

Is God Easy to Live With

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon explores the necessity of discipline in the Christian life, emphasizing balance, prayer, and the dangers of extremism.

Duration: 40:33

Scripture: Acts 20:19

Topics: "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of preaching the word of God and warns others day and night with tears. He commends the audience to God and encourages them to rely on the word of His grace for spiritual growth and inheritance. The speaker shares his personal testimony and discusses the significance of discipline and balance in the Christian life. He also mentions the need for love and genuine discipleship in Christian movements.

Transcript

Let's read a few scriptures. If we want to know about the disciplined life, there are many men we can choose. One of them is Jesus Christ.

Another one is the Apostle Paul. Let's just look at a few verses about the Apostle Paul. We have endless books about Paul, several new ones this year.

Endless books about his epistles. I think the young people of our generation are only asking one question. Where are the Pauls? Where are the men who can actually live this way? I think you and I have been in the ministry long enough to know that many British young people, especially those who have been in touch with the Christian Church, they've heard the message and their hearts are yearning to see the life.

Their hearts are yearning to see the life. And if our lives, and I speak to myself, can be even a few inches more a demonstration of reality, after being here, it will have been worth coming. And I know some of you sacrifice valuable ministry time to be in a conference like this.

Praise God for those who organize it. Let's start in Acts chapter 20. My hope is that the Lord will use his word tonight.

Because sometimes my words are weak, sometimes even off-balance. I'm a natural extremist. That's why I preach all the time on balance.

I even wrote a book on the subject. And I don't know how they've ever let John Stott's book on balanced Christianity go out of print, but I hope it will be back soon. Because I'm convinced that one of the major targets or the major strategies of Satan for the Church in Britain is extremism, getting us off-balanced, and all kinds of things along that line.

Let's read these verses. In Acts chapter 20, verse 19. Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears and trials which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews.

And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but I've shown you and I've taught you publicly and from house to house. Someone called that 20-20 vision. Acts 20-20.

Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks' repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Now behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there. Except that the Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.

But none of these things move me, neither can I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy in the ministry which I've received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God. Verse 27. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. How true that is today.

Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch and remember that for the space of three years I cease not to warn everyone night and day with tears. Now brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified.

I have coveted no man's silver or gold or clothing. Yea, yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me. I have shown you all things how that so laboring you ought to support the weak to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said it is more blessed to give than to receive.

And when he had thus spoken he knelt down and prayed with them all. Because of the time I'm not going to read several other scriptures, but I'm going to bring them to your mind. First of all, we have those words in Corinthians where Paul says, I buffet my body and bring it into subjection lest after preaching to others I become a castaway.

What significant words for all of us in the ministry. If the Apostle Paul, you can forget about me. If the Apostle Paul said I buffet my body, I bring it into subjection.

Read many of the different renderings and the different translations. They get, you get a wide variety of explanation, but it says the same thing. Discipline.

Lest after preaching to others I become a castaway. Many of you would not know perhaps the name of Chuck Templeton, one of the best looking, best speaking evangelists that America ever knew. He was rising faster than Billy Graham and then the devil moved in.

He's been one of the most scandalous reprobates in the history of North America and has just come out with another faith devastating book that probably will tear the faith out of many hundreds, maybe thousands. We are in a spiritual warfare. One of the things that bothers me about some conferences that it all appears to be a big gigantic holiday camp.

Contrary to public opinion, I'm not against holidays. People on our ship are forced to go and take a holiday. And rest and go to the mountains and unwind and refuel because otherwise they won't be worth very much.

But I am convinced that we have lost the sense that we are in spiritual warfare. We have Ephesians chapter 6. All of us have preached on it, much less studied it. So I don't need to quote all those verses about the shield of faith wherewith we can stop the fiery darts of the devil and about putting on the whole armor of God.

The Apostle Paul is not only a picture of discipline, he is a picture of balance. Especially if you study the first epistle to the Thessalonians, you see him in his discipline, but you also see him as a nursing mother among her babes. He was a man of tremendous balance after all he did.

