

Ict Ministry Pt 2 29.7.85

by George Verwer

George Verwer discusses the importance of relationships, financial management, and long-term commitment in the ministry of OM.

Duration: 34:06

Scripture: Philippians 2:2

Topics: "Missions"

Description

In this sermon transcript, the speaker discusses the importance and impact of the AV department in the ministry of world evangelism. The AV department plays a crucial role in coordinating and disseminating information to various teams around the world through videos and films. They also handle tasks such as duplicating video cassettes and creating teaching tapes. The speaker emphasizes the need for support and involvement from the audience in order to continue reaching millions of people with the message of the Gospel.

Transcript

Rand, Diana, Anderson, they were involved with OM, I guess, in the early 60s, and shared with me an interesting story about one of the old OM trucks, picking them up, OM lorries picking them up at the station in Bristol. And over the years, a number of times, we sort of thought about whether they should join full-time. But about a year or two ago, it really seemed to be God's timing for them to join.

At this point, I'd like to emphasize the fact that we are completely united in our ministry in Bromley with OM UK, based out of the Quinta, coordinated by Peter Maiden and Tony Kirk. And historically, OM has always had an office in London, even though our main bases have been in the north, except in the very first year or two. We are responsible to look after the affairs of OM London, and in some ways, OM south of England, though not exclusively.

If someone from the north wants to take a meeting in the south, that's no problem, and I take more meetings in the north than, in fact, I do in the south. But we're dealing with Britain's largest city. We're dealing with a lot of people passing through, arriving back from the field.

And so, in many ways, a good amount of our work, when it comes to actual time, is OM UK. On the other hand, OM UK, and especially Peter Maiden, are helping in various ways internationally. This has proven to be one of the most effective ways to operate on less money, because all the money that we can save back

here in keeping administrative costs down and the overall coordination costs down, enables us to put more finance out in India and Bangladesh and the Muslim world, communist world, and the ends of the earth.

Of course, most of us end up doing two or three jobs, and that's perhaps something that should be discussed. God brought me to Britain in 1962, sort of the 25th anniversary of that, with a great burden for this country to see God moving among his people, to see revival, to see vision, and then to see people moving out. And our concept from the earliest days was not just short-term.

The concept of long-term life ministry came, you know, and really before the concept of short-term. In the last couple of years, we've really sensed that we're on overload on our team. Far more to do, often, than we can handle.

Yet some of the tasks that need to be done can't just be done by some new recruit, and especially the whole area of church relationships, counseling, following up on ex-OMers. Some of the people coming back from OM find it more difficult to enter into British society than they did to enter into missionary work overseas in the first place. But one of the reasons I felt so burdened to invite Ray and Diana Anderson into the ministry was to help me and to help ICT in connection with our responsibilities with OMUK.

I mention this because some people just looking at the whole thing on paper think, well, Ray Anderson, if his work is Britain, then he, of course, should be just linked to the Quintin. But that's not really the purpose and the goal. And if he does that, then I have another gap.

All the work that I do, that I'm involved in, which are linked with personal relationships, long-term church relationships, friends, ex-OMers, people who are counseled in the meetings except Christ, it's impossible to grasp what OM is doing unless you understand relationships. And relationships can't just be passed off flippantly from one person to another. We, in fact, need a whole department just committed to this if we really wanted to do it properly, especially considering a number of factors we're faced with in Great Britain.

All of us, again, have to work together on this. And I don't think there's anybody on our team that's not to some degree trying to work on church relationships, recruiting, ex-OMer relationships, prayer partners, all that kind of thing. We need to do a lot more.

Can't go into detail here. We praise the Lord that we now have someone on the team who has this as their main work, though, of course, Ray Anderson already has a ministry of preaching and teaching, would have invitations for that whether he was in OM or not. We've not been able to see a breakthrough in housing, greatest practical problem that we have continued to face on our team, together with the lack of finance, the fact that people don't easily give to ICT.

When people give in a general way, they think of the ships, they think of India. If it goes into any of the main financial offices, and that's for UK, that's Quinta. If the money is not designated, then it goes into the general fund for the work in Britain.

They are also in the midst of a considerable battle. So we have lived continually under financial pressure in ICT. We're trying to find ways, maybe this tape will be part of that, to communicate to our friends and prayer partners the ministry of ICT so that they will be motivated to designate money toward this particular ministry and the ministry of this team of people and all that they're doing around the world.

