

How to Make Decisions 1.9.81

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the importance of decision-making in the Christian life, drawing on biblical examples and the value of literature for guidance.

Duration: 1:02:13

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 5:29, Acts 5:42 - 6:7, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:23

Topics: "Decisions"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of making wise decisions and avoiding disastrous evaluations. They emphasize the need to find a balance in decision-making and provide practical principles to consider when making decisions. The speaker shares their organization's radical view on purchasing property and how they chose to invest their money in spreading the Word of God instead. They also highlight the importance of effective communication and breaking down misunderstandings within teams.

Transcript

Lord, just help us in this difficult subject. I feel I still have so much to learn. I've made many mistakes.

You've sent special angels just running around me picking up the pieces and brothers and sisters as well, but we must not run away from this subject. So difficult. Some of us have had some real failures.

We really thought we had your mind. We ran down the street and hit our nose on a brick wall at the end, but we believe you're going to help us in this very practical subject. You're going to lead us in different ways.

We commit this to you now in Jesus name. Amen. Before I speak on this subject, I'd like to just mention that there is a gold mine of instructive literature available, a lot of it free.

I think one of the greatest advantages of spending a few months around OM, I really mean this, the literature you can get your hands on, not just books, but literature like this little tract called not to be ministered unto. Probably one of the most in-depth spiritual challenges ever put in print comes out of the Keswick convention many, many years ago. More people have probably come into a new life in victory and power through Keswick than almost any other movement in history.

The impact of Keswick across the world is still being felt. I read many of the old messages from Keswick in my quiet time or for study, and this is one of the most powerful I've ever read. We just keep reprinting more and more, twenty thousand, fifty thousand, and God is using that little leaflet.

Get a copy from the free literature table just down from the book table. Here's Dale Roton's study on fasting in the Bible. He did it years ago.

In our early days we were classified as extreme on the subject of fasting. It is of deep concern to me that the pendulum seemingly has swung to the other direction, perhaps running away from extremes. I just wonder how many of us continue to practice fasting.

Is it biblical? That will help you. Here's one on how to prepare for a conference. Here's one on the use of films.

I find there's only a tiny minority of people in OM who have a vision for the film ministry. Everybody likes to watch a film. We can't even find people who know how to run a projector.

The audiovisual department is down to zero personnel. You can be sure we haven't been rushed with applications, but we're not giving up. I can tell you the brothers in India are not giving up.

Some of you know about this ministry. This is called Operation Super 8, some information about one aspect of the audiovisual ministry. OM in the beginning days, and we still do, had a very radical view about purchasing property.

We must have almost stood alone in our conviction that we should not get involved in purchasing property, homes, and lands. Mission organizations seem to go into that as quick as anything. We're not judging others.

But the Lord led us that our money should be put into the word of God, Bibles, Gospels, tracts, booklets, and for direct evangelism, and to trust him to do the impossible and find us places to meet. We had pressure to buy a permanent conference center so we could all be more comfortable. Our conferences wouldn't bring such suffering upon the poor young people of the affluent society, who are under such strain.

We never did that. So we've had 20 years of watching God supply for a fraction of what you normally pay for conference facilities. This is a little memo, thoughts on why we should not get involved in buying property.

I'm sure most of you, without that little push, would never pick up such a memo. Here's one that's even more important. Manners.

OM at times has been accused of being an ill-mannered lot, as if OM in one month's summer crusade could alter your manners. I can tell you, as far as the summer comes, you come in sloppy, you go out sloppy. But we believe that manners, common courtesy, learning how to say thank you, learning to eat properly, is important, because it can miscommunicate.

And we hope that some of you will read that if you haven't already. Then we have such radical epistles as our point of view by the OM kids. This is unbelievable.

They're asked what they want to do in the future. They're asked other important questions about life on OM, all by the children. It gives their age.

This is about one year old now. And you can get some insights into OM that I never had until I read this, even about my own children. So there it is, our point of view.

Visit the literature goldmine. There also are leadership manuals available. You are not entitled to two of these.

They cost money. We're conservative in the use of trees. And if you already have one and you don't have it here, you can borrow one of these.

This actually says Sue Hassel on it. I found it on the table. You can borrow one of these and then give it back at the end of the conference.

I'm saying for some of you may have one back home, so you don't have to have two of them. A lot of material, and that isn't considered with Oswald Sanders' book, the textbook for this conference. Books.

Now someone's going to say, oh no, you mean you're going to push books when none of us have any money to buy anything? We're joining the year program. Most of these books you'll find in the book department on your team. I hope some of you will volunteer to be in charge of the books on your team if no one else volunteers.

It's a key ministry. Because if you think of every OMer just automatically grabs books when he goes out, you obviously haven't been around the movement too long. You've got to have methodology.

And the man in charge of literature is a key man on any team, making sure the right literature is there. You know the prices. I'd love to have a whole session on that.

