

Gv4340 Gv the Divine and the Human Factor

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of balancing the human and divine factors in missionary work, and staying focused on the ultimate goal of world evangelism.

Duration: 1:15:00

Scripture: 1 Kings 18:24, 1 Kings 19:5, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 5:18-20, Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 12:29

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of balancing the divine and human factors in our lives. He warns against neglecting the human needs such as sleep, food, and leisure, while focusing solely on spiritual matters. The preacher also shares a personal story about a friend who produced cassette albums of the Bible but lost his business overnight due to copyright issues. He encourages young people to appreciate the opportunities and people God brings into their lives, rather than complaining about rules. The sermon concludes by highlighting the story of Elijah, who experienced both the divine factor of God's miraculous power and the human factor of depression and exhaustion. God provided for Elijah's needs by allowing him to rest and sleep under a juniper tree.

Transcript

What a challenge those testimonies were to our own hearts. I would think that Vincent Price's was more of an explosimony than a testimony, and it's the kind of thing that I need on Sunday morning. I visited some of the missionary exhibitions, and I'm amazed at some of the things these people are giving away.

And I get all kinds of magazines with all kinds of maps and information and pictures. You know, all of this costs money. And in our own work, we had tremendous struggles deciding how to put anything in print about our work because we wanted to put all of our money into scriptures.

And we're always short at least five million pieces of literature in OM. We're never running. But we also put money into this kind of literature now.

Yes, always have a little bit. And I hope that you won't just read this material and throw it away, but you'll become a person who passes the material on. I always like to get free copies of Prairie Overcomer, so every time I walk by these little giveaways, I get one.

Here's a May 84 issue that somebody put back there. It's even got their name on it. But it's being recycled for Jesus.

Many of us, even who read English in Europe, have never seen a Prairie Overcomer. I'm trying to get a hold of a thousand right now. I haven't yet been successful.

But we take this kind of material for granted here in the Western world, the affluent society, the waste makers. A guy named, it was Packer or somebody once wrote something, the waste makers, true. Pass it on, give it to others, share.

I think of these cassette tapes that are being offered, of these very meetings. I don't know how they do it. They offer you the tape the moment you finish.

And some of these tapes, as you know, are dangerous. But what an opportunity to share with people who cannot be here some of the ministry of these different men that God has given. One of my, to me, the greatest invention since the printing press is the Walkman.

And I'm sure some of you more conservative types don't even know what I'm talking about. But I think the Walkman is the greatest invention since the printing press. Some of you know that I jog a little bit.

But I found jogging after a while, I've been doing it 15 years, a bit boring. And of course, I always just did it very briefly, a mile or two, until I got a Walkman and could take the Word of God with me. And so now sometimes I go seven, eight miles, get through the whole book of Romans on one run, memorizing it, listening to it.

It's good when you go in the streets, across the street, to take one ear off, just in case somebody's beeping their horn, because they can be a little dangerous. Like everything in life, they can be abused. We have the whole Bible now on tape.

My brother, John Wright, who also produces these cassette albums, has been producing the Bible on tape. I'd ask you to pray for him, because he's just been put out of business by someone who bought up the copyright on this particular series. And overnight he is out of business.

His other ministry of carrying my wife and I around in his old motorhome isn't anything dealing with profit. Just something he does as unto the Lord. So take your final visit to the missionary exhibitions.

Order your tapes to give away to friends. Take your last visit to our little OM exhibition. Very much appreciate your asking about my wife.

She's still recovering from major surgery. And I have some opposition to bringing her on this trip, but as usual, they lost. And she's with me.

But she's not really so well. She's been visiting with people morning, noon, and night. I spoke in the dormitory last night.

Got back late to the motorhome. I thought, surely she's going to be in bed. And there she was counting all the book sale money.

She's the team treasurer. But if you want to know about my wife, she writes this little family letter. She always tells me it's not a prayer letter.

It's a family letter, and it has a picture of her. In case you wonder what she looks like, at our 25th wedding anniversary, little surprise party my children pulled off for us just a few months ago. So that's available on the OM literature table.

Some of you didn't get my calendars, and you're confused about what my name is. Some of the calendars say George Vermer, but the printer made a mistake. And so I got a thousand more with my name corrected.

George Verwer, that is my name. But anyway, there's a few of those on that table. And there's a new leaflet just printed.

I almost didn't get this one in Canada. Had an interesting time at the border. But we've got it.

It's about next summer. How to get involved in summer work in Europe, Belgium, Austria, Eastern Europe, England. And that's available there.

I wanted to just mention this little leaflet called Seven Major Emphases of Operation Mobilization. Really, it doesn't have anything to do with Operation Mobilization. You could call it Seven Major Emphases in many of these missions, because they have these same practices.

But if you have a chance, pick this up, because it's a sermon in print. It gives me another opportunity to share with you. What are the seven major emphases of OM? 1. Worship and prayer.

2. Love and forgiveness. 3. Victorious living in the fullness of the Holy Spirit. 4. The Lordship of Christ and the all-sufficiency of Christ.

5. Honesty and true openness. 6. Discipline and brokenness. 7. World Evangelism.

That's available free. One of the reasons it also has our address. There's a lot of other material.

Of course, Bert has an old office full of OM material. And I hope some of you who are interested in OM will talk to Bert, and who knows what will happen. I wanted to bring greetings.

I've forgotten this every day. From Don Maxwell. Pray for him, because he's on my team this year.

A little team of people who have to do anything, anytime, anywhere. And that can include hazards. Some of you have walked by my motorhome.

Not mine, but my friend John Wright's. Smugglers used to have that. Florida, the police got the smugglers, and John got the motorhome for a tenth of what it's worth.

And it's really a bookmobile. But that's the motorhome that Don Maxwell fell off and almost was killed. In God's mercy, there was no damage to his spinal cord.

Some of you saw Don walking around with this weird thing. It looked like a Star Wars helmet. He's got all that off now.

I saw it actually laying over in the home of the Maxwells. He even has the smaller neck brace off. He traveled with me just before I came here.

