

James Nat Leadership Conf 28.3.82

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the need for spiritual health and continuous revival within the church community.

Duration: 1:01:32

Scripture: James 1:19, James 1:22-23

Topics: "Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of finding one's own style and approach to preaching the word of God. He encourages the audience to be actively involved in spreading the missionary vision and taking part in evangelism. The speaker shares personal experiences of delivering powerful messages to churches in South America and Mexico, urging them to grow and send out their own missionaries. He also encourages the audience to engage in activities such as giving out Christian literature and tracks, highlighting the impact it can have on spreading the message of Christ.

Transcript

I do want you to turn with me in your Bible to some verses, especially starting in the book of James. Familiar verses, but important verses. Verse 19 in James 1, very important for me.

Slow to speak. God's still working on me to learn how to keep my mouth shut more often. And I want you to go on to verse 22.

But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man beholding his natural face in a mirror. For he beholdeth himself, goeth his way, and immediately forgetteth what manner of man he was.

But whosoever looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth in it, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. I think some of you who have been around O.M. for a while know my favorite quotation, C.S. Lewis. We have the tendency to think but not to act.

We have the tendency to feel. Some of us, emotional cases especially, but not to act. And if we go on thinking and feeling without acting, someday we will be unable to act.

And I believe that many people in the church today are bordering on that particular phenomenon. I call it in my book, spiritual schizophrenia. Where we get to that place where we're almost like two different people

and we are unable to convert that which we receive, even in church, into action in our practical seven-day-week life.

Contrary to what some people may think, my great burden is not missions. Never has been. I'm a poor missionary.

That's why I was so thrilled on the invitation of four other Christian groups to speak on the Earth Invaders tour that has, in the minds of most people, nothing to do with missions. Though, in fact, you cannot preach the whole counsel of God without dealing with missions. And so every night we're touching on the subject of missions.

And if we don't see some recruits from every one of these cities we visited, I will be very disappointed. Because on the basis of Matthew 9, the way to get recruits is by praying that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers. But my greatest burden is really spiritual health.

I'd rather see you a healthy spiritual Christian in Newcastle than a misfit in India, even with OM. We know the history of missions shows us that there have been many misfits on the mission field. People who went there because they had some kind of emotional twitch, or they saw too many missionary slide sets or whatever else, and they got out there and they never really accomplished very much because they were not healthy, happy, holy, and spiritually balanced people.

This is the real burden of Operation Mobilization. It can be expressed in other terms. Revival.

The first thing I preached at when I started preaching at 16 was revival. I can always remember my text. 2 Corinthians or 2 Chronicles 7.14, If my people who call on my name will humble themselves and pray and turn from their wicked way, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land.

And beloved, we need revival in Britain. We need revival in our churches. And we in OM need revival.

Revival isn't a once-and-for-all event. It's continuous. We need continuous revival.

I'd love to speak to you about revival. One of the reasons I brought a lot of my tapes along is because I can't bear just speaking for one hour to people. Can't bear it.

I like to get people, as I had my Indian leaders, I've just come from Nepal, 50 leaders, hour after hour, we just went at it. And then questions and answers, and then a night of prayer, and then a few hours of worship. But I only have this one hour, and you've had a lot from other people which is just as good.

But if some of you want more, there are cassette tapes available to follow up. Some of them are in albums. Most of them sell almost for the price of the blank tape.

Because all I can do is throw some thoughts out and to get you thinking on some of these different areas. But I would love to talk about revival sometime to many of you. Maybe the Lord will grant it.

One of the main reasons we want people on OM, what do you think it's for? To run around Europe giving out tracts? Forget it. The Lord showed us that was ridiculous 20 years ago. Because we think you're the great apostolic band? Forget it.

The whole purpose in getting you to Europe is to get about 15, 20 or 30 hours of spiritual input into your life. We're just being honest today, eh? In turn, we know that as you go out to help the churches, and work

with the churches, and give out some literature, and do personal work, and begin to learn a foreign language, most people in OM speak at least two languages, which is that that will consolidate that which we put in in the way of teaching, study, tape recordings. Most people have had 30 hours of teaching before they get to our first conference.

But our burden is revival and spiritual wholeness. And we are not upset if after you're on OM, you feel the Lord is leading you to stay in your hometown. Because the answer to world evangelism, and the answer to reaching the world for Christ, is not overseas missionaries, it's nationals.