I'm mentioning these books not to all run out and buy them. You probably have more books right now than you can read. I hope you are taking all notes.

When I used to have more say in these conferences, everything's delegated now, everybody took an exam. In fact, I used to make people take exams before they could come on the OM year program. And several people were sent home at the end of the September conference because they failed the exam.

We interviewed them to see if the failure in the exam was an indication that their life was messed up, and often it wasn't. So we asked them to go home and come back next year. I don't know, maybe someone will spring an exam on you.

OM is full of surprises. But I do hope you will take notes. And I hope you'll write the titles of these six books because these are books I hope you will begin to use in your ministry.

One of the purposes of a leadership conference is to try to begin, you know, we don't want to be too idealistic, is to begin to get you out of spiritual babyhood. In literature, spiritual babyhood means you're usually thinking about what books you want for your library, what books you want for your own spiritual growth. Nothing wrong with that.

You need spiritual food, I'm not judging you. But as you grow up, you start thinking, what books can I use to minister to others, to give to others? And I just feel that some of you, as a result of this week, are going

to want to use literature more. You can touch lives with literature that you will never touch, and I don't care if you're the best personal soul winner that ever walked.

I was involved in personal soul winning before I had a great vision for literature. I led many people to Christ, even those who did not want to come to Christ, accepted Christ when I presented it, sometimes. And I learned slowly the tremendous value of the printed ministry in preparing people for real conversion.

God just so wonderfully uses literature, also in the lives of believers, to build them up. Here's some books to use in your ministry. Parents in Pain.

When I mention this book in a meeting of adults or parents, generally every copy on the table goes. People are crying out. Most parents have at least one child away from God, including most men of God and great preachers.

And it brings much pain into their life. This is a book for parents who are in pain over children who are away from God. It's a book that needs to be read.

I'm in the middle of reading it myself, and it's very, very helpful. These books are not only for your own need. Again, I stress that, but you want to read them yourself so that you can have some of this material to use in counseling.

Other years I've given a whole message, I'd love to do it this year, on the ministry of counseling. Maybe someone else will cover that. It's absolutely essential that the leader is a counselor.

It doesn't mean you're a professional counselor, but you're a good listener. You've got a little bit of common sense, the best thing a counselor could ever have. You're willing to read and learn from the word and from other books, and you can give wise counsel.

That's linked with this message tonight on decision-making. Then how to win over depression, the number one illness in Europe, depression. It's right that I've been told by medical doctors, others, now there are different kinds of depression.

Some are mainly spiritual, some are mainly emotional, some are spiritual and emotional, some are mainly physical, some are spiritual, emotional, physical. It is a complex area. None of you are going to be in God's ministry of counseling without counseling a depressant.

Any information you can get I'm sure will be a help. You don't have to accept it all. There's a book that I think you need to read.

Michael Griffith's book, *Take My Life*, a book we all should be distributing to any young person who's sort of just drifting in their Christian life. They don't know where they're going, they don't know what discipleship is. This in many ways, especially for the British, better than true discipleship.

Take My Life by Michael Griffiths. I'm sure most of you have read it. You know, we presume that everybody in LM's reading Tozer, but you know the human heart is very deceptive.

I've had people tell me, always encouraging, the very fact that I recommended Tozer, they decided they weren't going to read any Tozer. Boy, that really set my spiritual battery on overcharge. Fortunately, I think they are a shrinking minority group and we're determined to drive them all into the sea.

But we hope you will get some of these books by Tozer and be involved in distributing them because God wants to speak to us as a movement through that man's writings. I've had two letters from Alan Redpath in the past week, one reminding me that he's given the whole month of December in 1982 to ministry within LM, probably on the doolets. His books do not sell very well.

He's a greater preacher than a writer, but I have found both his preaching and his writing very, very helpful. Alan Redpath, this is his book, A Making of a Man of God. And lastly, a book that really, really has inspired me, The Total Man.

If there's anybody that ever did not embody the total man, it's me. This is not to be classified with the book, The Total Woman. But if any of you men want some amusement, read the book, The Total Woman.

You might wait until after you're married. This is a very much simpler book, more down to earth, more basic. I don't agree with everything in this book.

It's somewhat nationalistic in some ways, but it's good. Your personal fitness program. And I thought that tomorrow morning, since I've had two mornings of tennis, and that's chewing up part of my quiet time, that tomorrow morning I would jog with any poor soul who would like to jog at 6.30. My friend, Jack Forrester, where is Jack? Stand up, Jack.

He's going to wake me up. I sleep out in a van and we're going to jog. And tomorrow morning, because of the new liberty that's come into OM, we're going to have mixed jogging.

That's right. Women can come. Now, we would like you to come properly clothed.

No see-through t-shirts, just jogging, one of those running suits. They're okay. We'll meet out by the field at 6.30 if you already have your personal exercise program.

If this is against your religious convictions, you don't have to come. You don't have to come. But I believe in personal fitness, you don't have to jog.