By the Spirit give us 1st Corinthians 13. Without balance, without love, discipline becomes legalistic, it becomes ugly, it becomes unreal. And you can be sure that in movement like operation mobilization we've known something about that.

Perhaps that's why I wrote that little booklet called Pseudo-Discipleship. The subject of discipline perhaps has been one of my greatest concerns because I'm not a naturally disciplined person. Let me give you my own testimony because I'm sure most of you don't know me or know anything about me.

Not that that's important, but it may help you understand this burden I have. I'm not from a Christian home. My grandfather actually from Glasgow was a drunk and my other grandfather from the Netherlands was an atheist.

My parents were middle-class materialists. My father left the Netherlands and moved to near New York City. He wanted to provide me with a good life.

By 16, I thought I was really on my way. I had three businesses. I was spending my weekends in the nightclubs of New York.

I was intrinsically lazy and my dream was to be the capitalist and to sit back and enjoy life, especially women and a few other things and let other people work. Then an elderly lady came into my life. I never met her, but she prayed for me for three years.

She'd been praying for the grammar school near my near her home for about 15 years. A woman of prayer. We're going to be speaking about the discipline of prayer because that is the cardinal of all disciplines in the life of the evangelist and the Christian leader.

She prayed for 15 years. She started to pray for me every year I got worse. She kept praying, persevering prayer.

That's what makes the difference. We shall reap if we faint not. She then sent me a Gospel of John through the post and it was that Gospel of John that prepared my heart for a Billy Graham meeting in New

York City, just a one-night meeting in 1955.

I think he had just come back from Britain and God that night by his sovereign mercy, mercy saved me and brought me to himself and put his Holy Spirit within me. As I began to study God's Word and immediately some great Christian books became the major influence in my life. Writings of men like Oswald J. Smith and many, many other books, correspondence courses and I realized that the Christian life was impossible.

Just on the lust thing alone, I thought there's no way. There's no way that I can live this morality, this Sermon on the Mount. You know, we have a lot of verses in the book of Proverbs on laziness.

We touched on the subject of guilt and I'm sure as we spoke about guilt this afternoon, we realized that there is legitimate guilt. If you go and punch your grandmother in the nose and you feel guilty, then you don't read a book on how to get rid of guilt. You read Calvary Road on how to repent and get right with your your grandmother or whoever else.

And praise God for legitimate guilt. I've counseled a lot of people and I found very few among, you know, the average person who was dying of guilt. I think it's very different, of course, if someone is mentally ill and appreciated so much what was said along that line.

I went back to this grammar school and I found myself in the ministry of evangelism at 17, preaching to 500 students the gospel, giving an invitation. I didn't even hardly know what this was and seeing a hundred, 125 of my own students come forward and go into the cafeteria for counseling. And a lot of people locally thought I was the young boy evangelist of the area.

I think you know how Americans can get a little bit carried away. That's why we try to fill our movement. For every one American, we get two Englishmen just to keep the whole thing in balance.

Of course, if you get a Scotsman, then it's one for one. You don't need two. I won't say what happens when you get a Welshman in the crowd like Mike Evans over in France.

Most of us Americans find that we're panting trying to keep up with him. But they thought I was going to be the boy evangelist. But in those very early days, I was driven to the scriptures and then a trip to Mexico in which there was failure and problems on the team.

I was driven to see that if there was to be evangelism, there must be a solid foundation of discipline, spiritual reality, humility, brokenness, the cross, the fullness of the Holy Spirit. It's amazing what a controversy we have on that subject. I always love what Billy Graham says about the reality of the Holy Spirit.

He says, I don't care how you get it, just get it. People wonder how OM survives being so filled with such a variety of people, especially when it comes to that area of theology. We have a little motto in OM.

It's let your crisis be followed by a process or it will be an abscess. I'm sure you have already heard that, but hearing it is not enough. It's making sure it doesn't happen.