I was just speaking in the Egyptian church. They are the key to reaching the Arab world. Not Americans, who will never learn most of them Arabic properly.

But thousands of Egyptian nationals, born again, sitting in Cairo, sitting in Alexandria, who already know the language. And now God is moving among them, and they're launching out to Morocco, and Algeria, and to Saudi Arabia, and other parts of the Arab world. The key to world evangelism is already in these countries.

That doesn't mean we don't need these solid, long-term people, as were just mentioned in the panel discussion. Of course, they are a catalyst. They are often teachers, and trainers, co-workers.

And these nationals in most countries are asking us for this kind of quality person. That doesn't mean an OM team cannot be used, even if they don't know the language. Because young people, who love Jesus, and who know how to pray, and who have some degree of spiritual health, working in Alexandria, working in Cairo, working in Jordan, working in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and all these other places where we have these teams, have an enormous revival ministry, and catalyst ministry.

Last time I was in Egypt, the pastors had the word that I was coming to fold OM up. One of my favorite things is to fold OM up. I folded it up, almost single-handed in Spain.

Took on the whole OM leadership, hand-by-hand combat. I'm now losing it. It looks like they may reopen it.

But anyway, we got it closed for ten years. Pushed the vision back into the national church. Forced them to realize it wasn't going to be OM international.

It's a dirty word in a lot of countries. It was going to reach their land. Anyway, I went into Egypt, and they were really nervous.

A lot of pastors came out to a pastor's luncheon. One of our main ministries across the world is ministering to leaders. And they came to me one after another, almost begging.

These are leading pastors in Egypt. Please keep your people here. They are the kind of people we want.

They are like Egyptians. And I was very, very impressed about a work, my own work, OM, that I really had a few doubts about before I got there. Young people, there's an enormous, enormous open door for almost anybody who has some reality and love and power in prayer and spiritual victory in their lives.

Because so many places in the world, the church is a sleeping giant. The church in Mexico is a sleeping giant. Now, I had two experiences in Mexico.

One, I decided not to use my Spanish, which isn't so good anymore after 20 years away from Spain. So I spoke through interpretation. The same message, the hardest message I've ever given to the South American church.

Crying out that they would grow up. Start sending out their own missionaries. I have my little story of the Mexican who gets into Matthew 9, and he says, Lord of the harvest, send forth more Americans into the harvest.

I tell you, it hits him below the belt. But it went through. When I gave the same message on the ship to 200 pastors, 104 pastors paid \$4 each to get a copy of the cassette tape to spread that message across Mexico.

And a fire is burning in Mexico because those teams went in, because that ship went in, because pastors and teachers and leaders in Mexico are catching the vision to see the Mexican church come of age. We got a thousand churches in Mexico City alone. And yet, up to now, the church has not thought about missions outside of Mexico or certainly outside of Central America.

And one of the ministries we can have as young people in the world today is a ministry of revival. I always think of revival in two ways. Firstly, personal revival.

That's where Roy Hesschen has been a great blessing in my life. And I would challenge you to read that book, *Calvary Road*. Read it every year if you can.

It's not the total answer. It's only a little part of the answer. But it's a part we need, because I tell you, there's often such a lack of humility and brokenness among God's people.

And Roy Hesschen emphasizes personal revival. And I think that's so beautiful. It can be expressed in different ways by different people.

Billy Graham, in speaking about the spiritual walk, said, I don't care how you get it, just get it. And that's our burden today, because we don't want to take advantage of your coming here from many different churches and groups in order to give you one little line. Because we're very sympathetic with your churches and with your movements and with your groups.

And we want to be as ethical as possible in all that we do. And somehow, it's our prayer that this leadership conference will bring unity even among different groups and different fellowships. So there's personal revival.

Old Vance Havner, that great southern preacher, said, we wouldn't have to talk about revival so much if we knew vi-val. I love the way he said it with a southern accent. Vi-val.

Something like that. What a man of God. I don't know if you've ever read his writings.

Incredible character. Vance Havner. And he pointed out from the Word of God that we are alive in Christ, and if we are living in the light of all we have in Jesus, we will not need revival.

