

General Spiritual Balance

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the importance of spiritual balance, unity, and the interplay between discipline and freedom in the Christian life.

Duration: 46:48

Scripture: Matthew 22:39, Romans 12:3, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Ephesians 4:2, Philippians 4:13, Colossians 2:8, 1 John 4:8

Topics: "Balance"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the challenge of finding a balance between living a simple lifestyle and using modern methods in world missions. He shares his personal struggle with this issue, including the use of technology like television and computers in their ministry. The speaker emphasizes the importance of spiritual balance and not conforming to a cookie-cutter evangelical mindset. He also highlights the need for humility and integrity when handling finances for the cause of Jesus Christ.

Transcript

This evening I want to speak to you on the subject of spiritual balance and maintaining your spiritual equilibrium, maintaining spiritual balance. And I'm trying to unite together two messages. One is on spiritual balance in general, and the other is finding spiritual balance in our missionary thinking and our missionary work.

I've worked on these messages, and again and again I've changed them, I've studied literally hundreds of books and magazines, interviewed hundreds of missionaries and young people, and traveled equivalent to around the world about once a year for the last twenty-some years to research this particular message. Somebody said to me recently, when do you prepare your messages? I said, my whole life is preparation for my next message. I am always learning, I am always taking notes, I am always reading or listening to cassette tapes, and even from the people that I have had the opportunity to fellowship personally with today and here and these days, I've learned something.

And I just think it's such a great blessing to be in God's school. You know, in some ways it's an embarrassment in North America to speak to people when you don't even have one degree of higher learning. This is greatly looked down upon in the USA today, and I do not boast of this.

Many of our men in our work have degrees, and I've often thought maybe I ought to go back and get a little more education. But God led me to leave university in my sophomore year and go to Bible college, which

people in my sphere of friends laughed at, but it was one of the most important decisions in my life. To leave secular university, I had very high grades, and to go to Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, I was a babe in Christ.

I mainly went to Chicago because I wanted a witness to drunks. I found out this Bible school was there, and that was, in some ways, the greatest decision in my life, next to coming to Christ. Among other things, God had behind a nice little desk at Moody Bible Institute my wife, who's been with me these 20 years of marriage.

It's good to obey God, even if people don't understand. My parents, when I was converted, did not know Christ. I talked to my father on the phone today, by the way, who just had a heart attack, and he's a lot better and seems he'll be all right.

But shortly after I came to Christ, my own father, who was an elder in a liberal church, came to Christ. That caused quite a stir, I can assure you, especially when he left the church. And my mother came to Christ and became the first office manager of our work.

For eight years, she ran our office. When she left, we needed four younger women to take her place. And then my sister came to Christ, and then her husband came to Christ.

He was an ex-Marine, and what a blessing to see God put us back together. We were coming apart as a family. My father shared with me years later that probably the marriage would have come apart.

But Christ put us back together, and it's just a beautiful thing to have this prayer support of my family. I want us to read together from the book of Ephesians, chapter 4, Ephesians chapter 4. What a wonderful sound, the turning of all those pages. And I'd like to just say this, there may be someone here tonight, you're not going to understand much of what I'm talking about, spiritual balance and world missions.

There may be someone here that has not yet come to know the Lord Jesus Christ, and all of this seems a bit strange. You know, I can sympathize with you more than I can explain, because that's where I was. At 16 years of age, I didn't have a clue.

I didn't know what an evangelist was. If you had said, are you saved, I would have thought about swimming or drowning. I didn't know.

And I thought a lot of this type of thing was religious extremism. There was a little gospel church in the center of my town, you know, I didn't know what they did there. They made some kind of noises, I thought they were, you know.

So I can sympathize with you. If you think Christians are, you know, a bit, you know, I understand. We're supposed to be God's peculiar people, but you know, not that peculiar.

And I just want to say this to you. I pray that you'll never let any one of our weaknesses, because as Christians, we're still human beings. You'll never let any of our weaknesses or our poor show of who Jesus Christ really is to ever keep you from the blessed reality of personal salvation in Jesus Christ.

What a foolish mistake. There are counterfeits, and even real Christians have their struggles and their failures. We are not angels.

