

Foundations for Communication

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of communication and spiritual growth in our lives, especially in relationships and missions.

Duration: 55:33

Scripture: Ephesians 4:30-31

Topics: "Communication"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of world evangelism and reaching out to four billion people. He disagrees with the idea of living a simple lifestyle and believes that there should be more emphasis on spreading the message of Christ globally. The speaker also encourages the audience to rely on God's grace on a daily basis and to take a stand against bitterness, resentment, and unforgiveness. Additionally, he highlights the need to learn how to relax, bend, and break in order to effectively handle the challenges and problems that come our way.

Transcript

What a challenging day this has been. Praise the Lord. Let's just pray.

Oh Lord our God, we thank you for all that you have done today in individual lives. We thank you for the privilege of gathering in this way and to feed and receive so much information and challenging material. We thank you for this church.

We praise you that you are going to send out laborers from this church. Lord, we just commit now this, in some ways, brief time to you, that we may really do your will, even in this meeting. In Jesus' name, amen.

My great problem is that I always have too many messages on my heart, and I find it very difficult at times to know exactly what to share. I'm not one of these persons that's always 100% sure what the will of God is. I even have some doubts whether I should even be in Memphis right now, because I feel so strongly that I belong back with my wife and my two sons.

I don't think we can comprehend what it is for some people to be separate from their wives. Sometimes, just thinking about it, I almost start crying. I was taught, of course, as a little boy that crying was for sissies.

So, before I was converted, I was declaring all-out war against tears. So ashamed, whenever I cried, I'd go hide. And it was a wonderful experience when I came to know Christ.

I discovered I was allowed to cry. Isn't that great? Jesus wept. Paul wept.

And I hope that if you feel the need to cry in these days, you know, just cry. You want to come in my office and cry? I can assure you, if you cry in my office, I will definitely cry. We will have a Niagara.

Now, that doesn't mean we live. We don't bathe in our tears. We just, you know, out and away.

I try to talk to my wife every day on the phone, because the phone rates are now much cheaper. You can direct dial from Memphis. Isn't that exciting? It's also dangerous.

But, overall, I took the gamble and I came here, and I think and hope that I am in God's place. And it's the same way about this message. I'm not sure this is God's message for tonight.

But I'm going to take the gamble. The message has a title because you're all so diligent in taking notes. It's too late to go get a pencil now.

But I call this message Foundations for Communication. Now, sometimes I've given a similar message called Foundations for Communication in Marriage. But I don't think we have enough married couples tonight to justify that effort.

So, I'm just going to talk about basic principles of communication. However, let me say that in marriage, communication is absolutely essential. I once counseled a married couple.

They had no communication for six months. You know, except, you know, pass the butter, warm up the coffee, have you washed my socks, you know, real, real heavy stuff. And when there's no communication, the devil is very clever in getting in.

As we launch out this summer to Europe, we must communicate on our teams with one another, with the leaders. We have to learn about the, to communicate about the things that really warm our hearts. But we have to learn about, to communicate also about some things that may be bothering us.

And I want to just give you some of these basic principles that God, because I'm a slow learner, has been trying to burn into my soul over these many years. You know, we're all in God's university. Some of you feel you don't have enough education.

You're like me, I've got a great desire to go back to school. It's one of many desires I tend to have to put on the altar, because I don't think that's the Lord's plan. But you know, it's wonderful that we can be constantly studying, constantly reading, constantly learning.

All the time I'm listening to new cassette tapes. All the time I'm reading new books. I subscribe and read to a couple of dozen periodicals.

I receive prayer letters from several hundred missionaries, including O. Emmers. Always learning. Someone once said, well, when do you prepare for your sermons? Of course, I have to have specific preparation.

These notes didn't just jump, you know, off a cloud into my Bible. But I feel in another sense that my whole life, everything I'm doing, everything I'm living out, is preparation for my next message. And that next message must be in total line with the way I'm living.

Cannot be separate from what I'm living. Doesn't mean that I'll be living in the exact same par, because the message often will represent my goals. But I feel this is one of the most important aspects of what we're going into in this work.