We need to understand all that we have in Christ. On the other hand, I'm not against that other kind of revival. When the Holy Spirit comes in power upon a congregation or a community or upon a nation, I believe in both.

Well, that's something I'd love to go into more, but I'm not going to. So understand our goal, if you're praying about getting involved with OM, that our burden is spiritual health. Our burden is personal revival.

Our burden is that you may know the reality of a balanced, Spirit-filled walk with God. If you listen to all these tapes, this is one I gave at Prairie Bible Institute at their missions conference. This is one I gave in an English church situation.

You will discover only a small part of it deals with foreign missions. Because I'm convinced as we get right with God, and we get our lives sorted out, and we learn some of these basic truths, that we get to a position where God can lead us in the next step. In the next step.

People sometimes feel that I am sort of an evangelical Pied Piper. Even one of the great, well-known Christian leaders of Britain was a little upset with me in the early days. He said, I went to Cambridge and Pied Pipered and led all these poor, innocent Cambridge students out to the foreign countries and they never came back.

This was from one of the top Christian leaders in this dear nation. And then, of course, it wasn't true. Most of them did eventually come back.

How some skinny little American who doesn't even have a degree, who is only half educated, would be able to dupe these brilliant Cambridge graduates, is totally beyond my comprehension. The only way I can understand it is that perhaps the Holy Spirit is still sending laborers, even from Cambridge, into the harvest fields. And it is appalling, really.

The spiritual health of the average Christian union is just unbelievable. Just unbelievable. And if you think I'm getting at anyone, I can tell you the spiritual life on some of the OM teams is unbelievable.

Because OM can only work with that which we receive from the churches. It's not a matter of waving an OM magic wand over a group of young people. It takes years and years and years to build men and women of God.

I don't even like calling this a leaders conference. I would change the name, perhaps, for next year, but it wouldn't attract people, because right now in Britain the incoming thing is leadership. I remember being at Spring Harvest.

I couldn't believe it. My dear friend David Paulson, he was calling everybody out of the seats to become leaders, and they all ran into this big room, feeling that the Lord might be leading them to be leaders. You know, I thought some of them might even be under seven years of age going in there.

There is a sense, and there are people like David Paulson, who believe we are on the verge of a great revival. Now, I'm not totally convinced myself, but I like to be positive about these things. And so, let's say that David Paulson, that he's partly right, and that we're on the verge of something really big.

Hallelujah! But let's remember that just growth numerically is not necessarily what's on God's heart. And if revival comes to Britain, I pray it would. I believe there is church growth.

Right now, already, church is growing. I believe there's a move of the Holy Spirit. I believe there has been actually since Pentecost.

Somebody announced recently, one of these big organizations announced, we will now have a decade of evangelism! You know, I just lack so much. I need to study more. From my book, the Book of Acts, I understood that every decade was a decade of evangelism.

But anyway, I'm glad we've now announced it. It's a decade of evangelism. And if the church is going to grow, and if revival is going to come, praise the Lord! But I will warn you, to prematurely get into leadership, to think you are some kind of spiritual leader, when you haven't got the basics, when you're not spiritually healthy, when you're not walking in the power and the energy of the Holy Ghost, could be a fatal mistake in your life.

And most of us need to go away from here, not with thoughts of that leadership. We need to go away, and I think that was already brought strongly in the first message, with the thought of being a servant, and with learning the basics. And if God moves you into leadership and responsibility, and that will happen because the church situation is so desperate, and because the Christian Union situations often are so desperate, if anybody smiles and quotes one gospel text, he'll be elected as president of the CU, then you'd better get ready.

Some of you are going to be in leadership. And that's why this is somewhat of an open-ended event, because we know so many of you are in places of responsibility. Because the church is growing, because things aren't the way they should be, seldom are, and God is looking for leaders.

And if I had to lean on the side of the arch-conservatives, who don't want anybody to be a leader until they're 40 years of age, or are retired, and David Pawson on the other side, calling everybody to come forward, and an invitation to be leaders, you know, I think I'll lean a little bit toward my friend David. I remember old brother Andrew, we were speaking together in Holland, I'll never forget this, because I'm very conservative on invitations, part of my Calvinistic streak, which constantly collides with my Arminian streak. I was preaching in the afternoon, and brother Andrew and I had tea together, and he said, did you give an invitation? He's really strong in these invitations.