There are no wings in the back of our, behind our shoulders. And I would just long to see anyone here tonight that's never taken that step of faith for one reason or other to somehow tonight surrender your life to Jesus Christ. Maybe you've come to attend the graduation of a loved one.

That would be the greatest graduation gift you could ever give to a loved one, is to surrender your life to the Lord Jesus Christ. It happened to me 25 years ago in a very unusual way, and I can just say, He is real. I still don't understand it all, and Christians still sometimes perplex me, and then as you say over here, they bug me.

And I don't fit in, I guess, to the total religious scene, but Jesus Christ is alive, and I know if He can save such a character as I, that He can save anybody. I really believe that. So if you don't understand a lot that I'm talking about, well, think about the Lord and surrender your life to Him.

Ephesians 4, verse 1, I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation to which you are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, with forbearing one another in love. Did you get that? Forbearing one another in love.

Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, one spirit, even as you are called, in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. I believe one of the greatest burdens on the heart of God is the unity of His people. I have been stunned in the past two weeks here in Canada to hear of the divisions within the churches here in Canada, the splits and the sub-splits, and the splits of the sub-splits that go on and on.

I know there are cases when people legitimately have to leave their own church because it perhaps has gone apostate or is no longer preaching the Gospel or standing on the Word of God. I shared how my own father was led to leave his church. But I believe that far too often the divisions and the splits that take place in our churches are not of this nature.

But they are splits that take place because so often we are carnal. So often we have not experienced the revolution of love. And remember, the only thing the New Testament talks about more than love, if you count all the synonyms, is Jesus Christ and God Himself.

The Bible says God is love. He that says he loves God and doesn't love his neighbor, he's deceived. He doesn't love God.

And I believe that one of God's greatest burdens, and the Spirit of the Lord has already brought this through some of the previous speakers, is that we go from this place with a fresh baptism of love. That we go back to our churches with greater patience, greater forbearance, greater desire for unity, more humility, more reality, and all that we read about again and again and again in the pages of the New Testament. These divisions sometimes spread to the mission field and cause unbelievable pain and suffering.

They sometimes even take place between different mission societies. Our disunity, our carnality, our divisions have been more of a stumbling block to unconverted people and even some people who have known the Lord than we will ever know. And some people have left the Lord's way because they were so overwhelmed by the divisions and by the backbiting and the problems that come into local churches.

We have many teachers. And I think of those words of Paul in Corinthians where he says he had many teachers but not many fathers. And I think of how Paul rebuked the Corinthians because they were sectarian, because one group said we are of Apollos and the other group said we are of Cephas, or we are of Paul.

And he rebuked them and he declared them as carnal because they were not of one heart and of one mind. Again and again in the book of Acts we find God's people of one heart and of one mind. That's why they knew power in prayer.

Unity releases a tremendous force. Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am in the midst of them. And I believe one of the ways that we will find greater unity on God's Word is when we become less spiritually lopsided and we come to know more about spiritual balance.

Now often I am speaking in pastor's conferences. Probably over the past years more than 50 pastor's conferences. And if there's any message these pastors have indicated has been a help to them in their ministry is when I share on the subject of spiritual balance.

And so it's somewhat with the pushing of others that I come and share this message when there are many other messages I would love to share. And I pray that though this message may not be perhaps as challenging maybe as last night, that we will see it as a very basic teaching and basic exhortation that we desperately need and that I believe will be very, very much in line with what other men of God have said here in the past few days. A number of people have taken advantage of the messages that have been given here.

I'm hoping you get a series of cassettes of every message given at this conference because I have not been able to get in on all the sessions to say the least. Between the telephone and the priority which I felt of personal counseling with needy people, I have not been able to get in to all the sessions. But through cassette tapes I can do that.

I know someone phoned the bookshop and asked for every single cassette tape. That person certainly is going to get some spiritual food. But let's get in to some of the specific areas where we need to find balance.

I think we know from the Word of God, like Acts 20, 32, that there will be those who will attempt to deceive, who will attempt to lead us astray, and this has been emphasized. There are many other verses that I would like to share about how there will be seducing spirits in the last days and how it says in 1 John how we need to test the spirits. We mentioned already how A.W. Tozer said the more enthusiastic Christian is more easily led astray.