And so I was driven almost by the Lord into a training program of teaching young people the discipline life. You know, it only takes a minute for a young person to get a crisis experience. Young people who are keen, and Tozer said, the more keen young person is more easily led astray.

And we see this happening all the time. It only takes a moment for a young person to have a crisis with God. I've had quite a few actually being a little bit too emotional.

But it takes a life to teach a man disciplined living. This is one of the reasons that my favorite book is a book called *Spiritual Depression* by Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones. People have asked me if I went to prison with my Bible in only one other book, what would it be? And I've said it would be Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones book on spiritual depression.

I'd like to read something from that book. I collect quotations. I hope you do.

I have pages full of them and never know which ones the Lord's going to leave me to use. And I recommend you in terms of organization, because I'm supposed to be touching on that, to get yourself a quotation book. This is a quotation book.

And anytime I get a hot quotation, and some of you are in here, I write it down so I can use it. And I carry this with me wherever I go. But I felt especially that I should read this quotation by Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones that has meant so much from the book *Spiritual Depression*.

I defy you to read the life of any saint that has ever adorned the life of the church without seeing at once that the greatest characteristic in life of that saint was discipline and order. Now that's a heavy statement. Invariably, it is the universal characteristic of all the outstanding men and women of God.

Read about Henry Martin, David Brainerd, Jonathan Edwards, Brother Wesley Whitfield. Read their journals. Does not matter what branch of the church they belong to.

They have all disciplined their lives and have insisted upon the need for this. And obviously, it is something that is thoroughly scriptural and absolutely essential. We're not dealing with a periphery issue, but we're dealing with one of the most basic issues in the whole of our Christian life.

I think of some of the statements that Watchman Nee, a man unfortunately who is being misquoted in these days and a new cultic type movement under the leadership of Witness Lee is stretching these teachings to spread their message around the world. Quite heavy now in Germany, very heavy in America, not very much yet of that group here in Britain. But I still think we can learn much from Watchman Nee and I wanted to read another quotation that was such a blessing to me from this man and from one of his writings, *Table in the Wilderness*.

How hard we find it to drag ourselves into his presence. We shrink from solitude and even when we do detach ourselves physically from things outside, our thoughts still keep wandering back to them. Many of us can enjoy working among other people, but how many of us can draw near to God in the most holy place? To come into his presence and kneel before him for an hour demands all the strength we possess.

Listen, because we often think of Watchman Nee, you know, very spiritual and some people have only taken sort of part of his teaching. They become sort of the super spiritual cop-out types. Listen to what Watchman Nee says.

We have to be violent with ourselves to do it. But everyone who serves the Lord knows the preciousness of such times, the sweetness of waking at midnight and spending an hour with him or waking early in the morning and getting up for an hour of prayer. Let me be frank with you.

You cannot serve God from a distance. Only by learning to draw near to him can you know what it really is to serve him. We won't take more time to bring the challenge and the need for discipline because I think you're already convinced and you're already teaching it.

But I'd like to touch on some areas that I found especially difficult in my own life, especially as the kind of man described in Proverbs, and I think we need to be honest about our laziness. It can be emphasized that often as Christian leaders and evangelists, we are very active and maybe workaholics. Many who I've counseled acknowledge to me that one of the greatest problems in their life is laziness.

And the Word of God is clear about laziness, and I don't believe it will be extracted easily. Tozer said materialism will not come out of us easily. He says it will come out like a tooth being extracted from the jaw.

And I'm convinced that laziness and many other very basic things to our nature, they just don't come out through the raising of the hand or even the laying on of the hands or special prayer or what else. It'll be daily. Jesus said again and again, if any man come after me, let him deny himself, take up the cross daily and follow me.

Whatever other message we may preach, without that message of Jesus Christ, sooner or later we're going to be on a sidetrack or far worse than that. The discipline life has been a long uphill battle for me, especially the discipline or the disciplining of the mind. And I found that the devil never seems to give up.