He's also part of the OM subcontinent presentation team. But he'll be traveling with me again in November. We'll be going to Asia together in February.

And he will be remaining out there to give himself to Muslim evangelism, research, and finding God's place, as he has committed himself long term to reaching Muslims in the subcontinent. So I bring greetings from him, from others whose names I'm unable to remember. To me it's so exciting, not only the people God is sending out of Prairie, but the people that God's bringing here.

I had breakfast with a man, except he didn't eat anything, named Ed Yeager. Now every time I used to drive through Iran, Ed was there doing something, translating the Bible into Persian or winning souls or teaching. And he arrived at my doorstep a couple of years ago with his little clan early in the morning.

Some of the way we get accommodation in OM is we move into houses that are derelict. Nobody wants them. And the owner says you can live here until it falls down.

Rent free. I'm in a little rent free house in London. But mine's not falling down much.

It's leaking a little bit. And Ed came there and we had a great time of fellowship. And I haven't seen him much for years.

And sometimes you do lose contact with people. Lo and behold, I find out he's here on the faculty, teaching missions here at Prairie Bible Institute and using his summers to get out in other parts of the world. And really, I just say this to you young people.

It's easy to take for granted a lot of the things that you have here. The people that God brings you. So don't do them.

Some of you, I always find when I go to Prairie and all these Bible schools, same as Moody, some are mumbling about the rules. Rule mumblers. Don't worry so much about the rules.

It's no big deal. Life is full of rules. You drive down the road, United States is ridiculous.

55 miles an hour. What do they think this is, a horse and car era? So, you know, keep the rules to the best that lieth in you. Keep your attitude right.

That's more important than the rules. And when I got to Moody Bible Institute and I saw the rule book, you can imagine a character like me. I didn't know they had any rule book.

And they had this orientation. And they gave me this rule book. And I just about flipped out.

I said, what is this, a kindergarten? You know, God dealt with me. And all my time at Moody, this loud mouth rebel, kept almost all the rules. That's right.

Now, a couple of them I couldn't understand. But to the best of my ability, I kept the rules. I never went to a movie.

Imagine that. I'm a movie nut. I never went to Moody.

Cross my heart. My whole time at Moody Bible Institute. Anyway, I didn't have any time.

So much to do. So many souls to win. So, don't let the enemy get you, you know, in a hassle.

Because no Bible college, no seminary, no movement, especially OM is perfect. We're all learning. We're all growing.

Everything keeps changing except the basic doctrines and the basic foundations of the Word of God. And I know so many men here, and they're sincere men who want God's plan. But you cannot have a movement like this, and this is still a movement, not just an institution, without some basic rules.

And no matter what direction you take, you got problems. Believe me. I've seen the schools that have taken off a lot of the rules.

They got more problems than they had before. It's a human heart. And I thank God for the privilege of being here and for working together with you.

And it's so clear that OM and Prairie have been called into a special exchange working together program for world evangelism. We need each other. And I hope that you will have a right attitude.

When you do something that you agree with, you're not doing much. It's when you learn to do something that you don't agree with for the sake of the gospel that you come into a little more maturity in your spiritual life. Now, I even write verbal quotations in my Bible.

That's a bit... It could be an ego trip. I hope it isn't. But I don't have many verbal quotations.

But I want to read one to you that's helped me stay on target. And will help you if you don't agree with something in the mission you join. Or here at Prairie.

Or if you come on OM. Let me read this to you. Because of world evangelism.

Because of world evangelism. And the reality of the spiritual warfare. Get that.

The reality of the spiritual warfare. We need to agree on a plan of action. That's what your board members and leaders here at Prairie do.

We need to agree on a plan of action. And strategy and policy to carry out that action. Even when there are things we don't like or even agree with.

I'm known for getting in trouble. You know, I'm a very carefree character. In my soul, it doesn't matter if I'm ever invited back here again.

I love you. I believe in you. So I take risks.

So I'm going to say a word about television. I know you've been through a crisis over television. And you're looking at Mr. Hardliner against television.

And many years ago, God showed me in OM where we fought television and kept television out. That we should give adults and families freedom to have television in their home if they want it. We fought that years ago.

I know some are upset that there's now television at Prairie Bible Institute. And I just say this to any of you who are Hardliners against this. Because I've talked with Paul Maxwell and I know the Lord has given him victory in this.

And he and I are similar in some ways. But if there are any of you Hardliners that are still upset about the fact that there's television now in some of the homes. I would beg of you, beg of you to just submit to what the majority seem to sense was God's way.

It's not a big issue. Don't make this thing into a huge issue. Television in our society is like a wristwatch.

It's like a wristwatch. And the great thing you can do now is learn how to handle it. Learn how to turn it off.

And I believe many of you will come into more maturity through freedom in this area than without the freedom. That's my own personal opinion. And if you're a Hardliner like me, I still have no TV.

Crazy thing, in my house my daughter's now grown up. How can I force her at 21 to keep my policy? So she has a TV in her little tiny room. We have a little house.

Her room is like a little closet. And I tell you the craziest thing in the Verwer household is all of us sitting in her bedroom watching the TV. So don't let this thing become bigger than it is.

Many, many mighty men of God. I think of Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones. And we have a lot of false ideas about men of God.

He was esteemed as such a mighty man of God, such a prophet. But you know, I found out Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, you know what his favorite thing was sometimes when he went home? I couldn't believe it. To watch hours of snooker on television.

You know what snooker is? You know, pool, some kind of pool they practice in England. You know, it's about as boring as watching chipmunks carry acorns. But that was just something that relaxed old Dr. Lloyd-Jones and he ran the race to the end.

It is an issue. The enemy knows how to use it. But I want to tell you.

Hear me out. The enemy can use some of your big mouths far more than that cotton-picking television set. Believe me, the enemy in the church today, we've seen it in OM.

Most of us OM leaders who have, the ones who do have TVs, I've done research. They hardly ever watch it. You got cobwebs growing on the tubes.