There are many other personal fitness programs, but we'll look forward to seeing some of you. I've hardly ever jogged with any girls, but we made a mistake once in a Mexico crusade. It was a sort of a slip, and several girls showed up to jog personally with me the next morning.

And that had never happened before. And amazing enough, I met this one girl who jogged around the streets of Mexico with us at a Bible college in Canada. And I said, I know you from somewhere.

Where was it? And we had jogged together in Mexico. After the jogging, I'm going to give a little talk out in the field about personal fitness and teach you some other stretching exercises and wake-up exercises that will be an encouragement to you the rest of your life. So we'll look forward to that tomorrow morning.

Now let's see, where are we? Decision making. Boy, you got some decisions to make. I was looking through the book of Acts, and I was thinking on how these men in the early church were constantly pressed to make all kinds of important decisions.

It must have been one of the most difficult tasks that they faced. For example, in Acts chapter 5, they were beaten. They were brought before the council.

They were commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus. And then we read verse 42, and daily in the temple and every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. They had to make a tough decision, a decision that could have cost them their life.

And they did it. In chapter 6, the women were murmuring because they weren't getting enough food. Grecians against Hebrews.

And so they had to make a decision, and they had to choose seven men, honest, full of the Holy Spirit, wisdom, to appoint over this business. You know, the hardest thing I find at a conference like this, the hardest thing, it comes to my mind at least every hour of the day, is that there's not enough time. I once read a quotation that the man of God often lives in the constant sense and is haunted, that's the word he used, haunted by the lack of time.

I find this is a great thing in my life, so much I want to do, so much time I long to spend in the Word and in prayer and in reading and in writing. And I've got about ten different books I love to write, and I'm not even a writer. I think if I could get alone and get someone to help me, and I've got ten people volunteer to help rewrite my things, I could do it, but there isn't the time in the job and what the ministry God has called me to now.

Plus, I just, every time I think of it, feel that my job is distribution, not writing. And here at the conference, some of us are haunted by the lack of time. We have to, as leaders, these men have flown in from the ships, they've flown in from India, we have to meet this time of the year, two or three hours every day, starting Friday, 15 hours a day for four days, including a day of prayer.

That means to some degree, of course, we can't have more time with you during the first week. As soon as that's over, we'll be more available. We are already, to some degree, we'll be more available, most of us, to just meet with as many we can for prayer, for counseling, and I hope you'll understand that.

And as I read about these men in the Book of Acts, I realize they had many of the same problems. They had special meetings in Jerusalem to discuss their problems, to make decisions. One of the biggest decisions in the Book of Acts, what was it? To decide to let Gentiles into the church.

The church in its very seed stage was Jewish. They were all converts from Judaism. My understanding that the Grecians and Hebrews referred to here are all Jews.

These are Greek proselytes. It's later on that the door is open to the Gentiles. What a decision! So don't think, beloved, when you have to meet in a committee, or when you have to get together with other leaders to discuss and resolve problems, that's some unspiritual thing.

You should be out giving tracts out during that time, or be out preaching, or be out doing something else. I hope you do that as well. I do.

But it is biblical, it is scriptural, it is New Testament, whatever word you want to use, to meet together, to make decisions, and to resolve the problems that are in the church. Stephen then, of course, went out. He made this big decision that cost him his life.

He probably had some other things to do at that moment. He was one of the seven. He was supposed to be a practical worker, but he made the decision at that moment to go out into an open-air ministry, and he never came back.

I was thinking about Hebrews chapter 11. Turn with me to Hebrews chapter 11, and thinking about the people there. This is a great summary of men of faith.

Abel had to make that decision about what he was going to offer to God. Cain had to make his decision. Cain's decision was wrong, Abel's was right.

Well, frightening, isn't it? Some people find making decisions almost impossible. Do you know one of the reasons young people drift into these very manipulative type extremist groups where the leaders at the top make all the decisions for everybody? Because for some temperaments, not all, I can assure you, for some temperaments this is a tremendous release. They're unable to make their own decisions.

They're unable to take life in a sense by the throat and do what needs to be done. So they fall into false cults or extremism where somebody else makes all your decisions. I want to tell you right now, O.M. is not going to decide for you either who you're going to marry or where you're going to go or whether you stay with us or leave us.

We can give counsel. We can give advice. You have to make the final decision.

You stand before God. You live your Christian life before God, firstly, not before men. You can listen to the counsel of men.

We are part of the body of Christ. It's not a matter of each one shooting off doing his own thing. And it's an area where we constantly work for balance.

We never finally arrive. When you first come into a movement in your first year, probably you are going to be quite submissive. Once you make your decision to come, you're probably going to be somewhat submissive as to what you do and where you go.

In O.M., our method of leadership is negotiation. Of course, once you commit yourself, suppose you commit yourself to be a lineup man on the ship. Well, once you make that commitment, you've lost a certain amount of your liberty.