I wanted to dedicate this evening's message to the graduates because I believe as you leave this great institute, the enemy will attempt, maybe because of something you've struggled with here or something you haven't understood or something you haven't agreed with, the devil will attempt to move you into some extreme. Or maybe he's just got a more easy method, just get you discouraged because you feel maybe you're not all that you should be in Christ. The enemy is subtle and often the more hungry, the more enthusiastic person is led astray.

That's why he urged us to develop a little bit of healthy disbelief. That's good. Let me give some of the areas that I believe where we need to work for spiritual balance.

First of all, I believe we need to find the balance between discipline and liberty. We need discipline. We think of 1 Corinthians chapter 9 where Paul says, I buffet my body, I bring it into subjection, lest after coming to others I be a reprobate.

I think most of you know by now my strong burden and belief about discipline. But at the same time, there must be freedom. There must be even freedom to fail.

And I want to say this word to parents, there has to be enough freedom in your family for your children to fail or they'll never learn. And if you've got your children tied to your little apron string, and if you're trying to put some little kind of evangelical halo over their head or put them in a little gospel goldfish bowl, you're going to be in for some big surprises. Some of them may go along with it, but the average thinking young person today, it's not going to work.

There has to be freedom. Legalism is a deadly tentacle. And as Prairie Bible Institute is very much on into its second generation, the principles and the burdens that God gave you in the beginning days are going to have to be borne again in your own hearts year after year if this institute is not to become legalistic.

The same is true of Operation Mobilization. That which was once a burning principle, a great reality, a deep experience, if not handed down in the power of the Spirit, becomes nothing but a legalistic regulation that the devil himself can use to confuse more people than perhaps the world will ever know. Legalism brings people into that frame of mind where they're always going around judging other people's spirituality.

And they're very quick to condemn others who may not have the exact same convictions about worldliness and separation or sanctification, an extremely difficult subject. I can tell you most Christians in Britain don't believe the same way that most Christians in western Canada believe. And the Christians in France don't believe the way the Christians in southern Georgia believe.

And one of the reasons I feel so strongly that our young people in our very pressurized American and Canadian cultures need a couple of years in Europe and overseas is because it helps to de-Americanize them, de-Canadianize them, and often bring them into a place of spiritual balance. When I went to Mexico at 19 years of age, it was one of the most important steps in my Christian life because for the first time I really saw the ugly American that I was, George Verwer. I never saw it before that time.

I was very nationalistic. I was very proud. I, of course, was a dedicated, totally dedicated anti-communist, even though I had never really researched much about any of it.

And then when I went to Europe and lived in Spain and had to function in the Spanish language, and then when I moved to Great Britain and lived there for a number of years, believe me, I had a re-education and I thank God for it. I believe ultimately it has even saved my family. I believe that my temperament, my strong temperament, my tendency for extremism would have driven many of the best workers right out of the fellowship that God had put me into, in a position of leadership.

And I have never found it a problem now to have total identity and unity and a deep relationship with British or Spanish or Indians or Malaysians. Part of that happened through the Word of God. I had the privilege also of Bible school.

Part of it happened on my knees. Part of it happened because I read a wide range of Christian books. Part of it happened because I had influence from many different men of God, not all from the same school of thought.

But another major influence was to get out of my own culture, and the USA culture is more intensive, probably more nationalistic than Canada, though that would be debatable. And I got into Europe and I began to see areas of my life that were offensive and I began to learn more about brokenness and I still have so much more to learn about that. And I began to see that I was moving at times into legalism.

I was becoming, in a number of areas, rigid. I believe one of the enemies of reality is rigid thinking, closed-mindedness, people that think they're open-minded, but all they do in their studies is rearrange their prejudices. God has called us unto liberty, yes, but not to use that liberty as an occasion to the flesh, Galatians chapter 5. We need to remember that as well, or otherwise we go into the liberty cult and that leads to licentiousness and a lot of other things.