Part of the ministry of this whole team would be completely justified even if such a thing as OM International did not exist. But, of course, the bigger challenge of the team or the equal size challenge is serving, coordinating, helping lead OM forward internationally and around the world. So we're excited about the Andersons.

We hope you'll pray for them. They did get some financial encouragement for a home if they were willing to move to Bristol where they had many friends. They're living in Chepstow at present, or they're just moving now.

And we again, as we so often do in OM, drew up a compromise because we didn't have proper housing in Bromley, and they are now based in Bristol. Ray will generally be coming in two days a week to Bromley. Of course, there are positives and negatives about any move, but this does seem to be from the Lord.

And we'd really appreciate your prayers on behalf of their ministry. Already, Ray's been down to Italy. He's getting invitations to be involved in various ways in OM conferences.

And we just pray this can be kept in balance so that a good part of his time can still be given to the churches, prayer partners, ex-OMers, and the extension, the growth in depth of the work in Britain, and everything that especially is connected with our team. Pray that especially he'll be able to line up meetings. Sometimes we have key speakers on our team who have no meetings on the weekends.

Getting meetings is not easy. There are many churches who are not interested in someone coming in to present missions, much less present OM. What some people don't realize is that our men are available for general ministry, general teaching.

You can even assign them a topic. And of course, we do get some, but I don't think we really get enough. Some of us get more than we can handle.

We try to pass them on to other brothers. Some of us are more known than others. We've been going at it a longer time.

Some churches, some groups are not happy about that. Some are. I'd love to just talk for a long time just about our ministry in the Christian unions, because OM's input into the Christian unions for more than 20 years is an untold story.

And in a sense, we thank God for that. We never wanted to start any separate organization in the universities, and we certainly want self-crucified and don't want to be doing things in order to get the credit. But we are motivated about working in the Christian unions.

Naja Lee especially is a very close linking to the whole Christian union movement, UCCF. And we just feel that we're partners together with that great movement, which in so many ways is one of the main spiritual backbones in Britain. And so it's a sad day if we have to turn down meetings, which I personally have to do.

And we're praying that people would be willing to accept one of the speakers of this team, and that they'll have the confidence in this team to know that if we send someone from ICT to take a meeting, that that person will be able to communicate, that person will have the blessing and the help of the Lord in their ministry. Another family that's just recently joined the team is Viv Thomas. Viv and Sheila Thomas.

What an answer to prayer that this couple decided to, in the many options they had around OM, to settle on ICT. For many years, Roger Molstad was my main administrative assistant for general things. I mention that because for India, Gary Dean carries that role.

We'll talk about him in a moment. Before Roger Neal, John Neal was carrying that. This was an important responsibility where I was really delegating a lot of things that I no longer could keep up with, especially in connection with the Muslim world, also in connection with literature, relationships, other organizations, personnel.

And Viv, after much prayer, has stepped into this task. Viv was a pastor, then he went with OM India. He met Sheila somewhere in the midst of all that.

Then he went back to the pastorate at a church in London. Then he went back to OM Pakistan. And so he has considerable experience.

He is another person, of course, who just on his own can get plenty of meetings, as he's a very gifted preacher and communicator. And we're thankful for men who have that gift, who are willing to also develop their administrative gift. Every pastor, most pastors, have some kind of administrative gift, an overall leadership gift.

The key in Viv's job will be relationships. His wife feels very called to work in a secular job and to reach out in that way, which is a whole, in my mind, important area of witness and ministry. Some people will be closer to the OM sort of hub of activities and administration than others.

Other people feel within OM their greater calling or strong calling is their own church. Others feel the call to put Christ into practice, Christianity into practice, in the marketplace, in tough secular situations. And that's something that Sheila senses.

They don't have any children. And we'd appreciate your prayers for her in that kind of ministry. Of course, they're very much together as a team.

Recently visited the Middle East. Since it's his first year in this job, getting to know all the people, the organizations, the other Christian leaders is a big responsibility. Involves a lot of reading, a lot of meeting with people.

And I believe that for the future, they are certainly destined to be very key people in the overall leadership and servanthip ministry of OM around the world. Of course, even tomorrow morning, I often speak Friday mornings to the team. Viv will be taking my place and sharing with both teams as they come together.

Next week, he'll be teaching the study program. And we're just excited about their ministry and how thankful we are to God for them. I'd like to now just talk for a moment about Gary Dean and his wife.