But I'll tell you, far more destructive than the Word of God. Big mouths, judgmentalism, mountain climbing over molehills, and all that kind of thing. And so, in Christian work, on the minor issues, some people win, some people lose.

I've lost in OM on some of my issues. Never the big things. And God showed me years ago, I'm not going to shoot mice.

You know what that means? I'm not going to shoot mice, I'm going to shoot elephants. How many know what that means? Don't waste your energy and your resources on small things. Go for the big targets.

The major doctrines of the faith. If they start getting questioned, then you start shooting. The major biblical principles of morality and love and reality.

Many other things. Righteousness. That's where you use most of your ammunition.

We can talk about the small things as well. Praise the Lord. In all things, love is the rule.

That's what old Brother Maxwell emphasized with me. In all things, love is the rule. And I tell you, if you make love the rule, and you hold fast to the basics God has given you here at this great institution, nothing will stop Prairie Bible Institute from going into the next generation with power and reality and thrust even more workers out into the harvest fields than perhaps in the past.

And we'll be praying with you as you go. Let me read the quote again. Because of world evangelism and the reality of the spiritual warfare, we need to agree on a plan of action, strategy and policy to carry out that action, even when there are things we don't like or maybe even agree with.

Turn with me now in your Bibles to the book of 1 Kings, chapter 18 and chapter 19. And relax, we are not planning to run into your lunch hour. We want you back here on time because we always like to save the new wine for the end.

Now, whenever there's a group like this, surely there's got to be someone that I have turned off. Do you know that expression? The people that I have often loved the most are the people that I turn off. Because when I listen to my tapes, I get turned off.

At least to some degree. And if I've turned you off through some dumb thing that I've said, because with any message I give, you get the verwer straw together with the wheat. You just burn the verwer straw.

You can even take sections of the tape and erase over it. But I'll tell you, if somehow I have turned you off by some mannerism, forgive me, I've got to be real, I've got to be myself, in the sense of not trying to copy others, letting Christ work through me. Just let Jesus turn you off.

And beware if I have turned you off because a lot of our long-term leaders who have been with OM 15 or 20 years are all people I initially turned off. There's something fluky about that. So just rejoice and realize that this treasure is in earthen vessels.

I did have one other burden, just to bring things in perspective. I want to give you one prayer request before I read this scripture. I've been praying for many of you this morning.

Instead of going jogging, I went praying through the papers that you've been giving to me. So many papers. A couple hundred.

And praying for different people. And I thought, well, I want to ask them to pray something for me. And I've never done this, any September in 25 years.

It's the first time. Coming into New Liberty. Growing.

OM's changing. I love biblical, sane, spirit-controlled change. It's tremendous.

Anything that's growing, anything that's alive, has got to keep changing. And I wish I could talk to you about some of the changes in OM. Nothing throwing away our basics, but fine-tuning.

Keeping us young and fresh on the wavelength of this generation, so that we have more young recruits than ever before. Four or five hundred new recruits. Now, here's my prayer burden.

These recruits have been through our training, our month conference, summer orientation, interviews, tapes. It's quite a process. There are now hundreds of them in London, Brussels, Paris, Northern England.

Their trucks are ready. We travel in trucks. There's eight or seven or eight trucks ready to drive through Iran and go overland.

The Afghan team, the Indian team, the Pakistan team. As of last Monday, they were ready to move. Together with many other people who are on their second, third, and longer term people.

There's about six hundred people ready to move. A mighty invasion army. And as of last Monday, they started prayer.

Because they don't have the resources to move. They don't have the fuel. They don't have the food.

They haven't paid the bills yet from last month. We have a policy in OM. We don't launch the new OM year in October without paying our bills.

We don't believe in indebtedness. And we don't borrow money. And I would ask you to pray for these teams.

They're now going into the second week of prayer. Some fasting. Not whole weeks of fasting, but some fasting.

To see the heavens open. These young people are out there on the limb. Many of them don't have proper support.

Some of them already cancelled going because they haven't seen their own personal finance breakthrough. OM is a combination of personal faith and corporate faith. And so there's four or five hundred young people.

They've got some training. They're ready to go. There are not the resources there.

They're in Europe. Most of all in Europe. So you pray.

Maybe I'll just pray for them right now. I'd be a liar if I didn't say to you every single day. This has been on my mind.

I've been on the phone to England. Trying to see if there's a breakthrough. These are very hard days for many of us out in overseas missionary work.

You talk about forgotten people. The missionaries themselves become forgotten people. We think once they're out there, well, you know.

We had a lady once. She came to an OM leader. She said, I was going to give you a large donation for the work.

But I know you're a great faith movement and I didn't want to interfere. You could have killed me with a pea shooter. It's unbelievable the crazy things people believe when you're classified as a faith movement.

So let's pray for these young people right now. Some of them are from Prairie. Let's pray.

Father, you know that I've never mentioned that in public. And we've had this problem before. I don't think I've ever mentioned it in a big meeting in public in 25 years.

But Lord, you know, I'm so extreme on anything about resources. I have trouble even pronouncing the word money in public. But Father, I don't believe that it's just prayer.

I believe it's prayer and people. That you work through people. That you use information because there are people that want to do things but they don't know.

They don't know. So they do something else. And we pray for the resources for this four or five hundred men and women.

All the vehicles almost ready. Few of them that can't go through Iran like the Americans. They need the airfares.

And Lord, I pray that you'll release the resources there in Europe. Wherever. We're not fussing.

That this army may go forward. To Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, India, Sudan, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey. Communist countries.

France, Belgium, Austria. Other parts of Europe. That Dulas also held up.

May be able to sail around Africa. That people may be able to fly to Lagos in South America. To reinforce the crew there.

It's impossible. It's ridiculous. But nothing is too hard for you.

We are your people. We're not a secret society. So we unite together and we believe for a breakthrough.

For these men and women. And other missionaries who are held up in their support. Some of them banging around Canada for two years.

Trying to raise support. Father, we ask for breakthroughs. For these people.

For churches to awaken. To the real need. And the real challenge.

For we ask in Jesus name. Amen. May God do it.