Our desire is to put into practice that which we say we believe. I hope that's one of the reasons you're coming on this summer effort, those of you who are coming. To put into practice what you say, and some of you have been saying it and singing it for a long time.

And if we're going to do that, we've got to learn to communicate. We were sharing in the leader session this morning about relationships. And I shared with the leaders, they're just leaders in training.

It doesn't mean they're ever going to be leaders, at least in the next couple of years. But I shared how every relationship will be tested. Some of you are beginning to build friendships here.

Friendship is the first stage, or should I say the second stage of relationship. The first stage is acquaintance. Some of us, we're only making an acquaintance.

But praise God, many an acquaintance I made years ago, in God's timing, became a friendship. A friendship blossoms into a relationship, where there can be continued fellowship and prayer and unity to work together in God's Word. There's a lot of emphasis on this in the New Testament.

Let me, for example, just share one of the verses that again and again has challenged me along this line. In the book of Ephesians, the book of Ephesians, chapter 4, verse 30, I hope I can speak one of these evenings on be filled with the Holy Spirit. It's the message that I sense I need to speak about more than almost any other message.

Be filled with the Holy Spirit. That's not some super spiritual experience for a few people who stay up late, or who fast near unto death to get some extra blessing. That is an extremist, ascetic view that will help very few.

The fullness of the Holy Spirit is basic crucified living. It's for every Christian. Some seem to come into this walk with God because in a sense it's a walk with God.

It's a lifestyle by crisis. Others by process. Many more by crisis and process.

Be filled with the Holy Spirit. I believe if you yield your life wholly to Christ and experience something of the cross and the lordship of Jesus, that you will be a spirit-filled person. But you will have to be filled again.

And also there's a danger that as a spirit-filled person, you will grieve the Holy Spirit. Some of you may use the terminology the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Whether you use that terminology or the fullness of the Holy Spirit, you'll have to agree, I believe, that it is possible to grieve the Holy Spirit.

We often do. And this is especially true in our relationships one with another. We grieve the Holy Spirit by an unkind word, by a wrong action or reaction.

And the actions are easier to handle than the reactions. I do all right if I have a couple of minutes to think about it. It's the split-second stuff on the telephone that sometimes disarms me.

Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. 31. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another. Forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you. Let me read this in the New International Version.

Chapter 5, especially starting at verse 31. It's beautiful. God has so spoken to me again and again through these words.

I pray that you will let the Word of God speak to your heart. We're not here mainly to hear man's ideas, even man's commentary. We want to hear the Word of the Lord, and He uses His Word to speak to our hearts.

And as we listen, as we pray, that Word becomes real and personal. And we experience revelation in our hearts of what it says here. In print.

Hear the Word of the Lord. Ephesians chapter 4, verse 31. Well, let's read from verse 30.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as Christ God forgave you.

Then it goes on about being imitators of God as dearly loved children. If we go to Europe with this kind of reality, we will make an unbelievable impact for God. You may feel at times that people don't like Americans, and there are many around the world who do misunderstand, and others who don't like Americans.

That will be no problem when this Holy Ghost reality is burning in your life. I find no opposition to any great degree to the Americans who are with OM and who are by their life demonstrating this kind of Holy Spirit reality. Most of our fields in OM will take all the Americans and certainly all the Canadians and Mexicans that they can get, and especially so if they have some of this Holy Spirit reality in their lives.

It's this kind of reality by God's Spirit that's going to enable us to build relationships and to learn some great things about fellowship and communication. Now, Satan will counterattack this, and he will try to hinder us, and he will try to discourage us. And I pray that you'll not be discouraged by any failures in the area of communication.

In some ways, it's a high art. We live in a world that has become almost a semantic jungle, and it takes perseverance to learn how to communicate. I've often said that I feel OM is a greater preparation for marriage than it is for missions.

Some mission societies are upset with us because we don't send them enough candidates, though we're trying very hard. They fail to realize that a high percentage of people that come on OM, especially in Europe, they are not people who have even thought of becoming missionaries. They don't feel that is God's will for their life, and that is their privilege.

And it is not our job to put a guilt trip on them because they want to go back into secular work. And the majority of Europeans come on OM because they feel relaxed about it, and they feel it is a training program for life. Of course, many of them do end up going to Bible school and going on into missionary work.

