank you for the victories you do give.

Whatever our battle may be, maybe fear, maybe lust, maybe worry, maybe introspection, maybe something else. Oh Lord, take it to the cross. Cleanse it away by your precious blood.

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. I'd like us, before we have a further time of worship, just right now to pray in triplets. Groups of three.

Two of you put your hands together.

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