First Kings. Chapter 18. You want a title for this little talk? You could call it the Divine Factor and the Human Factor.

If you want a New Testament reference. And I've often preached on that New Testament reference. It's in the book of Hebrews.

Our God is a consuming fire. What a powerful verse in chapter 12 of Hebrews. Verse 29.

But let's look at our God who answers by fire. First Kings chapter 18. We read in verse 24.

And call ye on the name of your God. This is Elijah challenging the prophets of Baal. And I will call on the name of the Lord.

And the God who answereth by fire. Let him be God. Isn't that powerful? And all the people answered and said.

It is well spoken. God who answereth by fire. Let's continue reading.

We won't read about the prophets of Baal. But we know what happened. They prayed and no fire came.

Elijah even engaged in a little bit of mockery. Then Elijah took twelve stones. Verse 31.

According to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob. Don't tell me that numbers don't mean anything in the Bible. Unto whom the word of the Lord came saying, Israel shall be thy name.

And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord. And he made a trench about the altar. As great as would contain two measures of seed.

And he put the wood in order. And cut the bullock in pieces. And laid it on the wood.

And said, fill four barrels with water. Talk about cockeyed strategy. Talk about extremism.

You got to put water on the offering. Pour it on the burnt sacrifice. And on the wood.

When I was a boy scout, I learned how to light fire with flint and steel. You ever done that? Get an old piece of flint, bang it away. And I entered a firefighting contest with flint and steel and won the contest.

But I tell you, I didn't put water on the wood. This is really asking for a miracle. A miracle.

I'm thinking of preaching about miracles this afternoon. I haven't finally got God's go ahead. Seven major miracles we need in the church today.

Anyway, we'll wait until 2:15 before we worry about that. But Elijah believed in miracles. The water ran round about the altar.

And he filled the trench. Oh, my land. Trench.

Also with water. And it came to pass at the time of the offering and the evening sacrifice that Elijah the prophet came near and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel. And I am Thy servant.

And that I have done all these things at Thy word. At Thy word. So important, isn't it? We today, some of you are only here for today.

We want a word from God to our hearts. We believe the Bible is the word of God. We don't believe in adding to the Bible.

But we believe the Spirit of God applies the word of God to our heart. And I believe God wants to minister to each one of us in a personal way, not just in our minds, but in our hearts. According to Thy word.

Hear me, O Lord, hear me. That this people may know that Thou art the Lord God and that Thou hast turned their heart back again. They were backslidden, they were wayward, they were confused.

You may be backslidden, you may be drifting, you may be cold. That's nothing new in God's work. That's nothing new among God's people.

God specializes in characters like you. You know, I, with all communication, I miscommunicate. And probably some of you who, maybe I haven't been able to get through to your heart.

God's word through me has not gotten through. I'm sure some other speaker hopefully will get through. But if that's not the case, please understand that if you are a believer, He still loves you.

You may be in a state of rebellion. He still loves you. He still loves you.

You may have sensed that last night you should have stood to your feet and made a deeper commitment to Jesus Christ and let that fire come down upon your soul as it did upon many people here last night. But you didn't do it. You didn't do it.

You rebelled against it. You're confused. You're hurt.

You were unable to. Let me tell you good news. He still loves you.

He still loves you. You're going to have to run much further than you are now before you get away from Him. One of my closest friends, a couple of years ago, went through divorce.

He was a full-time missionary. He was used mightily of God. His wife ran off.

It was partly his fault. He admitted it. You know, when the innocent partner in a marriage is breaking up, the innocent partner can easily see where the other partner is doing the thing wrong because that person, of course, before God, is more guilty if they are living in adultery.

And that's what happened in this case. This woman went off into adultery. It's a terrible thing.

Now, they had left our work. They had been caught up with an extremist, a very extremist group that sort of believes they're the only group, the only true church. I don't know if you've met some of them.

And then he got caught up in the business world. He'd been out of our work a couple of years. But we were still in contact.

And then he came out of this extremist group. He discovered it was a dead end. He had enough brains to see that.

But at that time, she was already involved and the marriage ended. I tell you, two children involved. He'd been on the mission field quite a long time.

Well known. And we kept praying. You know, in our little fellowship, and I hope you have that, we have what we call holy ghost stickability to one another.

I don't know who it was, but some woman of God some time ago said, the church is the only group in the world that shoots its wounded. The only group in the world that shoots its wounded. And we prayed for that couple.

For four years he waited for the woman to come back. He followed all the rules. I spent a lot of time with him during those years.

She didn't come back. He didn't know what to do on the remarriage issue. And finally he decided he should remarry.

Around that time, she married the man she was living with. Right after that, he was stricken with cancer. And started to die before her very eyes.

In a series of coincidences, she moved home and ended up right behind a number of XOM prayer partners and friends. By pure coincidence. And she came weeping back to Jesus Christ.

Her husband, dying of cancer, sat in one of my meetings. He had never heard the gospel. He came to Jesus Christ and died.

She came back to Christ. It was too late. My other friend at that time got married.

Life goes fast, doesn't it? And they were all at the funeral of the dead husband of the wife. This isn't, you know, I'm not giving you a novel. I'm not writing fiction.

This is true. Today she's following the Lord. Today my friend and his wife are following Christ as a leader in one of the outstanding churches in that area.

I know that doesn't fit into some people's book. I'm just telling you this story. I'm not telling you whether you agree with it or not.

And the children, that's the thing that gets me excited, are far more on fire for Jesus Christ than children who have never been through anything like this. They've got two nice, happy, phlegmatic parents who don't even have divorce in their vocabulary. I want to tell you something you already know.

God is God. God is God. And He can overrule our father.

And He forgives, and He cleanses, and very seldom in the life of a believer is that person at the end of the road. So, you know, don't you give up on anybody. Doesn't mean you have to have an ongoing ministry personally with them because you may not be the right person.

You move into situations where angels dare to tread and you just make more of a mess. But you can love, you can pray, and you'll see God do great things. God who answers by fire.