I said, no, Andrew, I'll let you do that. And he said, yeah, I will. I've discovered it's easier to cool down a fanatic than warm up a corpse.

And it's true. A lot of people worry about OM, over-enthusiastic young people, dangerous crowd, running off prematurely. Do you really think enthusiasm is the biggest problem in the Christian church in Britain? You know what A.W. Tozer said about that? He said it was like sending a squadron of policemen to the nearby cemetery to guard against a demonstration by the residents at midnight.

Not the biggest problem in Britain, I'd say. Praise God for your enthusiasm. Praise God that some of you are willing to take a few risks.

And I believe, God, if you do get a little extreme, and you keep open and humble, and learn some of these principles we've been talking about, He'll bring you back into balance. Some people think I want a lot of people to go overseas because I feel they would make up a great apostolic army and evangelize the world. You know, one of the biggest reasons I want British people to go overseas, this is going to hurt some of you, is not to be some great apostolic army.

I'll tell you why. This is hard to say. I've never said it in public, and Peter, he's my boss, he's British, he can correct me.

I'll tell you why God wants some of you overseas, because basically, as British, you're ugly people. That's right. You all enjoy the book, *The Ugly American*.

I was one of them. We all know the Americans are ugly. We all have 58 jokes, if you're half British, to put the Americans down.

And I can really reduce the Americans to a very small group, because we have been an ugly people. And when God sent me to Mexico at 19 years of age, I was a little brainwashed, bourgeois, middle class, narrow-minded, ugly American. Praise God, He had mercy on me.

My closest friends became Mexicans, and Spanish became almost more of a language of my heart than English. And I went then back to Bible college, and went back to finish my training, and then launched out to the land of Spain. And of course, when I got to Europe, I discovered I was still an ugly American.

And it took 10 years to de-Americanize me. Now, I'm still an American. And I'm not anti-American.

I still love my own country. I have an American passport. God is great.

God is sovereign. If someone is ugly, then God's grace can make the situation even more beautiful. Of course, two of my children now have British passports.

They're born in Britain. They wave their passports around in front of me. I'm now a second-class citizen in my own house.

Now, understand this. If you're British, and you're living in Britain, in a sense, you may not be too ugly. Because it's your own culture.

You can do things the British way, and generally it won't bother too many people. But you see, you no longer can do that in Britain, because Britain is now an interracial society. And there are thousands of wounded immigrants from one end of the country to the other because of this ugly British way that we have developed over 18 years of being brainwashed by our own culture.

And I really believe that as a nation, we need to repent. I believe the American nation needs to repent. I believe the British nation needs to repent.

I'm speaking to Christians. We all expected Germany to repent. They're still repenting over World War II.

Germans are very sensitive about World War II. They paid all these Jewish people back. They're still repenting.

They still feel bad about it, especially Christians. And I think we have to repent in this country. Now, I'm only an immigrant, so I don't have credentials to say this.

Hear me out to the end. But I believe we need to repent of racism. I believe Britain has become a racist place.

I believe we need to repent of social classism, to use my own term. That the social class is still as real as it was in this country in some ways 50 years ago. And the evangelical church is largely a middle-class thing, made up oftentimes of a very high percentage of highly educated, well-articulated university graduates.

Who fellowship with a very small range of people, and certainly would not be found with an immigrant from Pakistan having tea in their lovely little bourgeois home in Surrey. And I am convinced that if we go back to the New Testament, we're going to find a radical, hot message of love that is going to cut right through this very English, very proper English evangelicalism. And I believe God has many ways of doing it, but one of the ways is for you to get out of Britain as soon as possible.

That's right. Not to go out there and evangelize the world, or demonstrate the higher realms of British culture. One of the greatest problems in missions has been the export of the empire that went on simultaneously with the export of the gospel.

And if you don't know about that, you could hardly have ever read a single missionary book. We were committed to spreading a culture. And now those of us who go out around the world today, everywhere we go, we don't only find the gospel, we find deeply entrenched British culture.

And in some countries, American culture. Now God is sovereign. He overrules.

And don't misunderstand me. He still has worked through these people. And some of those people who even went out under the British Raj, I will tell you I'm not worthy to tie their shoelace.

But we must be willing to learn from past mistakes. We live in a different world. Solzhenitsyn said we can no longer talk in this world about internal affairs.