And I personally would rather have someone leading a little bit more toward this side of discipline, even perhaps bordering a little bit at times on legalism, than get over into this thing, which is like going from the frying pan into the fire. Then we've got to find the balance between zeal and wisdom. Some people look at our ships and they hear the story of God answering prayer and they think it's all faith, but it's not quite that simple.

God laid the foundation for this ship ministry over a period of 15 years, building men together. By the time we even started to pray for a ship, we had about 200 men heart-linked and thousands of prayer partners heart-linked. And then God began to bring engineers, top, absolutely top engineers.

Some of them He had to save to bring them to us. So there was not just the faith and the zeal, but there was the wisdom. We often find that people are led astray by just coming and seeing the ship.

They see the ship, they hear it's an answer to prayer, they go back, they've never had much prayer experience, and they start to pray for wild things. And they don't happen. And then they're discouraged.

Someone wrote me recently and they said, oh, we're so excited about your ship. It's inspired us to pray for a jumbo jet for Jesus. I felt terrible.

I wrote this person, tried to investigate. There was no real organization. There was no fellowship yet.

Just one fellow, I think from somewhere in the States and one or two other people thought this was a great idea. Jumbo jet for Jesus. Everybody here should read the history of Prairie Bible Institute.

The book is in the bookshop. The sweat, the tears, the toil, how this began, so small. And our own work was the same way.

In 1957, three of us went to Mexico, three teenagers. The next summer, and those two went other ways because the two others who were with me, we had no plan for anything. I found four others and five of us went to Mexico and the problems we had.

I was a very strong, choleric leader. One fellow on the team didn't like me, thought I was, you know, related to Hitler and all kinds of problems. And it was through these experiences as young people, and we were under missionary supervision and getting good counsel, men like John Beekman, the great Whitcliffe Bible translator.

He was one of our first counselors. I'll never forget what he said to me in Mexico City as he took us out to see the pyramids. You know, he had his concern about us and he said, you know, Brother George, God

has given us a mind.

God has given us common sense. I wonder why he said that. And that stuck.

That went in. And I've always worked since that day to find the balance between zeal and then reckless faith, total abandonment to God, and wisdom, discernment, patience, building a slow, solid foundation in whatever work God puts you into. One of the greatest lessons God had to teach me in missionary work was patience.

I remember offending this Indian brother who I dearly loved. I named my first son after him. I left him in charge of the bookshop.

After my wife and I were married, we went to open some bookshops in Mexico for our honeymoon. And we opened this bookshop. And I remember one night going off to preach, and I left the Mexican in charge of the cash register and gave him a few pointers.

And I went off. When I came back, he had done things wrong. And so, you know, the old Anglo-Saxon rites of righteous indignation.

I gave him a piece of my mind. And I want to warn you about this giving a piece of your mind. Sooner or later, some of you can run out of pieces.

And it really looked funny when your nose collapses and your ears fall in because you're empty-headed. And God broke me. God broke me right there in that bookshop.

And I think it was because I had read Calvary Road. In fact, my wife and I had read that on our honeymoon, which really wasn't a honeymoon. And we read the chapter in Calvary Road called Revival in the Home.

If you don't read any chapter in that book, sit down with your wife and read Revival in the Home, because that's where it's got to begin. And anyway, I said to this Mexican, I said, look, I'm wrong. I have sinned with my mouth.

Will you forgive me? He was weeping. And I got down on my knees and I wept my way back to Calvary. And I went to my Bible for the next couple of days.

And I meditated on almost every verse about patience. And God began a long-run program in my life to teach me about patience. And if he had not done that, I would be disqualified today from Christian leadership.

There's no question. And I've still got plenty of scope for growing and learning. Balance in that area is very important.

And then balance between basic biblical principles and policies that we may believe. In OM, we have a lot of interesting policies. Some of you have been trying to figure out OM for the last five years.

Our financial policy is a little bit different. A lot of our policies are different. God had to show us that we must clearly teach young people the difference between biblical principles and OM policies and not allow them to get mixed up.

All some of the things that we, you know, we did. For example, in our work, often we would sleep on the floor, especially in the summer crusades. It's cheaper.