And I just share that, especially for any of you that feel God's left you out this weekend. Your problems are too great. You may feel your sins are too great.

Some people have shared some pretty heavy stuff with me here. And that is confidential material. You can be sure.

I'm not taking a list of things and problems to anybody around here. That's between myself and the Lord. But let me just say that God still loves you as His child.

And He'll be patient with you. But don't push Him too far. The sooner you get back completely with the Lord, healing of the damaged emotions, healing of the hurts, cleansing of the bitterness, the better off you'll be.

Simple as that. As a believer. Because we know all believers will give account to God for their behavior as followers of Jesus Christ.

Verse 38, Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. Hallelujah! Do you ever raise your hands in

worship and say, Hallelujah! Sometimes I do that. You know, if you think it's only people of certain denominations that do that, you haven't come to Europe yet.

You know, in Operation Mobilization, when the Spirit of God moves in, sometimes our Pentecostal friends put their hands in their pockets, and the brethren lift them up. You know, I don't know why people are so afraid of putting their hands up once in a while. I mean, how are you going to paint the ceiling in your kitchen? I'm still very conservative, and if I go into a church where they don't believe in putting your hands up, you know, I don't go in there and pull out my six shooters and say, Stick them up! Stick them up! Because to me, these are not major issues.

You can worship sitting. You can worship kneeling. I like to pray a lot walking around.

I'm a great walker. Oswald J. Smith had a lot of his praying walking around his desk. You don't have to pray in any one position.

That's a lot of nonsense. It's good to practice different positions. But let's face it.

In the Old Testament, it is very clear at times they lifted their hands, and they worshiped. Some of my things that are a little controversial, I do them privately. But, oh, you know, it just breaks my heart when I find people who are not experiencing reality in worship.

Worship's not something you just have in church. I mean, this just blows my mind here, this whole situation. Orchestra, I mean, I was weeping when they were playing.

You know, maybe something wrong with them in music. Just, you know, and this choir. You know, I mean, you don't get this for your quiet time every morning, do you? I mean, I can imagine some people sneaking in here at about 5.30 for their quiet time, hoping that the orchestra is going to show up.

And I'll tell you, what does the Bible say about the Spirit-filled life? You look over there in Ephesians chapter 5. I think you've already had this this week. But it wouldn't hurt us to go back. Some of you are just here today.

Ephesians chapter 5. Be filled with the Holy Spirit. And what does it say right after that? Speak unto yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Did you know you had a built-in orchestra? In your heart.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Have you ever compared Ephesians 5 with Colossians 3? It's not far away. Take a look.

This is a favorite section of my Bible. It's all disintegrating and falling out. But look at Colossians 3.16. You know, there's no mention of the Holy Spirit in the book of Colossians.

Did you know that? No major mention. Doesn't mean the Holy Spirit isn't present. Any more than Ephesians 5, the Word of God is not present.

There's not competition in the Godhead. But look at Colossians 3.16. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Different vocabulary.

One says the Holy Spirit filling you. The other says Word of God, Christ dwelling in you. Different vocabulary, same reality.

Isn't that amazing? You probably already knew that. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit.

Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust licked up the water that was in the trench. When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces. That's the way Tozer used to worship.

I have a friend down in Omaha. And he knew Tozer personally. I never had the privilege of meeting this man, destined to be one of the greatest influences in my life.

But I heard from others. Alan Redpath knew him. That he would sometimes worship prostrate on his face.

That encouraged me because I was already into that. Not generally in public, except some of the more intimate OM prayer meetings. But I would go out into the woods.

It's been my habit to have days of prayer since I was a teenager. Go out into the woods for a half day of prayer. And sometimes in the woods, alone with God, I would just feel so overcome by my own need and by the greatness of God, that I would just lie out before God and just worship Him.

Some of these men in the Old Testament don't quite fit in to the more regimented, organized way that we like to do things in many of our churches. That's no big thing with me, because the last thing I want to do is turn a church into a circus. But I thank God, when I go alone with God in the woods, there is nobody but the Holy Ghost that's going to tell me and His Word what I can do and what I cannot do.

And I want to ask you something. I hope you won't misunderstand it. I want to ask you whether you are experiencing personally the presence and the power of God in your personal life.

I sense from talking to some that we have a concept that the quiet time is mainly a discipline. Many people have asked me here to pray for their quiet time, that they'd be more disciplined. Some want it longer.

Some want this and want that. And we find a lot of quiet time guilt going around in Bible schools. Let me just be honest, some days I miss my quiet time.

But few days I have missed the presence and the power of God. Quiet time is not some kind of ritual. It's not some kind of magic wand.

I have other days when I have a tremendous quiet time, and the whole day seems to be a bit of a mess. Let's beware of superstition in the body of Christ. Because we do, religious people, and we are religious people in terms of the dictionary definition, we can get a little bit superstitious.

And I have young people all the time, they think because they've committed some sin, it's usually some small thing really, and there are different degrees of sin, in one sense all sin is the same, but it is completely crazy to think that there are no differences of sin. And we've had terrible cases where people thought because they had committed some small thing in the area of lust, they were already terribly guilty before God, so they might as well go out and do something really wild. We've had cases where we've counseled people because they had some struggle with hatred in their heart, they just gave up and became discouraged, and then did something wild.

Because they figured, well, they've already entered into sin, they've already failed. This is one of the great dangers when we teach that false doctrine that people if they commit a sin, they fall from grace. I'm sure there may be some of you that believe that it is possible through total reprobation to fall from grace.

Methodists teach that. We have some spirit-filled Methodists in OM. We've never been able to get every Omer to believe the same on this, but we're all very close.

Those who would teach in their churches that they could fall from grace would mean someone totally reprobate, who sort of spits in the face of Jesus, and just goes totally away into unbelief. They would say they fall from grace. Other people in our fellowship would say, well, they were never saved in the first place.

Others would say, well, they're terribly backslidden, we believe they're going to come back. I'm not in for that argument. You can handle that right in your theology class.