Gary right now is out in the subcontinent. He is my main administrative assistant for subcontinent affairs. I think there are other ways to describe his ministry.

The leadership for the subcontinent is basically on a national basis. Our goal is eventually to have an area leader for the subcontinent. We don't have that person right now.

And since that's where I've been involved the most in the last 20 some years, together with my international responsibility, I am the area leader for the subcontinent. But in fact, Gary is chief servant,

chief deacon, and really carrying the practical load. And the people of the subcontinent have really come to appreciate so much all that Gary has been able to do on their behalf.

There's five times more involved in that job than can be seen on the surface. I know the sheer amount of correspondence that I receive from the subcontinent would certainly be enough to keep me busy a couple days a week, especially if I included in that some meetings that I do take to present the vision of the subcontinent and the other things we do to build relationships for the subcontinent. Again, India has been having enormous financial struggles.

And ideally we need a team of people just out presenting the vision of India, the challenge of India. India in regard to world missions today is old, sort of old hat. There are not that many people interested.

We praise God this year under the umbrella of our team, we were able to launch a subcontinent team, Jimmy Christie, Frank Brooks, Don Maxwell, partly with that team, partly with me. And that has been really effective. Now most of the major fields want to see similar teams mobilize.

But that takes organization, it takes coordination, it takes follow-up, it takes general oversight. In O.M. there's often no quick, simple way to get certain things done because there's no great dictatorial powers where one person can just say do this and everybody sort of does it. We have to win people to what is on our heart.

We have to pray with them. We have to esteem them. This is why there's far more involved on our team along this line than we can ever even talk about.

The phone calls that have to be made to bring two brothers into unity or to get someone to understand what's happening. Everybody in O.M. wants to know what's happening. They don't want to be presumed on and they don't want to be walked on.

This means a lot of information has to go out. If it wasn't for the cassette tapes that we've sent out, like the financial crisis cassette, I just don't know where we would be. Plus all the memos and the other communication that build unity, like-mindedness, International Weekly Report, which we've had a lot of good feedback on lately.

These many, many ministries and functions will only continue as the Lord gives us a strong, like-minded team. Believe me, one of the burdens for sharing what's on my heart right now is that we need to see others who are willing to come in and work on this team. Most of these men need secretarial or administrative help.

They are carrying in most cases two or three jobs. This is only possible through the faithful work of secretaries. We've only been able to get a few longer-term secretaries, which of course to some degree we understand because people come and they get a burden to go out to India or the Arab world and we rejoice in that.

I'd like to just again request prayer for Gary and Sue Dean. They're crying out to God for the right people to step into that job for one year and for all that it involves. Gary also has a ministry of teaching and preaching and that gets used not only in connection with India, but in general.

I'd like to now talk about Vera Zebramsky. We wish we had more longer-term single people on our team, though there are hard people to find. Vera has now been more than five years working as my secretary

and to be quite honest, I think most people know she's doing the work of two or three people.

Tremendous skill, but also tremendous commitment to the task and she is actually doing far more than a secretary would do. Each person like Vera have other ministries, often the ministry of hospitality. We have a hospitality house on ICT and in connection with that, I'd like to mention Jim and Margaret Osborne, people who look after that house and have been just such a blessing to so many.

Few people can understand, however, the pressure that sometimes comes on that ministry and basically if we're going to think of hospitality in a serious way and we must do that and especially our team must do that, then we need more people involved in that task or should I say everyone on the team needs to reach out in the ministry of hospitality. With our limited accommodation and the crises we're often facing in that area, that doesn't always become, it's not always very easy. I usually have one other person who works with me as a trainee for a year.

This year it's Bob Rose, last year it was Mark Sotoquist, before that Dirk Roth. This has been such a help to me and of course it enables us to put into practice what Dale Roton talks about in his book Christian Strategy. We learn from each other.

I generally when I travel prefer for the sake of the job to have a team because there are people that need counseling, there's the book table, there's just so much that happens when you move out to take a series of meetings or to take a weekend conference. Pray for Bob Rose as he's seeking God's will about the future. I'd like to mention our team working in the AV department.

Donald who's single praying about his future and Bob McLeod has come in on a longer term commitment. I might mention that sometimes in Britain we have some difficulties in getting longer term visas and that's another prayer request. Please pray for Donald and Gail McLeod, their family come across from Canada.