An amazing number. There are ex-OMers in almost every nation in the world. But our first burden, and if any leader disagrees with this, there's no problem.

He's wrong and I'm right. It's simple. You don't have any problem.

He may have that as a personal burden, that his biggest personal burden is to get people in the Muslim world. And of course, I can understand it when he expresses that, expresses it that way. But overall, as a movement, in sensing everything that all the leaders are feeling and praying about, we feel our first burden is to see spiritual revolution in the lives of the people who come with us, to see spiritual growth, to see spiritual health, and to see, therefore, a foundation laid for marriage.

We are preparing people as much for marriage as for missions. And if your marriage isn't on a solid foundation, and now, before you're married, is the time to prepare. People often say, well, it isn't fair to marry couples.

Boy, do you hear what they said? If I have 10 kids, they may not even take me. Here's some of the murmuring. But if people would only understand, we as a movement have our limitations.

We cannot take everyone. And the organizational effort to handle one family is equal to the organizational effort of 10 to 20 single people, without any question, in this kind of work. And any family that comes in OM, I hope you see it as a very real privilege.

If not, just don't come. Because we are looking for people before they are locked into marriage, because in 25 years of experience, we have found so many married couples have just launched into marriage without getting some of these very basic things sorted out in their lives. And though in some cases in OM, we're able to, you know, get these things sorted out, and I, for one, especially take a lot of married couples into my team.

My other leaders are always on me about taking too many married couples. So don't misunderstand what I'm saying. But I believe that a lot of our marriages would be doing a lot better today if somehow there was more training and preparation for marriage.

When I went to Bible college, there wasn't a single course that taught anything in relation to preparation for marriage that I can remember. I must have forgotten something. Maybe I repressed it.

I don't remember any instruction or training about rearing children, though I did take a course in child evangelism. Maybe that was supposed to be the key. In one sense, marriage is God's graduate school.

The single life is the undergraduate program. It's easier, less strenuous, more free. But when you're married, you're locked into a lifelong thesis, so to speak, and you're in God's graduate program.

I'm so thrilled when I meet so many ex-OMers, often in their own countries, going on for God with happy marriages. That just excites me. In fact, I may be getting on a tangent because in many places, I prefer to speak about marriage than missions.

And one of the reasons is in Europe, if you speak about missions, and it's true in some places in this country, the people you want to talk to don't come to the meeting. It's sad. I don't agree with that.

It's sad. And I'm finding now when I take a weekend of meetings with the church, I say, don't call it a missions conference. Call it a spiritual life world outreach conference.

Something, because the word missionary and missions is so misunderstood. It's so loaded with funny little connotations. And we have so many false ideas of what a missionary is.

What a challenge. Communication. What are some of the specific things we can learn on OM this summer that will prepare us for marriage or prepare us for teamwork? Some of you are going to be single all your life.

You've been praying hard. The Lord would lead, leave you single. I've met too many of those and you're going to be in the single life, but you're going to be on a team.

You have to learn to relate to people. You're going to be in the church. We feel there must be a continued strong emphasis on the local church.

And we want you to know how to relate to people in a local church. I have a whole message. I won't have time to give it at this conference, but it gives the reasons why I feel so committed to the historic church.

It's called why I remain in the church, even when at times the church may be lukewarm. I won't give you that now. It's not time.

The first thing I believe we have to learn is we must learn to be more unselfish. Write it down, underline it. Selfishness is so unbelievably easy.

In the next couple of days, you're going to be given a memo about manners. Manners is a simple way of being unselfish, considering the other person in food, in sleep, in practical things. And if we can go to Europe just a little bit more unselfish than perhaps some others that we may meet, then we're going to minister to them.

Philippians chapter 2 teaches that we should esteem others better than ourselves. I want to say that I am still very much in God's school in this area, learning to be unselfish without going extreme and becoming an ascetic, neglecting my body, developing a wrong image about myself, and arriving therefore at the point where I do not have a healthy, sane respect for myself and my own body that God has given me. It has to be kept in balance.