And as we grow and we enter new periods of our life, Satan seems to have, what shall we say, new strategies, new strategies for us. Let me just insert this. I was going to speak for a while on the foundation for these disciplines, but I'm not going to do that because some of that was so beautifully touched this afternoon.

Let me just give you these things because without these foundations, I think discipline becomes very extreme and weird and it doesn't represent biblical Christianity. These are some of the foundations for the discipline life. Reality in worship.

Now in a sense worship is a discipline. But I am so convinced that the highest calling of the believer is worship. This was the cardinal backbone of our work, more important than discipline.

Without the emphasis on worship and praise combined with fellowship, I believe OM today would either be extreme or wiped out completely. It would have just, you know, you run out of steam. But as we learn to worship, and I love those words of Tozer who said, God knows all about us and loves us still.

And I don't come to you as some great disciplined person who's got everything arranged, you know, leading Christian work. I come to you as a fellow struggler. I come to you as a father who has failed my children.

I have three teenagers, 18, 16, 14. You can imagine what that's about. I come as someone who at times has been a poor husband.

I come as someone with a tremendous temper that God is still working on. I come as someone who overreacts and a lot of other problems. And have just so much more to learn.

I remember hearing Lindsay Glegg in this very room. And I'm indebted to balanced people like Lindsay Glegg and some women. And I tell you, we men need ministry from women.

If we don't get it, we go lopsided. Now, since some of your churches don't let the women say much, you'll have to read their books. And I would recommend the writings of Eugenia Price and other women who see things from a different light.

Whenever you find a book that's mainly written for girls like your half of the apple, get a hold of it and read it and find out some of these deep truths that may help you survive. Anyway, I don't know how I got into that from this thing of worship. The second thing I put down on this foundation for worship, for discipline, is to know the rest of faith.

One of my favorite subjects, Hebrews 4, the rest of faith. And I link that with knowing how to deal with worry. You can be committed, active, preaching, working.

At the same time, worry can be destroying you from within. And this is something we need to learn to deal with. We know the verses, but are we dealing with it strong enough? And then a little quotation I think of almost every day.

Know your limits. Oftentimes, we're exposed to great men of God who have great gifts and abilities. And they may be ordinary people, but in some ways they may not be so ordinary.

And sometimes reading their books, you know, the Jim Elliots and all these different people. The more we read, the more depressed we get because we know, you know, that's not where we are. That's not where we are.

And you know, it's wonderful to know that God knows all of our limits. One of the greatest things that happened in my life was to know my limits. Everybody thought I was headed for a nervous breakdown.

For 23 years, they've been waiting for me to have a nervous breakdown. That makes me nervous just thinking about it. Now, I can tell you, I probably have caused a few nervous breakdowns, but I haven't had one yet.

And I think one reason is God showed me my limitations and taught me how to back off and get into those hills of Scotland or the Quantock Hills or the Lake District or wherever and refuel. Know your limits. And something else that has so helped me lay this foundation for disciplined living, again expressed in the words of Tozer.

He said, and he has some very strong material, and if you only read the strong Tozer, you'll go off balance. You got to keep reading. But he said, God is easy to live with.

I couldn't believe it after all the other things I read of his. And Tozer acknowledges in his writing, I was just reading this three days ago, that his tendency was to overreact. His tendency was to take things in his own hand, to speak out too quickly, and he acknowledged in his writing he lacked moderation.

This is why his marriage had trouble. This is why Tozer's children, I think most of them, went astray. That doesn't mean he wasn't a prophet.

That doesn't mean we cannot learn from him. And I've learned a long time ago not to point at people whose children may have gone astray, because I know great men of God whose shoelaces I'm not worthy

to tie, who have maybe one or two children astray. And I think this is something perhaps needs to be kept in balance.

But God is easy to live with, and we don't have to be religiously jumpy. That's how he describes it, because God knows our every action. Another foundation is to get to know God's priorities, and get to know God's growth rate in your own life.

We're all growing at a different rate. I was so impatient with God's people. I used to want to, in my early days, and even now and then nowadays, you know, grab them by the neck.