But let's just understand, those of us who are strong one way or the other, that there are mighty, spirit-filled, great men of God on both sides of that camp, within reason, being used of Christ all over the world. So my strong Calvinist friends, and I guess I'm classified as sort of a moderate hit-cupping Calvinist, let's be a little more gentle with our Arminian friends. And Whitefield and Wesley eventually did get a little bit together toward the end of their life.

Whitefield's two volumes are brilliant, but so are Wesley's. And in our work, some of you have read this in my book, *On Spiritual Balance*, we'll take all the Whitefield's and all the Wesley's we can get. But both sides of this theological fence within our fellowship, and I sense that's true probably in your mind, would never teach that a person just falls from grace immediately because, you know, he has tripped and committed some sin.

That is false doctrine. That is deadly heresy. I remember winning someone to Christ.

I used to work in the jails and the prisons, and I won this dear black man to Christ. And during the week, he fell back into the habit of smoking. So somebody came in the next week and told him he had just lost his salvation through lighting up a cigarette.

And of course, you get into crazy situations when you get into that. I've met people that have been saved and lost, lost and saved over 15 times. And when you get into the relating issues in this, it's just unbelievable.

This is why in our fellowship, we do believe that doctrine is important. And I pray you'll not despise your studies in theology. And one person already shared with me that they sense, well, they want to get going.

They want to evangelize the world. How are they going to stay here for a couple of years? And, you know, get into this dusty theology. Let me tell you, as someone who has a passion for theology, has never been able to study as much as I want to, theology, when the Holy Ghost in it, is not dusty, I can assure you.

It's exciting. It is good to get a few amens. Thank you very much.

I'm going to give you five or ten free books. You know, it's amazing how in some of our churches, if somebody says, amen, you know, people say, oh. Well, God is patient, isn't He? God is loving.

But that God that we're talking about, that God that we say we love, is a God who answers by fire. God is real. Fire is real.

Have you ever been burned? How many of you have been burned by physical fire in some way? Raise your hand. Most of us have the experience at some time. I have.

There was a man once in Wheaton that prayed for a vision of hell. Months later, somehow a can of gasoline exploded and his whole body was caught on fire. He lived through it.

You better be careful about what you pray. Our God is a consuming fire. The Bible has chosen to use the word fire and to illustrate spiritual truth through the word fire throughout the Bible.

When you have fire, you are going to know it. And if you are worshipping God, if you are living for God, if you are having reality in worship, you are going to know it. Not always to the same intensity.

And I have dry periods of worship. And I have times when I don't sense the whole thing is very real. And that's when even more I just get on my face and say, Lord, Lord, I need your help.

You know, we get a lot of young people that talk about losing their first love. I think there is a lot of confusion about this. And the excess of guilt and then the enemy gets us discouraged.

I think sometimes we confuse first love with initial fervor. First love is not mainly emotion. First love has got to be, if it's biblical, emotion and the will.

Emotion and the mind. And so, I believe you can keep your first love. I've never lost my first love for Jesus Christ as far as I know.

I'm open for correction. It's not always the same. And I was helped by a quotation from a book called Unseen Warfare, written by H.A. Hodges.

I don't know if you have this in your library. It's a hard book to find. But here's the quotation.

This fervor. You see, that's what you probably lost. Some of the initial fervor.

I'm one of these characters that's been introduced in meetings as George Fervor. Bit of an embarrassment. This fervor is especially characteristic of beginners in the road of discipleship.

And it's drying up. It's drying up should be welcomed as a sign that we are getting beyond the first stage. That's pretty revolutionary, isn't it? To try to retain it or to long for its return in the midst of dryness is to refuse to grow up.

It is to refuse the cross. He went on to say, by our steady adherence to God when the affections are dried up and nothing is left but the naked will clinging blindly to Him, Christ, the soul is purged of self-regard and trained in pure love. And I will tell you, this is the burden of our little missionary training fellowship.

It's to train young men and women in pure love. It's to teach them that emphasis of Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones how to deal with the emotions, how to deal with the mind. You know, Lloyd-Jones knew a lot about victory in his life.

He would speak verbally to himself when he sensed his body wanted to go one way. Do you ever get that? The body wants to go one way, but the mind is telling you from the word another way. And Lloyd-Jones

would speak verbally to himself.

He'd say, now body, you just get in line. The mind and the word is in charge here. You get in line.

And guess what? The body got in line. I have practiced this for many years. We have the mind of Christ.

Now, I can easily get myself into depression. I could get myself into depression as quick this afternoon as many of you will get to the dining hall when this meeting is over. But you know, I've learned something.

Please, please, please get this. Especially those of you who have made this deeper commitment. You have to determine what you are going to think.

If I get down Worry Road, once I thought the ship was going to sink in the middle of the Bay of Biscay. We were out of contact. There was a terrible storm.

This ship is very old. And I was in the grip of worry. And I was coming apart.

I was lying on my bed, crying. Just lapsed almost back into childhood. People ministered to me.

I tried the Psalms. Finally, God brought me halfway through. You say you don't like half victories.

Look, you're looking at a character. I'd rather have half a victory than no victory. And then eventually when I got word from the ship that it was alright, somehow, emotionally, greater victory came.

Now, I haven't had that particular crisis since. I've learned how to deal with it. Now, all of you have already dealt with many crises in your life.

Dealing with depression. Dealing with worry. Dealing with hurt.

People hurting you. Dealing with criticism. That's a great one, isn't it? You know, young people, I hope you have a course here at Prairie on how to deal with criticism because whatever you fill your head with, when you go out in the mission field, you are going to get criticized.

You are going to get misunderstood. You are going to get overvoted in maybe an election on the field. You are going to get your policies trumped on.

And if you don't deal with criticism and apply the bomb of Gilead, you are going to come apart. And I've seen a lot of people come apart. And I've been down all these roads.

Many tears. 30 years. And I've learned, when I go down a road and I get burned, I get depressed, I get hurt, I mark that road.

I mark that road. And when I approach it again, simple. I'm so simple when I speak, right? Even little children understand my messages.