Like everything else we talk about this week. If you heard the orientation tapes, you heard the funny little illustration about the apples at Bible school and how everybody takes the apple until the bad one is left for the last person. Oh, that there may be a revolution of unselfishness in every practical aspect of our life.

It's more blessed to give than receive. You'll never understand OM until you understand that in all that we do, we want to esteem our brothers and sisters in poorer countries. You're going to wonder why we're driving at times old vehicles.

Why is George Burrward driving around in a seven-year-old Renault that's worth about \$100? One of the reasons is because I want to esteem my brothers and sisters in India and I want to channel any money for vehicles, all that I can pray in, out to them. I want to think about them. Now, I still need some transport so that I can carry out this vision to serve them.

And in Europe, it seems best for me to use this little old Renault. And then after a few years ago, for all of our international travel and so that we could live together, my wife and I prayed and trusted God for a five-year-old, much better van, a rather large van that's converted into a little tiny house. Some of you will

see it.

And that has enabled us to survive some of the so-called pressure of the middle years. I believe that in the whole area of expenditure for transportation and everything else along that line, we find one of the most difficult areas to find balance. In fact, I'm just writing a new tract on the simple lifestyle.

Let me share something almost for the first time in this form to help some of you old-timers. You like to hear something new. Jonathan McCrosty is very worried about this memo.

He's arch-conservative on spending. Peter Maiden, our leader in Britain, boy, this memo ministered to him. He wants it published everywhere in magazines.

McCrosty gets me, Hey, have you sent that out to any other people? So I have to get together with Jonathan to see what's wrong with this memo. Anyway, I'll share with a little about it. I have come to see that if we are going to give ourself to world evangelism, 4 million people, 4 billion people, 4,000 million, we say in England, if we're going to really do the job, we cannot live the kind of simple lifestyle that some people talk about.

For example, I don't know everything about the book, Rich Christians in a Hungry World. I just know that with that general line of thinking, I am not actually totally in agreement. And I believe a lot of the thinking in that area, I'm not saying necessarily that book, but in that area, number one, there is not enough emphasis on world evangelism, reaching the world for Christ.

There seems to be more emphasis on social change and giving everybody a bowl of rice and a lot of other things that are somewhat unrealistic. If we really look where Russia is and what Russia is planning to do and a lot of other things around this crazy planet. And I feel a lot of the emphasis on the social side of things.

And I lean that way myself. Don't misunderstand me. And I'm very concerned about the lack of reality in that area.

But I feel it quickly becomes a tangent. And we lose the priority of spiritual revival and world evangelism. The reason we like to practice a simple lifestyle as much as possible.

We don't like to spend too much money on ourselves. The reason we mainly use secondhand clothing and a lot of other secondhand things. By the way, there's some things you can't use secondhand.

You write me, I'll let you know what they are. Is to release more money for Bibles. To release more money to get the gospel to the ends of the earth.

That has always been the heartbeat of the movement. And if some men are going to be raised up by God to really support God's work around the world. I don't think they're going to be able to have the kind of minimum salary that some people suggest if we're going to live a simple lifestyle.

And even within a work like this, we're going to have to spend money. Some people have criticized the ship because it was out of line with their simple lifestyle. Actually, this ship is relatively simple lifestyle.

Had very old ships, very small cabins. But of course, it does in total 300 people cost a bit of money. Nothing like 300 people living in this country.

Probably maybe one third of what it would cost to live in this country. But if we're going to evangelize the world, we're going to have to learn how to spend money. For some of you, that's hard.

For instance, I could have a much more simple lifestyle if I could give several hours every week to start a vegetable garden. Some of the books suggest that. But you see, time is money.

If I start giving myself to a vegetable garden, there's many other things I could do around the house to save money. Endless things. I could be puttering around my little tiny house in London, which I have rent free and answer to prayer a long time.

But then I wouldn't answer those letters. We wouldn't get that next 10 million pieces of literature off the press. The 30 or 40 film projects we're into wouldn't come to pass.

And an awful lot of other things we've been doing for 20 some years, it just wouldn't be. And I wouldn't be here because I couldn't be away from my vegetable garden that long. And I had to fly here.