Again I need a whole tape just to talk about the AV department. A department easily misunderstood because a lot of the work is indirect, it's catalyst, it's information, it's coordination, it's letting our different teams around the world know about new videos, new films. Of course there's a lot of other ramifications like the duplication of video cassettes, the making of teaching tapes.

We don't feel we're ready to go into production in a big way but there are film strips. It's something also that Peter Conlon has been very involved in who helped produce the Lagos film strip. So that department is still really just being born because of the cut back in connection with finance because we're very slow to add personnel.

That's linked with the housing. It's also linked with the huge task that the team leader faces in keeping all this together and helping to meet everybody's needs and how we thank God for that department. And they're of course still over in the same building with STL making use of one of their computers and that's helping that work to go forward in a very, very real way.

One of the greatest needs in the whole of the Bromley operation including STL and ICT is for a proper maintenance department. We have a dear brother as a volunteer John Wilkins helping us a few days a week. He's mobilizing some of his friends.

We did have one full-time brother last year. We've had years when we had a little team in maintenance. A lot of our buildings are old and most cases we are responsible for the maintenance of the building especially if we've had it at a low rent or rent free.

I tell you this is a point where we really would appreciate your prayers and also if you know anyone can get involved with us in that kind of ministry. Another major hub of our whole operation in Bromley is the garage where Sam Marshall and his faithful brothers carry such an enormous load. They technically are on STL.

We have had some ICT mechanics from time to time but in fact they serve both teams. Again few people can grasp what it is to keep such a large scale army of people mobilized. Sometimes people have asked why do we have so many families.

I don't believe of course considering the task that we have that many families but the way we sometimes think within a land. One of the reasons for this has been very clearly our desire to esteem the frontline operations where often families are not able to function because of schooling problems, other problems, visa problems and where they are constantly crying for committed and dedicated single men and women. We of course cannot sacrifice all of our single men and women and they are vital to the office operation and the behind the scenes operations and these other related ministries that we've talked about.

Though we have some hardships in placing families I don't think those hardships are as great as often trying to place families in some of these other countries. There are people who want to get involved in world evangelism like the McLeods who have recently come with us who I interviewed in Canada a couple of years ago and who had to correspond and had to go through all the various sort of interviews and red tape before they can get involved because they're a family. OM is conservative as we take families, getting to know them, finding God's place and I think that is basically good.

But I praise the Lord that we've been able to find vital ministries that families can get involved in because that in turn helps us recruit other needed personnel and often releases sometimes people who are able to travel with less difficulty further afield where the need is so great. One of our greatest burdens as we work together as a team is to constantly esteem these other fields. The international coordination of the work is not done exclusively by this team.

I'm sure you understand that. I tried to make it clear in the beginning. It's done by various sectors of OM, CAO and the European operation in Brussels, the ship coordination base over in Mossbach, Carlisle where Peter Maiden has his operation.

But one of our responsibilities is to provide communication, regular continual communication between all coordinating bases. We believe this decentralized approach is effective but it will only be effective if this team at the hub and the center of communication and coordination functions properly. We now have a communications committee under Dave Hicks that usually meet in Bromley.

It seems clear that this must be an increased part of our ministry in Bromley. This leads me to wanting to just share the fact that Jerry and Gene Davey after their sabbatical year will become a part of this team. Already he is working part-time in his new task as fellowship secretary.

Again, this is the kind of task that some people don't easily understand. Feel free to write Peter Maiden for Jerry's job description. Ideally, of course, for the work Jerry and Gene should be based in Carlisle because they're working directly with Peter Maiden, everything connected with agendas, the notes at major meetings, getting this into the policy manual.

This involves research. By the way, our team initially had a whole research department, especially under Ray Mayhew. But through financial cutback and other pressures, this now is just being done unofficially, I guess by all of us.

We have some of the greatest files of information, some of the greatest cross-section of books linked with research that you'd find anywhere almost in the OM world. But because of the family situation, Jerry's family very much involved in schooling in the Bromley area, it's clear that Jerry and Gene should remain in Bromley and will, after their semi-sabbatical, really become part of this team. We'll also be involved in consultancy work in connection with literature ministries around the world as he had so many years of experience, 18 actually or more, on the STL side in terms of literature.

So uphold them. That will be quite a step, transition from the STL side, which they've already done into their sabbatical, but then entering into the life of ICT. We desire to continue to go forward as a committed fellowship and a committed community of soldiers and workers for Jesus Christ.