Do you know why publishers have published my books? I'm not a writer. I'm not a writer. I never wanted to do a book.

Publishers got my tapes. I did write that literature book. It's the only thing I actually wrote.

I've written magazine articles. My books are just my tapes. Somebody else edits them.

And I've opposed them. And the publisher last time, when they were producing No Turning Back, he said, we need a book that simple people and high school people can understand. I said, no.

He said, so many of the books today are written, especially in England, all written by Oxford people and Michael Green and people like Josh McDowell, brilliant people. We need something from somebody who hasn't got so much. So, then let's keep it simple.

Somebody wrote that on the back of one of my letters once. K-I-S-S. They wrote it on a letter to me.

I thought, oh, a kiss. Then they told me what this meant. Keep it simple, stupid.

So, let's just get this point. If you've been down a road and you got depressed when you went down that road, if you've been down a road and you got worried when you went down that road, if you've been down a road and you got hurt and upset, or you got into the self-pity puddle, how many ever get into self-pity? That's probably just one of my problems. Any others? A few ever get into self-pity? Ooh.

My, this is really relaxing me. But if you've been down that road and you got stuck in the mud of self-pity, then the next time, what's the simple thing to do? When you see that road approaching, you don't go down it. You know, that's not a deep hidden secret of the victorious life only given out to a few.

That's simple ABC of walking the highway of holiness with Jesus. It's better not to go down the road in the first place. But you see, the first time you didn't know it, right? You didn't understand it.

You were still young. So you went down. You got in trouble.

Okay. You're cleansed. You're forgiven.

Now, the mind, the Word, you approach the road. Don't go down it. Now, I'm going to share something else.

I know my reputation is going to go down. But I have a fear of death. Now, I know so many of you, dear folk, you've got, you're all ready to die.

You go, you know, you go home tonight and say, praise the Lord tonight. Maybe this is it. Whoopee! Whoopee! Just pray for me.

I'm not quite there yet. I'm just growing. Just young.

I like life on the planet. You know, I've got no, I've got no big thing against being here for a while. I enjoy a little food now and then.

I know it doesn't look like much. I don't think it's a sin to enjoy aspects of life. I think that's false teaching.

That's got a lot of young people confused. Anything you enjoy, right, high scores, must be a sin. Many things you can enjoy in this life that are not a sin.

And I enjoy life. So I got another problem. I don't want to die.

Now, I've got the victory in the head. But when I get up in these airplanes and the thing gets in one of these turbulences and you know, you know what happened in August. Follow the airplane events of August.

Very encouraging for those of us who fly, you know. I have to go right around the world in December. Must be 20 different flights.

Some of the, you know, we always like the cheapest airlines. You know, we're always looking for the books for the cheapest airline. Air Outer Mongolia.

You can go to Sri Lanka if you'll stop off at Mongolia on the way, only 10,000 miles extra to Sri Lanka. And they lock you up in a jail during your stay over. I used to fly Aeroflot through Moscow.

Saving money. Saving money. It's frightening.

Frightening. There we are, great men of faith. We just preached a great sermon.

People have got saved. We're talking about eternal life. We're up in the plane.

We're in turbulence. People are beginning to look nervous. And we're scared.

Why? Because we're human beings. No matter how much faith we have, there is the unknown factor. What if I'm wrong? Then what is out there? And I have dragged myself in airplanes absolutely to a state of fright.

And I know quite a few men of God have had this struggle. But I learned not to go down that road anymore. I have far, far less problem now in flying.

I just, as I go to the plane, imagine it as a gigantic coffin. And very, somehow intellectually, I just go up. I can almost feel it.

It's almost like a funeral over and over again. I go up the stairway of the plane. You can hear the music.

There are the girls. Sit down here. And you take off.

You go straight toward heaven anyway when you take off. You can laugh. But I tell you, you're looking at a man that many times in my Christian life, many times I have been scared stiff.

Scared of life. Scared of a lot of things. It's just to me sometimes the whole planet seems to be going out of control.

And I feel sometimes at that moment, God, I'm not going to serve You today. I'm not going to try to win anybody to Christ today. I'm not going to try to do great exploits today, God.

God, if I get through without coming apart, that is victory. And I have discovered a lot of people can relate to that. You're not going to plant new churches for Christ every day.

You're not going to win people to Christ every day. You're not going to tear down strongholds of Satan every day. Every day is not on the wings of eagles.

I know those verses. There are days when you're plotting. You put your hand on the plow.

You know the enemy has got something out there. It may be the funeral of a loved one. It may be some other heavy thing.

It may be going to the doctor to discover whether you have cancer or not. I had that last August when a little lump started growing on my vocal cord. And I went to the doctor.

And then I went to the operating theater right here in Canada. A very good surgeon. And he cut it off.

And then I wait for news. Is it... What's that word they use? Is it benign? Or is it not benign? Whatever the other word is. Cancer.

You don't like to say cancer. And so there are days. Plotting days.

Some of you women, you've just gotten married. You've just had a little junior who's just plunged into your life. And you're just adjusting a little junior.

He's about 10 months old now. And you're hanging on this little thing you never knew just what this was all about. And now word has come.

Lulabelle is due. Or junior too. And you're coming apart.

And your husband wants you to go to more meetings than ever before. And your husband wants you to type up some magazine article he's just written like I made my wife do yesterday. And your husband is saying you need to do this and you need to do that.

And you're not out in evangelism enough. And why aren't you at the 7.30 prayer meeting? And you're... And pretty soon you're thinking the whole world is crazy. And I'm going crazy.

And as far as you know, I don't think they've built a mental institution yet in Three Hills. It's a small place. There are days... Listen.

There are days when you've got to put your hands on the plow. You've got to pull back. No soul winning.

No prayer meetings except maybe some personal prayer. No great exploits. You say, God, today is a plotting day.

It's a plotting day. William Carey said, Give us plotters. Most of the missionaries I have interviewed face enormous struggles against discouragement.

Just against discouragement. It's rough. It's tough.