In many ways, I'd love to come here by water bicycle or canoe. But it would be a long journey. So I had to spend \$300 to get here.

And I could say in my mind, \$300 could buy so many soybeans for this man living in Somalia who is starving. This kind of thinking is utterly ridiculous. Because unless God raises up some men of integrity, unless God performs a spiritual revolution in the very fiber of our being, most of the money that goes out to these countries is wasted because they don't have men of integrity and ethic and discipline who can organize and manage and make sure the food that's given gets out to the stomachs that need it.

We need men in the world today, unselfish men, crucified men. And those men will have to know how to spend money as well as how to save money. The battle will be perpetual all their lives.

And we'll have to reframe from judging others in a complicated world. So lifestyle is important in OM. We want to be unselfish.

We want to be radical. But at the same time, we want to evangelize the world. And that means we're going to have to have some office machinery.

I used to force my secretaries to work on the most weird, outdated office equipment you can ever imagine. It's a miracle some of them weren't killed by flying keys that came loose. Now, to this day, we don't believe in OM.

We should just flippantly buy the most expensive office equipment. We pray. We try to find it at a lower price.

We try to look for good secondhand things, not junk. And so there's a lot we can do to remain simple, to stay in union with our brothers and sisters in poorer countries. Why is it that so many young people in poorer countries have so linked with us? Why do we have 400 workers in India just willing to do almost anything there for the sake of the gospel? Because they know our manner of life.

And they know the way we live, even though there are always problems when there is an amalgamation of people from such very, very different cultural backgrounds. Number two in this building foundations for communication, and a long way to go. David Hicks will appear in the door sooner or later.

Learning to be patient. This is so important. How many of you, like me, have had some really serious difficulties with your temper? I'm not talking a little irritability and you get a little upset and saying, Oh, I mind.

Would you mind not doing that? I'm talking about people that, you know, you really, you know, raise your hand. Any of you in that category? This seems to be a national disease. And I want to tell you your time on Operation Mobilization is going to give you a glorious opportunity for you to see that temper crucified and crucified and crucified.

And not only your temper, but God wants to go right down into the disposition, right down into your very attitude and teach you the way of patience. The New Testament talks more about patience than it does about evangelism. I won't take the time to give some of my favorite illustrations, but there is no area.

Well, there are one or two other areas, but perhaps. Patience. It's hard to know what is your greatest problem, isn't it? You know, when you got quite a few.

But I think at the core of so many of my problems. Has been this this difficulty. In in terms of being patient.

And as Americans, we are often in a hurry. We are a in the hurry culture. And we are very offensive.

We are often very offensive to people in other nations. You must understand that. Here's a dear brother who's trying to change a tire.

He's not doing it as fast as you would. So what? You feel he's turning the wrong way. And so you push him aside and say, look, I've had training.

This Americans are quick to tell you about their training. The guy changed one tire as a small boy with his dad's help. I've had training in this.

Let me show you. So if it's an Englishman, especially he and they're generally a little more patient, he steps aside and say, oh, well, thank you very much. He happens to know that that particular boat only turns that way.

Because in some nations, it's reverse. And he just sits there and watches you. Steaming, sweating, praying, crying to God for every inch of sanctification you've ever held.

Turning it tighter and tighter and tighter and tighter. One event like that can ruin your whole day. It's like someone said to me some time ago, one midair crash is enough to spoil your entire day.

It's true. You don't need that to happen to have your days ruined in one sense in operation mobilization. Patience.

You meditate on that word in your Bible and you will see just what I'm talking about. The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance, self-control against such. There is no law.

And I made a study of all the fruit of the spirit. The first OM conference of this type took place in 1960, the month of June, the Mexico border. Every night we talked on the same subject, fruit of the spirit.

That was the basic thrust of this movement from its very earliest days. And I don't know where we'd be if it wasn't for that patience. So many of the problems in my home have been a result of my impatience with my wife.

I have had to repent again and again and claim his precious blood over my words, my lack of patience. Sitting in the car, I gave her 20 minutes notice. I don't know where in the world she is.

We've got to get to this meeting. And I remember once I decided I wasn't going to say anything. I've already blown it 58 times.