And you know, I could have blown the whole movement of OM to pieces so easily. God is working in different people in different ways. And it takes time.

Fantastic book by Lane Adams. Why is it taking so long? A great man of God who was willing even to go to a psychiatrist to get some of his own problems straightened out. He writes about that in his book.

Now this man is one of the greatest Presbyterian churches in the United States. And then a right emphasis on relationships. I think this is why discipline living is so hard for us as Christians, because we have to be willing to scrap a whole day's schedule to deal with one problem person.

Our priority, I believe, in evangelism and in God's work is people. We may have scheduling. We may have to dictate so many letters.

We may have to make a radio broadcast or some other big important thing. But if some needy soul comes to our door, I believe that not every case, in most cases, should be the priority. Kept within balance.

To know your limits. Because I know in counseling, and I spend more time counseling than preaching, that that can wear you out faster than preaching. Counseling one problem case can take more out of me in two hours than preaching.

Any time. And yet I believe I need just as much of God's Spirit for that as for ministry. And then the foundation of making sure as much as possible that in all things we are maintaining spiritual balance.

The family, the work, some of these things we've touched on. Now, let's move into some specific areas. First of all, our prayer life.

We would say there's no need to speak about this. It's so basic. But doesn't that where, isn't that where the devil often attacks? The basic issues? I meet many Christian leaders.

They acknowledge to me even some in our own work. In fact, we had a leaders meeting recently and the Spirit of God moved upon us in the prayer meeting. One of our leaders stood up and said he'd been away from God for months.

No communion. At least communion. He wasn't in overt sin, but he wasn't walking with God.

And together we reached out for him and and stood with him and he's back walking in victory. Our prayer life. Samuel Chadwick, that great soul winner whose writings most of you have read, said that will be the one primary aim of Satan to destroy your prayer life more than anything else.

How are you doing on that? When the doctor mentioned jogging, I almost said amen. Then I remembered it was England. I conserved myself.

Controlled myself. But I believe in jogging. I hate it.

I love the bed. Alan Redpath said the greatest problem in Britain is blanket victory. Certainly true of me.

Getting the blanket off in the morning and getting out of bed. And I, knowing my limitations, I gave up a long time ago. Now I have someone help me.

They come to the door and they ring the buzzer. 6 30 every morning until I'm there. You can't leave this poor soul out in the English weather.

6 30 in the morning leaning on your doorbell, even if it is a chime. So I get out of bed and I go down and we go for a run. Maybe a half a mile or a mile.

That's been the habit of my life. That type of exercise almost my entire life since I became a Christian. I find more than keeping me in physical condition.

It helps me fight morning depression. My type of depression is more intellectual than emotional. The newspaper, the suffering, the tragedy, the hell that seems to spring loose in this crazy world.

And the state of the church and all these negative things. It just, as some Americans now say, it just blows my mind. And I find depression early in the morning.

You know, the Bible seems dry and you don't want to pray. And I found that a little physical exercise early in the morning. And have your cup of tea before or after whenever.

Forgive me for my sugar. Boy, I feel so guilty about that. My doctor told me anything I put in it'll burn it up in about 25 minutes.

He said I had a high octane engine. Fortunately, he told me I had medium low blood pressure and that's probably why I'm still alive. Yes, I find this getting up and a little exercise is the key to my prayer life because I was a professional at sleeping in prayer.

I used to have men on my team in India like this. They could sleep in prayer on their knees. I had this one brother.

I thought he was so spiritual. He was there for an hour on his knees. I went over, brother, it's time for breakfast.

It reminds me of this fellow that tried to have his quiet time under the blankets with a torch. And it seems to me that there are practical things that we can do that we can be more alert and then give ourselves to the Lord. You know, Oswald J. Smith does most of his praying walking around a table or his office.

He doesn't pray sitting down. I do a lot of my praying walking around the woods of Kent. Hallelujah.

And I hope you'll be willing for some of these practical disciplines that your prayer life may increase. But no matter what, it will take the buffeting of the body and discipline. We can work together in this.