I see a big smile on somebody's face in that department because you can't say, well, I really feel led to line up this particular port in southern Australia. The ship is not going to southern Australia, so what are you going to do lining up a port there? There has to be the negotiation. Certain jobs demand sacrificing some of your liberty.

Marriage means that. I think that's a problem with some of the contemporary women. I just throw this in as a side.

It's not the main message. They want the best of both worlds. They want all the advantages of the single life.

You've stopped crying on your pillow and start whistling. The freedom. No husband telling you what to do, what to cook them, wash my trousers, where's my clean shirt.

Don't you realize this? Tremendous freedom. But the day you stand at that altar and say, I do, especially if it's a normal evangelical Bible-believing man, you have just sacrificed a very interesting chunk of your freedom. Now you still have freedom.

Don't misunderstand me. I am not a male chauvinist. I have even a deep, intrinsic link with the women's liberation.

I believe they should all be liberated from their sins by the power of Jesus Christ. But the Bible says that we're to love one another. The Bible says that we are free.

Book of Galatians, only don't use the freedom as an occasion to the flesh. And just to keep all of you men from running into a tangent, when you get married, you also give up a chunk of your freedom. There is no real happiness in marriage without sacrifice, without giving up in order to get something, which I believe for most people is greater.

In the book of Hebrews, we have Abel making his decision. We have Enoch who made his decision. He made it daily.

He walked with God and so God took him. I think he made the right decision. We don't get much in the Bible about Enoch, but it seems to me from my understanding of God's working, he was constantly plagued with making decisions and yet all of his life he seemed to make, at least to a large degree, the right decision.

He walked with God. We read about Noah, an enormous decision to build an ark. We read about Abraham, a great decision to go out not knowing where he was going.

And whether it's Isaac or Jacob or Joseph, think of the decisions that Joseph made, especially when he became prime minister of Egypt, where Moses, who it's recorded in verse 25, chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. And then Rahab, and then who can begin to speak of these other heroes, all who made constantly important decisions. Some decided not to be delivered and of course they suffered trials, mocking, scourgings, moreover bonds and imprisonments.

We're going to deal with some other things along that line later on. I've just written in my Bible, I have this habit of writing in my Bible, things that I don't want to forget and I don't want to lose. And I just jotted a few notes about how to make a decision.

This is a practical thing. Here at this Leader's Conference, we want to give you things that we're not going to be able to give at the General Conference. If you're going to be a leader of any kind, you must know how to make decisions.

A leader is decisive and we need decisive people in the work of God. Decisiveness is linked with fearlessness. Decisiveness is linked with courage.

Joshua, more than anything else, it's recorded in the Word, was exhorted to be courageous. We're told to stand strong in the Lord. On the other hand, as we make decisions about the work of God, about other people, about our own lives, I don't believe we are to turn off our brain.

I understand that the Witness-Lee Extremist Church Group has a teaching in which they emphasize that for true spiritual life, you must learn to turn off the mind. This is something quite common in some groups, an emphasis on super-spirituality, where you turn off the mind and you just turn on to God, supposedly, and mystical experiences. Vibrations and you get carried away in supposedly find God's will through that.

There is, I believe today, an overemphasis on the spectacular in finding God's plan. We have many people waiting for special prophecies, revelations, color slides in their sleep. And, personally, I think some Christian organizations are being torn apart because of an overemphasis on spectacular forms of guidance.

I don't believe the fleece message, method used in the Old Testament, is something we sort of just go around doing every day or every week. I'm not saying God doesn't confirm things in a miraculous way. I can tell you that gift that came in a few days ago, the way it was designated, the way it came to me, the fact that in an unusual way the check was written out to me, which is sad, doesn't happen much in O.M., was a confirmation of a number of rather big decisions I had made in the past six months.

And it just was enormous. In the past two weeks, I've been praying, Lord, I need a seal on some of this money that's being spent on some of these projects we're launching on giving away thousands and thousands of books when we don't have any money to give away books. When we started giving away 2,000 copies of Love Covers and sending them postpaid to Christian leaders throughout the entire world, it was a bit of a gamble.

And I wrestled with this and a number of other expenditures, literature projects all over the world, some of them not absolutely necessary. And I was praying and asking God for some kind of token. And I prayed specifically for a large gift and that the gift would not be for something like, say, for the ship or for some other aspect of the work where, of course, I have nothing to do with it.

It just comes and goes. I can't pull 5,000 pounds of that and use it to pay for books. The Lord led us, I guess mainly me, a couple of us, to give a large quantity of books to youth with a mission recently, French books, with the idea when they sell these, they can use the money for their ship.

I got the invoice for this just before I left England. I thought, Lord, I don't have any money to pay this invoice. And I was crying out to God in desperation.

Now, when I thought the Lord would send a token, I must be honest, I was thinking, you know, five grand, 10,000, you know, you don't see much of that kind of thing within a land. And so you can understand why I flipped out slightly. Please forgive me for my behavior.