I was just going to be quiet no matter when she came to the car. I wasn't going to say anything. I'm going to be patient.

She finally got to the car. I didn't say anything. One look, I could burn her through the door.

There is a real sense in which if you don't have control over patience, if you don't have control of your temper, you are almost disqualified to be married. And there was a great general in Britain that said, until you have mastered the art of warfare, you should not even consider being married. I wouldn't go that extreme.

If there's any area where women are often naive, it's about what lurks down in the inner furnace of this good-looking lad that they're about to marry. I've had to counsel women beaten across their faces by men who were as gentle as angels before the wedding and who became as ferocious as lions afterward. We can be very naive about life.

Very naive about what happens one year after the wedding. Praise God, there are many, many cases where that doesn't happen. But we need, if we're going to be effective communicators, if we're going to have reality in our marriages, on our teams, and in our churches, there must be the crucified life.

And there must be the development of patience and spiritual reality in that area. Thirdly, we must learn how to accept one another. There's too much of this manipulation mentality in which we say to our wife or to our friend, if you become more like me, then I will accept you.

And we form mutual admiration societies. And us, we as husbands, and I failed in this area, we're always trying to change our wives. We need to accept one another as we are.

We can have our prayer. We can have our aspiration. We all, of course, want to grow in Christ and to be more spiritual.

I think the key word in this is the word we read in Ephesians 4, forgiveness, forgiving one another, forgiving each other, just as Christ God forgave you. I want to ask you, is there anyone, anywhere that you've not forgiven? I'm not saying you don't have some memory difficulties. We can't plot everything out of our memory.

But as far as you know, by faith, you have forgiven everyone. I remember speaking in a morality session in Europe, a morality session, and a question came up at the question and answer time. The colonel said, my father has raped me many, many times.

Can I ever forgive him? Yes. Yes. There is nothing that we cannot forgive as his child, because God, through Christ, has forgiven us of every ugly wickedness, every defilement that man could ever imagine.

And any finger we point at one man, there are three fingers that point back at us. That doesn't mean it will be easy. That doesn't mean there will not be emotional scars.

I am an emotionally scarred person. My wife is. And we'll have to learn to claim God's grace on a day-by-day basis.

And just like the ship, we can't get the ship from London to New York in one day, nor in three days, nor in five days, but we can get the ship at least pointed in the right direction. At this conference, we cannot give you the total answer and cure to emotional hurts, to struggles, to awesome things that have happened to you. That can't happen in one week, but you can get your ship, your vessel of God, pointed in the right direction this week.

And know, therefore, that when you leave here, you're taking a stand against all bitterness, against all resentment, and against any unforgiving spirit or unforgiving disposition. What a revolution could take place in the church and in our homes if this became one of our main goals. And by God's power, we put it into practice.

Fourthly, I believe we must learn to bend and to break. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate that book, Calvary Road. If there's any book I would recommend you get, it's Calvary Road by Roy Hesschen.

It's not the total answer, just a small part of it. But a small key can open a big door. And if you learn something of that key of a cross, something of knowing how to say, I'm sorry, Lord, forgive me.

Or to our friend or our team member or our team leader, forgive me. It will open the door to blessing. 1 Peter chapter 5 says that we should submit to the mighty hand of God.

We need to know how to humble ourselves with one another, to be honest with one another, and to learn how to break and to bend. Don't feel you have to run around Europe defending the United States. If something is said wrong about your country and you feel it, that's an opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ.

Whenever I go to a country, one of the first things I do is in my mind make a list of the positive things in that country. I've never been in a country where I couldn't find something positive. And I talk about that.

Herbert Cain, the great missiologist and missionary teacher at Trinity College seminary, in his new book on the missionary life, says that when we launch out overseas, we need to, in some ways, forget our own country. That's right. As you launch out, even for short-term work, to some degree, we need to forget our own country.

Stop always talking about your country, how lovely it is in Western Canada, how much cooler it is, how much wider the streets are, how much cleaner the toilets are. Forget all this kind of thing. And start to re-enter or enter that new culture, appreciating it, trying to understand it, and then learning to bend and break when you do say something that's wrong or that's offensive.