It's faster. And when you get so many people moving, living in tents, evangelizing villages, you just sleep on any church floor. We've been on more church floors in England than anybody in history probably since, who knows, maybe Wesley.

I don't know where he slept. Probably on the horse. We would get people that would think this was a spiritual principle.

And one young girl went home. Her mother's waiting all summer for her daughter and had the bed nicely made and the room all fixed up. And the first thing she asked her mother was if she could remove the bed from her room.

From now on, she was a soldier of Jesus. And her mother thought a disciple of some nutcase burwer and she would sleep on the floor. I have written about this at some length in my book, *Revolution of Love and Balance*.

And I hope that as you leave Prairie, graduates, you will be able to discern between that which was a biblical principle and that which was a Prairie principle, which may have been very valuable here in this particular situation, but you may not want to carry it everywhere you go to the ends of the earth because, among other things, you may limit your fellowship with other people who will not understand you. O-M-ers, people who have been in O-M, if God had not broken us, it could have become a cult. It could have become a cult.

The children of God began with a zealous group of young people, a Christian Missionary Alliance pastor. It's true he was bitter. And it went further and further and further away.

I often give a message called the marks of the false cults. And you'll discover that most of the false cults have the same marks. And we need, especially in these days, after the Jonestown crisis and other events, we need to avoid even being cultic in appearance.

This is why in our work we very much esteem the parents. We send letters to parents. Young people make a commitment to us.

But if the parents feel that that commitment has to be changed mid-year, we will follow as much as possible their instructions. I have to move on because the time is going. And I want to cover a number of other subjects.

The balance between this whole area of the warfare and the rest of faith. Last night, we mentioned this great book, *Total Warfare*, by Mr. Maxwell. I hope you get it and read it.

I almost overemphasized warfare. I started reading war books. I started using all kinds of illustrations from warfare.

And God had to bring a check on me and show me that some people could not handle all this terminology. And some of my illustrations were offensive to certain nationalities. And I had to see how the warfare had to be balanced with other messages of Scripture.

How God wants to bless us and the rest of faith. And so many other Scriptures. In any case, though we're in the spiritual warfare all the time, our finger is not on the trigger all the time.

You'll burn the gun up and your hand. And we have to learn to refuel. We have to learn the reality of Isaiah 26, verse 3, and many other verses where we learn about what it is to really be cast upon God.

And in this, I had to see how God was working in different people in different ways. This always worries me when I'm speaking to a group of people who have all gone through four years of the same school. One of the things that helps here is the emphasis there is on spiritual balance and that you're not here at Prairie, as far as I can discern, all pushed through one little doctrinal evangelical cookie cutter so that you all come out sort of walking the same with the same length hair.

You know, it's difficult to preach with this guy sitting behind you. Maybe you'd like to sit down with my wife. She looks very lonely.

He told me it was a bad illustration. Anyway, it's actually a good illustration, because some of you, when you go to Europe, are going to discover some of the most committed people that I ever have known with rather long hair, including evangelical gospel preaching Bible-believing ministers. You've never found that too much around Western Canada, or maybe you have.

If only we could realize that God works in different people and in different ways, and never allowed any greater truth that God has given you, any blessing that God has given you, in any way lead you into the school of the Pharisees or into the cult of the super spiritual, which drives perpetually innocent people away from the Savior. It's a spiritually balanced man who can have strong convictions, know where he stands, but not feel he has to push that down everybody else's throat. It's so important to see this, especially on the mission field, where we must work together.

If only hybrid American total, total, total fundamentalists can work together on the mission field, then we have an extremely small number of missionaries in the world today. And I will tell you in the opinion of hundreds of Europeans and Asians, sometimes this type of hyper person has been the most offensive person we have had to deal with in Europe and in Asia and many other lands. God wants to give us spiritual balance, but it's going to cost.

One great man of God said, it's difficult to convert emotion into action because it costs. And as we go out, we're going to have to learn something of this spiritual balance. Then the balance between evangelism and church planting, a number of very quick practical areas.

I say we need both. I say do not allow our missionary work to polarize. And when it comes to world missions, there are a number of areas where we must work for balance.