Some of the children were offended when, you know, I got this check. And this check was marked George Verwer, personal, in the envelope. And it was just there on my pile in my van.

And I opened it, and I prayed to the Lord, 1,000 pounds, look at that. And then this is the truth. Wow, this is 10,000 pounds.

Because it was just one with all these numbers. There were zeros. And it was only when I got to the writing, the writing underneath, you know about checks, and it said 100,000 pounds.

Well, God does do the unusual. But you will not survive in your Christian life if you expect to just live from one unusual thing to the next, one fleece to the next, one blessing to the next. William Carey said we need plotters.

We need plotters. We need people who can keep moving on when there is no spectacular, when the money is not coming in, when it's nothing but problems, as we read about in the last chapter of Habakkuk. So I'm convinced that in our decision making, we should use our heads, use our minds.

And it's a tremendous challenge to find the balance between trusting God for the impossible and using common sense in making a decision. We can't just quickly run around, for example, ordering things, presuming the money is going to come in later on. Hudson Taylor believed in seeing the funds come in in answer to prayer before purchasing.

Because of the business aspect of OM, the literature aspect of OM, we're not quite that conservative. But I can tell you, know our policy, we are not moving from here in one month's time unless all overdue bills are paid and things are up to date. It's difficult to find the balance.

What are some practical principles? Very quickly in these remaining 15 minutes, and then you're going to get a cup of coffee or something, at least water. Number one, these are some questions you can ask. I put this in the form of questions, things that I can run through my mind in a matter of a minute when I'm making a decision.

And let me just say this before I give you the list. I believe, and I have seen some of the most wonderful, beautiful Christian leaders make some of the most disastrous, ridiculous evaluations and decisions in their life. In fact, most do.

So if great Christian leaders with all their knowledge and all their prayer can make such disastrous decisions, which in some cases destroy their ministries, you know, don't be too puffed up. Let's get what we can. First question, you might ask yourself, how long will it take? Whatever you're planning to do, whatever you're planning to go, what project is involved, how long is it going to take? You remember Luke chapter 14? Count the cost.

Count the cost. I've seen in OM people launch projects without counting the cost. And I will tell you, we have had some interesting little disasters in operation mobilization.

I've led some of them. Count the cost. Right now, OM is so big, it has grown so quickly, and has so many internal problems that every move we make, some want Quebec, some want North Africa, some want Argentina, some want South Africa, some want Australia.

There's another 15 major moves that are on the table right now for discussion. I want to tell you, some of the few of you senior leaders are here, every move at this stage in OM is going to cost. It's going to cost.

Luke 14, 33. And this is a time, I believe this year especially, in which OM needs to count the cost. Our talk about the Muslim world can be big.

Where are we going to be married families out in the Muslim world when our children are 13, 14, and 15? How many of us are still going to be there? I just talked to a brother from Italy. You know what he's told me about all the ex-OMers who went to Italy because of our great vision for Italy? You know what he's told me? Most of them are coming back. Five more couples returned to England in the past six months.

That's just Italy. It costs. Cross-cultural, long-term, in-depth missionary work costs.

There's educational problems. There are all kinds of things that we don't always see on the surface. For six years the Lord led us, at that time a few of us, to count the cost, what it would mean to launch a ship for world evangelism.

For two years, the first two years after God gave the vision, there was almost just a handful of us that even believed it. There was not a single crew member. At that time at OM, I knew more about ships than anybody in the movement.

I was reading everything I could get my hands on. I was touring ships in many different countries. It was only after visiting ships, one of them I remember in Gothenburg, the Scoggin II, that God confirmed the vision he gave in the little converted pub up in Bolton, Lancashire.

So for two years there was the counting of the cost. Then the Lord gave a couple of crew members, including Graham Scott, and for four more years we counted the cost, we prayed, we evaluated, we listened to the criticism, listened to the criticism, and in some ways let the vision almost die, and it was a battle. I think one of the toughest decisions in my life was when we bought that ship.

The initial reaction to that ship from two brothers that visited was it definitely was not God's ship. And I had to go back after a summer of combing the world for ships, when we made this decision in a summer conference, though things were still dark, there were still problems, we still didn't even have the money, and that ship cost less than that one check we just got. We decided full speed ahead we're going to find a ship.

Peter Connell was looking all over Greece, I went back to Copenhagen, and I walked through that ship, and at that moment a couple of us made the decision, this is it. I will tell you I was scared. But if it's wrong, do you know what it can be to get the wrong ship? I knew just enough about ships to realize this could be the greatest nightmare in O.N.'s history.

And I tell you the first couple of months of that ministry, it was a nightmare, as Satan tested and purged and attacked, the tow rope towing the ship from Copenhagen broke in the sea. And the other problems there's not time to go into. How long will it take? Maybe a very small thing, maybe a very small thing.