And so often, these people, who even at this very moment, are receiving some of these same messages, they will be wanting to go the extra mile to love us and to forgive us. And we don't have to be uptight as Americans that the French or the Germans are trying to pounce on us. In fact, probably some of you, in an amazing, unpredictable way, within the next couple of years, will be married to a German or a Frenchman or a Swede.

How that happens with this social policy is a miracle that is without explanation. It's supposed to all happen after the first year. Anyway, birds fly where they will.

You know not the flutter thereof. And then, very quickly, we have to learn to love. You're supposed to be meditating regularly on 1 Corinthians chapter 13.

Memorizing those great verses about love. It's true, the fruit of the Spirit is love. But also, we must learn the way of love.

That's why we have endless verses about love. It's not some little automatic thing. You just get the right cliches and make the right verbalization in terms of sentence structure.

And from then on, you just go along in the Spirit-filled life. Jesus said, If any man come after me, let him deny himself daily and follow me. No matter how loving I am, on any one day, I know I need more love.

One of my goals is to love my wife more. And I already love her so much, sometimes I can hardly think straight. I want to love her more.

And, of course, love has many aspects. 1 Corinthians 13 will give you some of those aspects. Some of the ways of love will only be learned through failure.

So don't be discouraged by your failures in that area, but learn. We all switch some people off. Don't get into a guilt syndrome and allow your image of yourself to be trodden underfoot by the fact that you've failed at times in communication.

Or you've been unloving, or something else along that line. And then, sixthly, we need to learn to discipline ourselves. We're going to be talking about that more, so I'll just go past it now.

But if there's going to be an effective teamwork, there must be discipline. If you're going to have an effective marriage, there must be discipline. Marriage is not firstly love, as we think of it here, brainwashed by Hollywood.

I would prefer to use a different word, that love is firstly commitment. Commitment that includes the kind of love that the New Testament talks about. We are committed to one another.

That commitment will not be broken. And love is there. It will vary, it will change, our feelings will go up and down.

Other women may come by, or men, and bring greater emotional vibrations for a particular season. But because we're committed to one another, we know the biblical basis of marriage and relationships. These little flutters in the dark, these little emotional kicks, will not have an effect on our basic life and throw us off God's narrow path.

We must learn that, we must learn that. And any discipline you can learn this summer, will help you in your marriage and whatever lies ahead in your life. And then seventh, we've got to learn to relax.

Tozer spoke about how we as Christians easily become religiously jumpy. We know God sees our every action. And so, you know, we're sort of walking around waiting for Him to bomb us on the head with a hammer.

God knows all about us. Tozer quotes, probably getting it from some other mystic from hundreds of years ago. God knows all about us and loves us still.

I would add that God loves us as much when we've failed, as when we're moving along in some great soul-winning expedition. Let's learn the secret of what Tozer says when he speaks about God being easy to live with. Isn't that amazing? After all his rather extreme statements, he turns around and he says, God is easy to live with.

Learning to cast every care upon the Lord. Let's become a little more relaxed about ourselves. I like people to work for me who are relaxed about themselves and their lives.

Relaxed about me, so when I say something a little dumb, you know, they don't climb the wall and think I hate them. Really, Christians get uptight on this whole area of sanctification and love. And it becomes an awesome, awesome experience for some people.

We need to be a little more relaxed. We're going to make mistakes. Parents that want their children only to say nice little evangelical statements sitting around the table.

And the first time their little teenager utters one of those four-letter, really shocking words in a moment of impatience, and the dear little mother just about has a nervous breakdown. What do you think our children are learning in our high school? Nursery rhymes? Oh, I know in America we try to protect all the children in the Christian schools. They'll probably turn out a whole new brand of spiritual schizophrenics.

I will tell you one thing, and I'm not against Christian schools. They aren't giving us very many missionaries. And you should get the British evaluation of the American Christian school.

Very interesting. Not saying I'm against the Christian school. Just like the people that have fresh thoughts all the time.

But there is a danger, and this is true in O.M., that we can live a very sheltered life. And little Johnny doesn't hear any swear words. And little Johnny only goes with little Susie, who's born again and all that.