The balance between the call, people who emphasize the call and people who emphasize making an objective decision and getting God's guidance. I am totally on this side. But I greatly respect people who emphasize the call.

Praise God. There are people who have had emotional calls and all kinds of calls all over the world. Hallelujah.

But I believe God often leads other people through just basic down to earth guidance. And for the local church, sending them out to the field because they believe that they have the gift or whatever else is

needed in that situation. Don't put one against the other.

I believe you'll find both in the book of Acts. The balance between the need and guidance of God. We've heard of incredibly needy nations in these days where there are hardly any workers.

But that is not the only factor. It is one factor. It is a major factor.

It should be studied and researched. But then there must be the guidance of God. The counsel of the saints.

There must be providence. One thing I like about the great Puritan writers is their emphasis on providence. God's circumstances.

All how God can work through circumstances. And then the balance between closed lands and open lands. The great missionary rush has been to open lands.

This is why I like the emphasis of Ralph Winter. The unreached people. I believe God has raised up this man.

I believe we can learn something from him. And we are seeing so many missionaries are laboring among people who have already had to some degree the gospel. Second, third, fourth generation.

We need that. Let's not polarize. But let's bring it into balance.

And to do that, there's going to have to be a greater emphasis on the Muslim world. There's going to have to be an emphasis on China. There's going to have to be an emphasis on North India.

And other unbelievably unreached areas. We need both. Praise God for church growth.

I hope to have Donald McGovern as our speaker. One of our conferences in Europe. And it's interesting that Donald McGovern in recent years has also strongly emphasized the need to go also to the Muslim world and the unreached peoples.

Spiritual balance is needed in every area of missions. The balance between social work and evangelism. The balance between working with nationals or nationals doing the work and missionaries.

Some people attack missionary work. They say nationals can do it cheaper. This kind of comparison to me is a little bit dangerous.

And it brings more problems on the mission field than we know between nationals and missionaries. We need both. And the big thing is not whether the man's a national or a missionary.

Is he a man of integrity? Is he spirit filled? Does he love Christ? That's what counts. I think we would all agree with that. The nationals are crying out in many nations to send more missionaries.

Missionaries are needed in almost every nation in the world. And there is a great internationalization of missions taking place today that we need to recognize. We just had 70 Latin Americans go on our ship to evangelize Spain.

Praise God. They all speak the language. The moment they got off the ship in Vigo, Spain, they could communicate and lead people to Christ.

And they made a great impact. World Missions is no longer an Anglo-Saxon project. God is raising up different people from different countries to launch out.

And this is why we need even more than ever spiritual balance and a greater degree of flexibility, adaptability, and humility, without which no man will be a really good missionary. Then we've got to find the balance between the radical, which sometimes OM represents, and the status quo or the stability and the continuity that the more traditional viewpoint brings. I feel we need both.

I feel that movements like OM and others that have somewhat of a radical message, and sometimes they state things in a way that maybe people don't agree with and can be misunderstood and misapplied, I think that is balanced off by some of the great traditions, many of which are based on Scripture. And I believe the younger missionaries must major on understanding older missionaries and not go out just shooting their mouth off. Learn submission, how important that is.

At the same time, older missionaries must beware of dogmatism, must beware of their own ego trip, their own fear of change, and being threatened by younger people who may have more education or who may have different ideas. We need both. We need each other, the young and the old, the radical and the traditional.

And unless we band together in the unity and the power of the Spirit, we will never evangelize the world. That's why I believe many of the divisions in our churches are unnecessary, because with love and humility and brokenness, different kinds of people with different viewpoints and even some degree and difference of doctrine could work together and pray together and shake their town or city for Jesus Christ instead of creating another evangelical scandal. I would beg of you in the name of the Lord Jesus who commanded all of us, if we want to follow Him, to deny self, take up the cross daily and follow Him.

I would beg of you to see that that will have great practical implications in bringing us into a greater like-minded and united thrust for the cause of Jesus Christ around the world. How do we find the balance between the simple lifestyle, which I have tried to emphasize, and the need to use modern methods in world missions? We have a television. Putting this material onto television videotape to use it on our ships, to use it in many parts of the world, to use it where people can't even get out of their homes because they're crippled.