Some of the same methodology I use for big things, I use for small things. Number two, this is the biggest question of all, will it glorify God? Will it glorify Jesus Christ? Is there a possibility that it's an ego trip? Is it a possibility that you're trying to just get ahead, just be somebody, just get some recognition, evangelical recognition? From the earliest days of O.M., God gave us a strong word about motivation. I've always felt that the motive was more important than the action.

That's why I never had difficulties. If this is a boast, forgive me, maybe I did have difficulties that I've forgotten. But I never had difficulties doing the simplest jobs.

I don't think we could ask any of you to do anything here that I haven't done many, many times. Be it toilets, peeling potatoes, washing thousands and thousands of dishes, whatever it is. What a joy.

For Jesus, everything is a joy. Nappies. Americans call them dippers or diapers or dupers or whatever.

And the Bible clearly says, whatever you do it, do it heartily as unto God, all to the glory of God, not just the big things. God didn't lead us into that shit ministry in the first year, first five years, or the first ten years. He laid a foundation, little things.

My life is filled with little things, not big things. And so is, I'm sure, the life of many of you. Will it glorify Christ? No, when you have the privilege of doing something and nobody knows about it but God.

Boy, that's wonderful. It's hard to do these days with the Gospel Gazette, people running around with cameras. In England, you give out two tracts on the street corner, somebody will take your picture and put you in the paper as an evangelist.

Things certainly have changed, haven't they? My heart just breaks sometimes when I pick up some people's Christian propaganda and I find the director's face on every other page. I just can't believe it. I don't judge the man.

It just seems to be the order of the day. Will it glorify Christ? Is not much of what goes on today in the name of Christian work strong, stubble? Will it not all burn on that final day where everything will be judged and where motive will be considered the most important thing? Was it for the glory of Christ, the glory of God, because we love him, because we want to obey him? I don't want to put you into a double guilt trip. I'm not saying everything has to be perfectly motivated.

You'll go crazy if you try to be perfect in the area of motivation, but at least we should be moving in that direction and quick to repent whenever wrong motivation, the glory of man, your own ego, pride, evangelical status-seeking, reaction from your own insecurities, whatever keeps you or keeps that situation from bringing glory to Christ. Thirdly, is it biblical? We need to be constantly asking ourselves, is it biblical? And we need to search the scriptures. We need to know the scriptures.

Fourthly, what are previous cases and examples? When the Lord led in regard to the ship, I studied about George Whitfield's ship project. It was a disaster. George Whitfield made a number of disasters.

His biggest one was his attitude toward women. Unbelievable, unbelievable. And God was merciful.

All these great men of God made a lot of mistakes. You read about George Whitfield's movement in North America. You think we have extremists in OM.

He had some men following him who were totally insane. That's right. They caused more scandal for the early revival in the New England states than you can ever imagine.

I mean, it really wouldn't be too good if we had someone here who kept running into the meeting claiming he was Moses. I mean, some of you could lose, you know, our credibility might drop, especially if it was somebody like McCrosty. The awesome problems that come, especially it seems at times when revival comes.

Then I researched the New Tribes missionary ship project. They had a ship, an American mission, one of the most criticized missions in history. They used to whip people out of Bible school faster than they could get, you know, to the library.

They'd be out on the mission field. They crashed two airplanes, killed two loads of missionaries on airplanes. That warmed my mobilization transportation heart.

Including the director of the mission crashed in one of the planes. We had a man come into our conference, a great man of God, DeVerm Frompke, and I think it was 1966. That message alone was enough to finish OM.

Boy, he talked about how God prepares people for a great work, and he was talking about 10 years, 15 years. Any of you remember DeVerm Frompke's message? Gordon, do you remember? Anybody? Boy, I

remember it. He almost was on one of those planes.

He belonged to New Tribes. The Lord, he told how the Lord led him out. I had always liked the New Tribes mission.

They actually learned through those experiences. Now they have one of the most intensive boot camp training programs and other language schools and all kinds of schools before you ever go to the mission field with them. Sort of the pendulum went back a little bit.

But they had a ship, and I think it got stuck on a sandbar somewhere, and they found out they couldn't get the right papers, and they eventually decided that ships were not their thing. Yes, there were plenty of discouraging factors. We consulted some of the top Christian shippers in Europe, at least two or three of them.

All negative. All negative. So in studying the previous cases and examples, we might have decided that this was not God's way.

Someone suggested to me some years ago that we get a jumbo jet for Jesus. Jumbo jets were selling cheap. They were sitting out in Arizona.

Why not? Just, he had a list. He had it on paper. And he said to me, this really discouraged me, O.M. has been the greatest inspiration for my project.

I want to tell you, without the control of the Holy Spirit, the ship project has the potential of spreading more crazy ideas than any other ministry afloat. Anyway, not many ministries do float. And I talked to this man, and I prayed about this jumbo jet idea.

I constantly have had people come to me about these airplane things. Then this fellow came to me, what about a submarine for evangelism in depth? If you think we are lacking, if you think we are short of new ideas coming across my desk almost every week, I can assure you, you can come and join our ICT and help process the post. I could use someone just a specialist in answering crazy letters.