And someday he's got to get out in the world. Someday he's going to work with someone who calls him a son of a... And someday he's going to get punched in the nose. You can't just protect people all their life.

And if people aren't used to a little bit of the hard knocks of this world, they are often more subject to mental illness. I believe with all my heart that living on planet Earth as a Spirit-filled Christian includes failure, it includes sin, and praise God, victory includes knowing what to do when we do sin. There is a way of victory, but it is not some isolated, little hairy, little fairy cloud type experience.

It's a nitty-gritty experience where we have to face failure and problems and mistakes head on. And to me, at the same time, learn how to, in a sense, roll with the punches. That's an American expression, I think.

I like it. In OM, I hope you'll learn at times to roll a little bit with the punches. There are some things you're not going to like in OM.

There are some things I don't like. You can't fight everything. You get nervous.

Do what you can and get a good night's sleep. If I start carrying just the problems that have been loaded on me today to bed with me tonight, I'm going to feel miserable in the morning. And at 5.45 tomorrow

morning, I don't care what you think about it, I'm playing golf and I want to be in good condition.

Because I've got to preach here, I guess, at 8.30 or something else. And so I think in about one minute, I'll close. Learn how to relax.

That's why I took up golf. And then very quickly, learn how to share and be open. It's better to speak at times and say something stupid.

Praise God, I'm so thankful for my children that they're all communicators. And though I feel sometimes what they say is not the most edifying, I'm just thrilled that they're all constantly verbalizing. Many of our family meals, I'm the quietest one at the table as we go through World War II, civil wars, and other various things along that line.

Some of you are very introverted, very shy. You never speak, never pray in public. That's all right.

But if you think that's spiritual, you're crazy. You're just scared. Or shy.

Or introverted. We're not going to put a strong grip on you that you must become an extrovert. We don't want you to be that way.

That would be weird if all of a sudden, little Susie Quiet, you know, walks up here tomorrow. God is not trying to destroy your personality. He wants to work through you.

But there needs to be growth, little by little. We're not asking it for all to come in one week, one summer, one year. But learning to share.

Learning to open up. Learning to take off the mask. Learning to express yourself a little bit in public.

Even if it's one sentence. God, I love you. I haven't learned how to pray yet.

In Jesus' name. Amen. What a prayer.

We're supposed to be little children. We don't have to create elaborate theological sentences. Coming to God as if He were some kind of, you know, gigantic theological wizard who was computerizing your every prayer sentence to see if you were in tune with the proper spiritual vocabulary.

And then, just two closing points. Learn to repent and embrace the cross. Ultimately, that is the most basic of all the issues.

And number 10, learn to redeem the time and organize so that you have more time for fellowship. The person who organizes his time and disciplines his life, he has more time even for a little recreation, which will help him to organize his life even more. So, ultimately, he will enjoy life more, he will accomplish more, and he will be happier as well.

Happiness is a byproduct of holiness. Our goal isn't happiness. Our goal is God.

Secondly, holiness of life. Happiness is a byproduct. And I feel it's important that even in this summer together, we learn something of organizing our time, keeping track of phone numbers, addresses, instructions.

Some of you have already scattered your instruction papers from one end of the building to the other. Your briefcase looks like someone threw a hand grenade into it. I have great struggles in this area, but I believe it is very, very important for communication and for building relationships to learn something of being disciplined, tidy, and orderly.

It's all linked. You cannot separate the practical from the spiritual. It's all linked.

I hope that these thoughts will give you a great desire to be a communicator, to go the way of fellowship, the way of relationships, whether it's on a team, in the office, in the factory, or in your home. And by God's spirit, it can be done. And we'll be hearing more about that throughout the week.

And of course, through these books and tapes that are available to us. Let's pray. Lord, we thank and praise you for so many principles in your word.

It's just so exciting. And we believe you are going to teach us some of these very basic principles about communication. Don't allow us just to forget all that we hear.

We believe, O God, that you want to do a deep work. I know you want to do this in my heart. A deep work in this area of relating to others, loving, communicating, and laying down our lives.

At the same time, we believe you're going to minister to us. You're going to bless us because you love us so much. And we feed upon that grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

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