Mission work is not what many of you think it is. There are many disappointments. Especially at times with your co-workers.

With the movement you're with. With life. With yourself.

One of the answers is to learn to spot those dangerous roads. Fear Street. Worry Alley.

Unbelief Lane. Depression Ditch. And when you get to the beginning of the road, you see it.

You've been down it before so you're not going. And I want to tell you I've seen more and more victory in my emotions, my mind, my whole life by just not going down those roads including old motorway of lust because I know it's a dead end and you, therefore, control your mind. You may use the word at that time.

You may use music. You may use physical exercise. You may use a diversionary tactic.

Don't think you can't use practical things in the warfare against Satan. I use diversionary tactics. I'm in an airport.

I'm alone. The pornography is over there. I know I can get a few vibrations out of that.

I know that's not from God. But I'm in a struggle. So I pray.

I use the word. What happens? I'm still in a struggle. I'm a human being.

Diversionary tactic. The other side of the airport. Ice cream.

And so here I am having my ice cream. I also enjoy that. Pretty soon I forgot all about the other side of the airport.

Pretty soon the ice cream is finished. I'm on the plane and the victory is over. Now I've been in that kind of hand-to-hand combat with the devil all of my Christian life.

I got 25 different diversionary tactics. Some of them are doubtful. I'm still growing.

But I'll tell you, in the spiritual warfare, when you're under attack, you've got to use every possible method. The seven I gave you last night. Other things that God will give you.

Phone people. Men that I know are really battling some of these difficulties. They phone me at times of emergency and on the phone we claim the victory.

There's nothing greater than the weapons of Ephesians chapter 6, I can assure you. In closing, I want you to look briefly at the 19th chapter and just notice what happened to Elijah after this mighty victory, after this great outpouring. We find him in verse 4 taking a day's journey into the wilderness.

You don't have to do that here. And came and sat down under a juniper tree and he requested for himself that he might die and said, it is enough. It is enough.

Have you ever said that? Any of you students ever said that here at Prairie? It's enough. You battled something, you had this relationship hassle, this thing, that thing, and you got back to your room and you said, this is enough. Many of you high school students ever say, this is enough? You know one of the outstanding men on our team in England right now, he's a son of a missionary.

When I arrived in India, you know what he had just run away from Christian boarding school. He was a renegade. He was a rebel.

He took off. His father poured out his heart. Later on he joined the Royal Navy.

He was tough. He got on the Ark Royal, one of the aircraft carriers of the Royal Navy. I never lost my burden to pray for this young missionary kid even though I didn't even know him.

God put a burden of prayer on my heart. I wrote him. I prayed for him.

And out there on the Ark Royal, that young man, Andrew Thompson, got mightily saved. And people got saved through him in the Royal Navy. And then he met this girl.

She was in one of my meetings in London once. Her family was a top Air Force family, military family. He was a top in rank and was also the leader of one of the bands he played before the Queen of England.

I went to the wedding. The whole band was there at the wedding. But that young girl, she got converted to Christ.

They got married. And they're now full time in God's Word today. And I just heard the news that her father and mother just surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ a few weeks ago.

So let me just tell any of you thinking of running away. And you young people get a little fed up with prayer. You're going to run away.

Some have. You're not going to run away from God. And you're going to run.

You're not going to run right out into the mission field. So you know, if you run away, give me a phone call. I'll probably tell you to come back first and get things sorted out.

Because God likes to do things decently and in order. We see here the divine factor, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a miracle of God, our God a consuming fire. And then next to it we see the human factor.

We see this mighty man of God depressed. We see him saying it's enough. We see him wanting to even take his own life.

And what little diversionary tactic did God pull at that time? Send him to a night of prayer, of course. Or off for a year of Bible training. Or down Revival Road or Repentance Alley.

No. What did God do? Verse 5, And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold an angel touched him and said unto him, Come and pray. What does your translation say? Arise and eat.

Isn't that appropriate for 12 o'clock? Brothers and sisters, I've been saying this for three or four days. I hope you don't miss it. If you only emphasize the divine factor, the fullness of the Holy Ghost, commitment, prayer, soul winning, world evangelism, and you deny the human factor, the need for sleep, the need for change, the need for a little food, the need to laugh and play, the need to be yourself.

If you only emphasize the divine and you neglect the human factor, this treasure is in earthen vessels, I can assure you, you are headed for big trouble. And you'll take a lot of people with you as you go down extremism alley. We need to find this balance whatever the cost.

Our God is a consuming fire and I pray this morning that you are on fire for Him. And our God is a God of grace, a God of love, a God of infinite patience. You are His child and we need to know something about the Father heart of God, reaching out in love to His children, always forgiving, always loving, always bringing plan B, plan C. And let Him minister to you even in the small, practical, loving things of life.

A little better place to live, a little better car, a little better meal, a new friendship, a new song. Our God is a God who answers by fire but He is also the God of grace. And when you've got those two things blended together, fire and grace, nothing will stop you from being His disciple to the ends of the earth.

Let us pray. Our God, we thank You for this great challenge tucked away there in the Old Testament from this 18th and 19th chapter of 1 Kings. And we would pray as Elijah, O God, send the fire, send the fire, send the fire, upon prairie in the weeks and months to come.

But with the fire may we live and abound and know the reality of You, a God of all grace, a God of all comfort. May we know what it is to soar on the wings of eagles, but may we also know what it is to put our hands on the plow and not turn back. May we know what it is to enjoy and sense and feel Your presence, but may we also know what it is when in a time of testing to go down a particular road that will lead to confusion or sin or depression or fear, but by faith and an act of the will, we will refuse to go down that road and we will follow Your way.

Whether it's a major biblical Ephesians 6 tactic, or whether it's some beautiful little diversionary tactic linked with the human factor that all of us have to accept. We thank You, Lord. Yours is a way of victory.

Yours is a way of reality. Yours is a way of honesty. And by Your grace, we will walk in that way the rest of our lives.

This is our commitment. I know this is the commitment of many here this morning. Therefore, together, we will go Your way the rest of our lives through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

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