After a few months, he would probably be a little funny himself. We need wisdom. We need to evaluate.

We need to examine the facts. People often ask, where did some of these great visions come from? The vision for Turkey. Was it something spectacular in the night? Did I go to Turkey and catch the vision? Some people give the idea you can't have a vision for any of these countries unless you go there.

I want to tell you the burden for the Muslim world, burned in our hearts almost as hot as it does tonight, before we ever left Moody Bible Institute in Wheaton College, apart from the few of us that had gone to Mexico. The vision for Turkey came in the library of Moody Bible Institute, doing research on Turkey. Yes, of course, it is better to go to some of these countries, and that certainly increases the vision, but God can give us a vision as we pray, as we examine the facts, as we use the minds that God has given us.

Fifthly, how much will it cost? For every Christian work today that's launched and is successful, there are four that collide and crash to the ground, and a high percentage of them with economic problems. I've read some very good articles about it, and presumption can come in. If the Lord gives Operation Mobilization 100,000 pounds, well certainly God can supply this 20,000 for my new house.

Thank you, Lord, you are the God of Operation Mobilization. I'm trusting you. You go down, put the deposit on the house, and you pick it out.

You tell the man, you've read about how George Mueller went to the railway station. God supplied the money just as he walked to the ticket counter, no money in the pocket. You are the God of George Mueller and the God of Hudson Taylor, and you walk down to the real estate agent the day the money is due, and you say, in the name of the Lord, you're going to look pretty funny.

Five hours later, the real estate man's liable to call somebody to take you away. God leads different people in different ways. Don't talk about what God did in George Mueller's life until you read his whole life and see all that happened until he got to that point.

The first praying I ever did for money, I will tell you, the amounts were very small. The amounts were very small, and it was provided in unusual ways, and you know one of the ways I believe God wanted to supply money for me? Probably due to my father. I believed in working.

I said, Lord, give me a job. I was selling books door to door. I had a few other little jobs.

Lord, give me another job. I got a job in answer to prayer. It takes prayer to get a job.

Living by faith doesn't mean you're unemployed trusting Jesus to bring in the money through all of his people. It may mean getting a job, and this day it takes faith to get a job. I prayed for a job.

The Lord gave me a job. It was a miracle teaching Spanish. I couldn't even speak Spanish.

The guy I worked for was crazy. He had about 35 cats. I don't know if he could speak Spanish either, and that's the truth, and people came to him.

He ran an ad in the paper, Learn Spanish. He hired me and paid me a very good fee. People came in.

They didn't know any Spanish at all, so I could teach, you know, yo hablo espanol, tengo esto, and todo esto, and all the rest. I was praying away. Some of you have heard this story.

I love to tell it. I was coming home from teaching Spanish, praying for finance, worshiping the Lord. I was driving my father's car, and a fox dashed out across the road, stepped on the accelerator.

Boom! I hit him and collected \$20 bounty on that fox. It may have been more or less. I don't have the exact amount of money.

Now the craziest thing you could do tonight is because this is the way God led me, is to run out into the parking lot, jump in the first O.M. van, and start looking for foxes in Belgium, and yet somebody may do it. How much will it cost? Are you ready not just to pray and believe God for a miracle? Are you ready to work? If God gives you that ministry of supporting his work, of working hard, and then number six, we've got to move quickly, who will be involved? That's very important. Each decision, who will be involved? And if it's other people, you need to pray with them, you need to talk with them.

Don't presume that everybody's just going to agree with you. You've got to know how to get other people involved. You need to know how many people it's going to take.

Number seven, what are the possible dangers? Again, counting the cost. Every move we make in a movement like O.M. has possible dangers. In a movement of God, we need a balance of people.

If you have all optimists, you're guaranteed you'll go off the rails into all kinds of trouble. If you have all people who are only very realistic, you'll probably never do much. You need the balance.

You need the balance. But I think we need to ask ourselves the questions. What are the possible dangers? One of the reasons is because when something really bad happens and people start getting hurt or even killed, that can happen, people panic, people panic, and they start making accusations.

When the first teams headed for off for India in those early days, they only got to Switzerland. We had no garage. They were repairing the vehicles in the field.

It was snowing. It was terrible. Things went wrong.

There was no money. We were in debt. And people began to panic.

Some said the Holy Spirit has left O.M. Several people left us just like that. They believed the movement was finished. Others felt that there was a lack of humility.

A whole group then broke out with mumps. Surely this was the judgment of God upon O.M., mumps. They had to put several people with mumps in one part because the Swiss medical people got, you know, Switzerland, they don't believe in illness, and they got the medical people and they were quarantined.

And in the little room where they were quarantined, one brother came up with the idea, we're not humble enough, we're all going to wash feet. And there was one of my closest friends there, a dear, big, big, strong, smiling black brother. And I will tell you, nobody was going to wash his feet.