We all know that phrase. It's almost a cliché that we are a global village. We've got to learn to live with these Pakistanis down the road.

We've got to get to understand Muslims and what they believe. We've got to open not only our churches. That's easy, they're only open twice a week.

We've got to open our homes. Anybody who doesn't understand why the house fellowship movement is the fastest growing movement in Britain today, obviously has just not studied the state of the British church. And I believe with all my heart, God is just longing to do so much more.

I don't despise what the Lord has done. And the Lord knows that this is my adopted country and I love British people as much as my own countrymen. Perhaps not quite as much as Indians and Mexicans.

I'm considering even becoming a citizen. But I believe because we've spent most of our life in this culture, watching TV here, receiving most of our input here, and because our culture has a degree of sickness, there are many good aspects to the British culture. There is still a Christian heritage, a remnant of it in this country which is an amazing factor and one of the reasons God still can so mightily use British people if they will become spiritually healthy and balanced and loving and compassionate and sensitive.

Sensitive, do you know that word? Sensitive about other people who live differently, believe differently, have a different education, live in a different kind of home. Have you ever gone door to door in poor districts? Have you ever been to the east end of London and some of the back streets of Glasgow? The first time I went door to door there I couldn't believe that people were still living like that in the 20th century. Most of those places have been torn down now.

Are you conscious of the unbelievable social problems in this country right now? And America, even worse there of course, more intensive, bigger, younger, more extreme, unbelievable. No wonder it's

manufactured a few ugly Americans. That's why whenever we see a man like Billy Graham on television here in this country, you know of course he's still an American.

God doesn't destroy your nationality any more than He changes the shape of your nose. But He brings that character, He brings that life into subjection to the Lordship of Jesus and He changes that person. And one of the most exciting things I've seen in 22 years living in this country, except when I've been living in Asia and other places, is how Christ can change the ugly Englishman or the ugly American or the ugly German or the ugly Swede to become a Christ-like individual and link His heart with people of other cultures and call some of His greatest, closest, most intimate friends to be people of other cultures.

I remember the advice one of the first missionaries gave me, he'd been in India for many years, very English, proper man, one of the first things he told me when I came to India, he says, no, you'll never really get close to these people. You've got to understand, there's got to be a bit of distance between you and the Indian people. I want to tell you, I'm not worthy to tie the shoelace of some of my Indian brothers.

And Indians can be, when Christ gets a hold of them, some of the most spiritual people I've ever met. And I'm convinced, whatever your situation is today, no matter how much you may be brainwashed into your own culture, no matter how much you may be a product of this culture, with some of its ugly aspects, that it's not too much for Jesus. And I want to challenge you, it doesn't mean you have to come on OM, to get some time in cross-cultural situations.

You can do it in Southall, you can do it in the East End of London, second major language in London is now Bengali, probably competing with Arabic. But sometimes it's better to get out of your own country and live with people in another country, of another culture, and develop cross-cultural spiritual sensitivity. For some, it eventually causes them to realize they can't handle it.

They go back to their own country, where they can survive. But even when they do that, they're never the same. Generally, they're never the same.

When they go back to their own countries, they get involved with immigrants. When they get back in their own country, they decide to live on a simpler lifestyle. When they get back in their own country, they're usually a little more broad-minded.

Oh, how my heart aches that Christians so often become so narrow-minded. As Billy Graham once said, we've taken the sword of the Spirit, and we're carving one another up with it, instead of going in a great offensive for world evangelism. You know, the road is already narrow, young people.

Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life. Few there be. But all believers are on that road.

And the problem I see in many places today is groups of people, and Americans sometimes lead the pack, specialize in making the road even narrower. Only with those with short haircuts are on the road. Or only those who use this Bible translation.

And how my heart ached when recently someone stood up in some narrow-minded church in Northern Ireland and declared a number of groups, including Operation Mobilization, as totally apostate missionary organizations, because we do this or do that. And one Bible college in America wrote us off because we sell Billy Graham books. And Billy Graham is supposedly the apostate of all the apostates.

Maybe you're too young to be exposed to all the unbelievable division that there is within the body of Christ, if some of these people are in the body. But I think as people in training for leadership, it's about time you realized something of the difficulty there is when people become incredibly narrow-minded and only fellowship with certain types of people. Interdenominational is an absolute dirty word.