Don't we admit one of the greatest needs the church in Britain today is the prayer meeting? Some of you may have read an article I wrote, What Happened to the Prayer Meeting, published in a few British papers and in Moody Monthly. I'm so concerned about this. And I hope you're faithful in getting in to a local church prayer meeting or some kind of midweek prayer meeting and encouraging God's people and leading it.

We spend hours in preparation for sermons, but we go into prayer meetings with no preparation at all. And then the people wonder, or you may wonder, why it's dead. Oh, how we need leadership in prayer.

And we just finished a wonderful night of prayer over on Doulos. We didn't believe anybody was going to come because America is worse than Britain on this. We had a thousand people for a night of prayer.

It started at about eight o'clock. Christian leaders came and we phoned some others. Brother Andrew up and a few other Christian leaders played it through a loudspeaker.

We had 400 people still praying at three and four in the morning. William McDonald, one of God's great Bible teachers, he said he believed this was one of the greatest needs in America. I would love to see someone organize nights of prayer throughout the nation.

You don't have to have a night of prayer. Many of our teams worldwide, they're free. They have a day of prayer.

Have a morning of prayer. But prayer for sure is the greatest discipline and the greatest need of the hour. And then I've written down discipline in details.

Don't think that details are unimportant. Some very spiritual people think I'm going to leave the details to someone else. But no matter what your ministry is, you need to have some files.

You need to have a good address book. You need to have a few systems. It saves time.

To me, one of the great challenges in the Christian life is to redeem the time. Redeem the time. And I'm still challenged by that.

Little things can be entered into so that you can redeem the time. For example, some time ago, we produced some prayer cards. Some of you have seen these little cards.

52 needy nations in the world. We don't need these to pray. But if you're going to the Mind Wanderers Club, as I do, you'll find that these little maps of each country, prayer requests about each nation, are valuable.

You're on a bus. You're on a train. You're waiting for someone.

You can just go through these and have a great time of prayer. You can do the same thing with memory verses. I try to feed on different tapes.

Some of you that I've never had the opportunity to hear in person. I've been listening to your tapes for years. Generally, I listen to tapes when I'm shaving or when I'm in the bathtub.

Because to me, that's a, you know, what you like to do, if possible, two things at once or three. But never just one thing unless it's a priority thing like prayer or counseling someone or preaching. But things like shaving, washing, driving.

You can listen to cassette tape when you're driving. Alan Redpass is a bit heavy when you're driving, but you could try David Watson. And I can't tell you how much spiritual food I have received through those cassette tapes.

Little things do count. And then the discipline of setting goals. Do you have goals for 1980? You've only got a few more days left in this year.

Write some goals out. I don't believe that's being legalistic. I'm, not saying you have to make New Year's, what do they call them? Resolutions.

I'm not talking about that. But goals after prayer, if they involve the whole body, discussion with others, or if it's a personal thing or a family thing. Last year, as we went into some difficulties in our family, I felt 1979 should be the year of the family.

Now, really, every year is a year of the family. But if you've been a family neglecter like me, you know, you have to repent, and I did. And we had the year of the family, and I've been home more than ever before, and I've been doing all kinds of wild things.

I even took up canasta. I used to feel cards were all of the devil. That's what they teach you at Ingram Moody Bible Institute.

But anyway, my son got into bridge, and that was too much for me. So we compromised on canasta. I hope I don't break fellowship with all of you, I know.

But I am convinced that so often little things are big. And we need to be disciplined in setting goals. I'm just going to take a few minutes over time, because I lost five minutes.

I hope you won't mind that for the canteen. But I just must not fail to give you these few more points. The discipline of letter writing.

This is where I believe 90% here, probably, if you're honest, you need to repent. You need to repent. Because most Christians are not good letter writers.

There's people you even said you were going to write to, and they're still waiting. We tell people we love them. Good to see you, brother.

Praise the Lord. We'll be remembering you. Out he goes to Africa.