He thought this idea was, he might have been right. But I will tell you, you will never know to some degree what you're made of until you're in an emergency situation, where the pressure's on, where things look bad, where some are saying the Holy Spirit has left us, where others are shouting something else. The man of God is a man who can keep his head when everyone else is losing theirs.

You may not arrive at that destination overnight, but I hope you'll aim in that direction. I am. I'm not convinced I'm even there yet, but I have it as a goal.

What are the possible dangers? Eight, what are the misunderstandings? Every time we speak, there's potential misunderstanding. We can't be afraid of that, but we can work to keep them down to the minimum. In a movement like OM, because of the size and the complexity, the possibilities for misunderstanding, I would say in the past four years have tripled.

I've seen more misunderstandings in OM this year than any year in the history of the world. Maybe it's because more is happening. There's certainly more people, more projects, more visions, and it gets very, very complex.

The same is true in the smallest decision you make on your team. And if you're going to be a decision-making or a decisive person, you've got to know how to communicate and constantly work toward breaking down misunderstandings. Let your team members know why you're doing something.

Give them reasons. Give them reasons. Don't just dictate, you do this, you go here.

Give them the why. This is one of the reasons we have a conference like this, to give some of the why, some of the reasons. What are some of the next questions? Some of the possible complications.

Then, what are some of the possible alternatives? Consider the different alternatives. One of the most important factors in making decisions is the realization that it is very easy to be subjective. Somebody has hurt us and our decision will be affected by the hurt that they have inflicted.

It's an unusual man of God who can learn to be more and more objective in his decisions and less subjective. We need to make sure when we're about to make a decision that we're getting all the facts or as many of the facts as possible. It's better to wait a little, get a few more facts before you make a decision, especially about people.

People are complex. Don't make instant evaluations about people. If you feel you have a special telepathy in instantly evaluating people, personally, I would prefer not to have you in Operation Mobilization.

I think you'll be a menace because you'll probably get an in-ego trip. You'll probably get proud. You may have a special insight into people, but without humility, without brokenness, without the cross, without the control of the Holy Spirit, that's a dangerous thing.

And if you get five right and one wrong, you may destroy one. That's enough. I'm very, very, very, very cautious when people give special prophecies about a particular dangerous thing that's going to happen to somebody.

A man gave a prophecy that his, that, what was that I heard in one country? The prophecy was that this friend was going to die and he was going to marry his wife. He was also already married and that this was made in public. I mean, if you get some screwy ideas and you share them with your pillow, the Lord bless you, may you wake up more sane, but not in a public meeting to throw out some little vibration.

These things are not generally from God. They're just man-made, soulish, human intuitions or vibrations or something that may be dealing with the area of the psychic. Many people get the spiritual confused with the psychic.

And I believe God wants OM to be a movement that is heavenly minded, but somehow is anchored to this earth, thinking through, praying through, being objective, getting the facts. And then as God fills our heart with faith, that means waiting upon Him. That means much waiting upon Him.

We take the step of faith and we believe God. And even then at times He will test us, even after we've done everything else. We sense this is God's way and we take the move of faith.

We still must be ready for any surprise God wants to give. And we will humbly be willing to go back to the cross and start again. I think the most important thing I can say in closing is no one is going to learn this way of making decisions without many mistakes.

My whole life is a long history of mistakes. If you can aim at getting your average better and better and better, I think there's a great possibility that you can be mightily used to the Lord in making decisions which sometimes only affect your own family, other times affect your church, other times affect whole nations. Some of you have to decide where you're going to spend your life.

That's a big decision. It will determine perhaps the destiny of whole tribes, billions of people. I think decision making and finding God's will is one of the most exciting, unpredictable, filled with surprises, adventure we can ever get into.

And if you aren't excited about finding God's will and making the right decision and seeing God do great things because of the decisions you make, well, you need to just bow your head right now and say, Jesus, forgive me. I'm a dummy. Maybe you don't like that terminology.

Use some other more pleasant terminology. Let's pray. Oh, God, we just thank you for your mercy toward us.

When we have gone down some dead-end street, you've still loved us and you've gone with us, even though we failed to hear your voice. Lord, you know some of us don't want to make any more decisions. Lord, I have trouble sometime in the morning determining whether to change my socks or not.

Lord, I know some of the single people, they've been trying to make a decision about who they should marry and the range has been getting narrower every year and they're about to quit. May they be encouraged. May all of us somehow be encouraged not to give up in our desire to be committed, decisive, dedicated individuals.

That we may not somehow exchange our backbone for a wishbone. That we may stand firm and that we may learn your ways and your will and how to be soldiers and how to be leaders to help lead your church in decisive action against the enemy, in penetrating enemy territory, in tearing down the strongholds of Satan. We cry out for fearlessness and for wisdom and discernment.

In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, amen. Amen. To him be all the praise and all the glory.

Amen. Just a half moment of prayer. So you're seated.

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