On one hand, I'm trying to live a simple lifestyle, spending as little money as possible. On the other hand, I've got to sign a check that pays for a video recorder, which I'm glad I didn't sign. Someone else bought it.

I will tell you, I have wrestled with this problem. We now have a computer in our British operation because the book selling has grown so big, we cannot keep track of it. I never dreamed that ever we would have a computer in Operation Mobilization.

I used to attack computers, you know, not physically, but in my messages. I have had to back down. I have had to confess areas in which I was extreme, in which I was off balance.

And the Lord has been merciful. So it's an area where we'll never totally find an easy answer. In some ways, a person in my situation has to detach himself from the work.

Though the work may involve fuel bills, I dare not even tell you a fuel bill for our ship. I cannot go down shopping on the basis of what I've just spent to refuel the ship Dulles. I have to live my personal life, not before OM, but before God.

And God is looking for people that He can entrust millions of dollars with for the cause of Jesus Christ, knowing that He could give this man or this person or group a million dollars, and in no way would they be stained by it, or led to sort of take advantage of it, to just move up the social ladder and what we talked about the other day. It's an area where we desperately need balance. And then balance between the emphasis on personal work and the emphasis on mass evangelism.

Why is it that people using different methods attack each other's evangelism? They do it very subtly, but I believe it grieves God. I pray that every one of us will rededicate our tongues to Jesus Christ tonight. And say, Lord Jesus, once again, nail my tongue to the cross that I may not speak against your work.

David could have taken the life of Saul, but he said, dare I touch the Lord's anointed, even though Saul was a wicked old man. And I believe we must be careful before we speak out, especially when we're not sure. Of course, we must evaluate.

And it's an area of great difficulty, but certainly without love and without compassion and without patience, we are doomed to become extremists and to move into the snare of the enemy. Yes, I could give you another 40 areas where we need to work toward spiritual balance, but I don't think it would be fair to take more time. Study this subject.

Compare Scripture with Scripture. Spend lots of time in the book of Proverbs. Read some of the writings of Tozer and then pick up perhaps something of Tim LaHaye or Eugenia Price.

Then read some of Maxwell. Then go read something of Lloyd-Jones. And of course, then lay it all aside and go back to Romans and Ephesians and Philippians and Colossians and the Word of God.

Balance is not a place of compromise. No, it takes a totally committed person to find spiritual balance. It's something that enables us to build, enables us to grow without going off into this extreme or that extreme, into this false doctrine or into this overemphasis.

It has been the basic principle of this work, Prairie Bible Institute. And I believe it's one of the reasons that there's been such a linking between some of the leaders here and some of us in OM because we feel so strongly that without spiritual balance, we are doomed. We are doomed to be second-rate in God's program.

Oh, He may use you. He doesn't lay you aside the moment you've got a few kinks or a few extremes. Boy, you'd really be shorthanded.

But you'll never know all that God wants you to know. You'll never see all that God wants you to see in your life and in your ministry and in your church unless you know this kind of spiritual balance in your church, in your marriage, in every area of life. I think it's one of the most exciting subjects in all of Scripture.

And I pray that you'll pursue it and become that on-fire, biblical, balanced man or woman of God that I know He would have you be. Let us pray. Let's have a moment of silent prayer.

If we feel that we've been off-balanced and in some extreme in our life in one way or the other, this would be a good time to tell God about it and say, Oh, Lord, I have wandered away. My own imagination, my own tendency for extreme, my own temperament. And ask the Lord to bring you back to Calvary where He can do the balancing of the power of His Holy Spirit.

There may be some that are right away from the Lord, may be driven away by some extremists. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could come back to Him right now and place your hand in the hand of a man from Galilee and say, Lord, I'll go where you want me to go and I'll do what you want me to do. Maybe some of you have turned away from going to the mission field because you've had off-balanced views of what it's really all about.

And you need to come back to a new commitment and say, Lord, I'll go. I'll go to the mission field. I'll begin to move by faith.

Maybe you've been deceived by some overemphasis. Oh, I pray you may come back to the cross and back to spiritual balance tonight. Let's have a moment of silent prayer.

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