Out he goes to Europe. Never hears from us again. There are people you've led to Christ that would, they'd worship, almost worship a letter from you.

Or be certainly encouraged by it, but they didn't get it. And I believe that those of us in evangelism and people's ministry have got to learn to write letters. You can get a dictaphone now.

I saw one in Smith's at St. Pancreas a few hours ago. 29 pound. You say, I don't have a secretary.

I'm not some big cheese leading some Christian organization. I'm just a little nobody. What about your wife? Maybe she could learn to type.

What about one of your own children? Some of you look old enough to have children. I believe there are people in the churches would be thrilled to do a few letters for you. And just imagine the blessing that

would be.

The discipline of letter writing to me is so important, especially in the age of impersonalization. And I want to tell you, in evangelism, we are up against a lot of prejudice. A lot of criticism.

That's why I believe in what Dr. Schaeffer says. By the way, as you know, he's very ill with cancer, but has been responding excellently to the treatment. But he says we have to engage in pre-evangelism.

And I think that's so often true, breaking down prejudice. And in this age of depersonalization, a letter, a phone call. Why don't we make more use of the phone call? When phone calls after five or six are so cheap.

It's cheaper now than a letter, if it isn't too long. And you don't have to have a long call to encourage someone on. I find many of God's people are discouraged.

And I believe we lack discipline in that area. And then discipline in the distribution of Christian literature. Isn't it interesting that if someone gives out tracts, they're considered sort of naive.

Oh, that's all right for the new converts. Oh, that's all right for, you know, late adolescents give out tracts. What a wonderful thing when mature, seasoned, I hope not too much, Christian leaders are still giving out tracts.

I don't mean you have to stand in the corner and give out 5,000. But just as you go, people are still being saved and brought to Christ through literature distribution. And I will tell you our young converts, our young Christians today, far more than learned by what we're saying.

They're going to learn by what we're doing. That which has become a disciplined reality in our own lives. We're going to do it differently.

But I think it's so important. Many young people have said to me, what depresses them is they don't see leaders in evangelism. Yes, leaders are willing to preach to crowds on the radio, but in the streets, in the markets.

I'm not saying you have to do that every day. Even once a week would bring a revolution to the present scene in Britain today. The apostle Paul was found in the marketplace and in the streets and house to house.

And I know some of you, of course, are doing far more than that of that than I am. It takes discipline, doesn't it? And I am just convinced, and I'll close just with this thought, that we have been babying ourselves, many of us, for far too long. We have more hymns on the subject of comfort than any other subject.

We have been babying ourselves. We have become flabby and we have become fat. And when that happens spiritually, that's far worse than it happening physically.

Because I know some mighty disciples who are way overweight and they're burning on for the Lord Jesus Christ. I may say a few words about that, but that's not my big concern. It's when we become spiritually flabby, spiritually undisciplined, and we don't have these realities that we're even preaching about in our own lives.

Then I become worried about the church of Jesus Christ. We're not going to get here overnight. But let's go from this conference at least moving with a little more energy by God's power in that direction.

Some people say, well, isn't it just the Holy Spirit that does this? It's just, you're going to get us all into bondage. People talk about, oh, I'm being in quiet time bondage, because we have quiet time every morning. I go to this person and say, do you have breakfast every morning? Yeah.

Oh, breakfast bondage, huh? Nobody's worried about that. No matter how filled we are with the Holy Spirit of God, He will not force us to live the Christian life. Jesus said, if you love me, keep my commandments.

The power and the grace is there, but we've got to take the step, embrace the cross, and go forward with all of God's strength. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time of just having our minds renewed by your word, by some of these quotations from great men of the past.

We thank you that you know all about us and you love us still. And that in so many ways, you are easy to live with. We don't get to heaven because of discipline, but because we're on the way to heaven, saved by grace, we want to be all that you would desire us to be.

Disciplined men and women in every area, and balanced and built up in yourself. We commit our lives to you as we sung in the beginning of this meeting, Lord, take our lives and let them be wholly consecrated to thee, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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