As we think of even organization, the bottom line is love. It's relationships. It's our heart linking together.

This will have tremendous advantages, but of course, sometimes in terms of structure and measuring structure, it will not be easily understood, especially by people on the outside. We need people who will stand with us in this ministry. We need people who will go back over this tape and pray about one or two families that they will particularly stand with in prayer and in the ministry of practical support or encouragement.

We would long to, and I know all of our people on our team, correspond with others who would like to get involved with us. Don't be afraid to ask questions. We always appreciate questions rather than accusations because sometimes our team has handled a fair share of criticism, especially because to carry out an operation like this, especially when we're living basically in rented accommodation.

Remember for 20 or 30 years, we have chosen to put our money into literature, into national workers, into vehicles, into ships, into getting the job done. We have not given much esteem to our bases. When we have, it's usually been the national bases where the recruits are, where the prayer letters actually go out from, where people at least to some degree can measure and see what's happening.

At times, those of us on ICT have really felt that people didn't understand and were quick to jump on us if they thought we were spending too much money. We have to spend money on airfare. How can we possibly coordinate a work in 35 nations that has a ministry through literature and teams and the ships into 100 nations involving 1,600 people and all their children throughout the year, another 2,000, even with all the various modules? That, by the way, cuts down on expense in many ways, but it increases expenses in other ways.

There's no way that anything like this can be done without seeing a significant amount of finance. Of course, we sense as a team, it is our responsibility to trust and believe God for the money to keep this going. Now, the rest of the OM body has agreed through the leaders to give 1% of their income to help us with our expenses.

If we had something very clear that we're spending on behalf of India, like buying a spare part for their vehicle, that can be billed to India. That is done. Turn over at this point to continue on the next side of this particular tape, the remainder of this message.

Thank you. There are many expenses that are indirect. Of course, the whole thing of travel, telexes, correspondence, which is huge.

We have so many ministries that are linked with correspondence. This has put our team really with our backs against the wall in terms of finance. We would ask you to stand with us and to unite with us in prayer for a breakthrough in regard to the personnel, both short and long term, that we need for breakthroughs in all of our various ministries.

We'd be happy to supply more information about that and for breakthroughs in the area of finance. The greater thing of all is that we may know the control of the Holy Spirit in all that we do. That we may, those of us ministering the Word, men and women, know the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Also, in our evangelism, as we're involved in evangelism locally, we're involved in evangelistic campaigns, various parts of the world, evangelistic meetings, that we would see people coming to know Jesus Christ personally. Then we'd see people trained and disciplined. One of our biggest goals in our team is leadership training, motivating the whole OM body to be involved in more in-depth leadership training, helping to supply them with the literature, the tools, the know-how, sometimes a speaker.

Oh I could go on and just sharing about the many goals, burdens, things that we're involved in, in serving the rest of the body. We feel that God has really brought us together as a team. There's a great unity among us at this present time.

That doesn't mean we don't have problems. That doesn't mean we get an army of strong, like-minded, strong-minded people, like the brothers and sisters I've talked about, and everything is just rosy. We're from different nationalities, different churches, different backgrounds.

We have different octane engines, but we thank God for the like-mindedness and the singleness of heart he's given us concerning the overall task and the calling that he has given us into the ministry. Thank you for taking time to listen to this, whether you're someone in OM or whether you're someone outside, though we believe really as a prayer partner here on the inside. It's really through your prayers and support that we are able to move forward.

I really look forward to getting your feedback about this tape. Not so many copies of this tape will go out. Again, there's an expense involved.

We're constantly trying to know God's mind about each piece of literature we do, each tape, how widely do we distribute it. If this tape is ever to be used widely, it will depend on whether you take it and share it with someone else and try to stand with us in this ministry that's literally touching millions of people to enable it to go forward. Thank you very much.

Lord, we do pray right now that you would lead and guide each one of us concerning what you would have us do. How should we be involved together in this great task of world evangelism? How can we be involved with this team that ministers to every other team within OM and to many other organizations and fellowships and churches outside of OM? Father, you know my own heart that I am as excited about this ministry as I have been about many other ministries that have been born in OM. The India work, the communist work, the Muslim world work, the European work, the South American work, Dulos and Lagos.

And we just pray that our bases right around the world will be strengthened. And Lord, we believe as this base is strengthened, that it can help each other base in the various countries to be strengthened. We

look to you, our Father, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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