Even in America, the great Southern Baptist organization, where many beautiful believers... Why, if you're not Southern Baptist, you just keep your distance. Many a young person that's wanted to launch out as a missionary, if it wasn't within the Southern Baptist, there was no encouragement whatsoever. And the same thing is true here.

Many young people that would be on the mission field today from Britain are not there because their church would give them no encouragement unless it was with their denominational mission society. I believe there is a danger that we make the road too broad. And I'm very much aware that we need sound doctrine, and we have a doctrinal statement if you want to see it.

But I'm also aware of the fact that we tend to make the road too narrow. Sectarianism. And I pray that we may seek a kind of lifestyle in which love covers.

We're not going to always agree. Must we agree on everything in order to work together? Then forget it. We're never going to work together.

And even my wife and I had better separate because she finally decided she was going to tell me the areas where she didn't agree with me on. And it took her several years because she thought that being spiritual, partly due to some of my extremism, meant she just went along with me on everything. And finally she got the courage to tell me areas where she doesn't agree with me.

And I had to change. I had to change my lifestyle, the way I spent money. I was unbelievably tight with money.

For me, one box for your chair, another box for the table, everything else is for missions. Luke 14.33, except you forsake all that you have, you can't be my disciple. You wouldn't believe the sermons I gave my wife in that first year.

Then I came into balance. I gave her a pound and said, spend it however you want, feel free. And if I hadn't changed, if God hadn't driven out some of this, now not ugly Americanism, ugly, ugly O.M.isms out of me.

They became O.M.isms. A whole culture. O.M. became a whole culture. People sleeping on the floor, eating peanut butter and jelly, staying up late at night, looking droopy in the morning like someone had punched them in the midnight hours.

Unwilling to buy ice cream. And all these other little things. People got so confused between what was a basic biblical doctrine and what was a particular principle in a particular situation.

Like the girl who, after spending the summer sleeping in a tent on the ground, went home to her mother and asked her mother to take the bed out of her bedroom. You can wonder why we got a few parents that didn't appreciate our ministry. It's changed now.

We get the parents applying and the kids don't want to come. God had to show me that I, in some ways, had become the ugly missionary. The ugly missionary.

And I will tell you, many tears have gone down over these cheeks. And I was to the brink of resigning because I saw the ugliness of my own self-life. On a mission field, speaking the foreign language.

And I just feel that the sooner you can get started. I started a bit late. The sooner you can get started being more sensitive about people and their cultures.

Being more sensitive about why people behave the way they do, rather than just making your little pendulum thinking or your little generalization about them. Or about the church down the road. The tendency in some of the house groups is to immediately wipe the church off down the road as being dead, simply because they heard this from this particular source.

Some churches are dead. Some churches may appear to be dead because they haven't changed their sign in ten years. But there may be some very living, live stones in that church.

And then the people in the established churches sometimes make little generalizations about the house churches. And it's just the same game. It's the lack of sensitivity, the lack of maturity, the lack of Christ-likeness.

It's the lack of holiness, the lack of victory, the lack of spiritual balance. And I would plead with you to at least get some of it. As we go from this place in twenty minutes time, what are we going to do? Will it be all theory? Will it be all just notes in our notebook? Or will we be able to take that exhortation in James to heart and be doers of the Word? I never cease to be amazed at how vague evangelical people can be.

Do you know the word initiative? I think it's been mentioned. Sanctified initiative. Write it down.

It's thrilling to see you taking notes. I know sometimes in my meetings people are writing letters to their girlfriend. But it's thrilling to see you taking notes.

Sanctified initiative. Let me give you another word. Sanctified imagination.

I want you to go this afternoon as you go home and write down on a piece of paper some things you can actually do because God's spoken to you. Now I know there's immediately the danger of what's called youthful zeal. And we've had many warnings, not necessarily this weekend, but in general, about becoming overzealous and too activist.

And there's all kinds of articles now attacking the poor workaholic. We develop all kinds of new terms to make everybody eventually feel guilty. But I believe it is perfectly normal for a young Christian just discovering the truths of the Word of God to be active.

And if you were a little more active, I believe, many of you would be staying out of the trouble that you know you are getting into. Let's be honest. Morally and in many other ways.

I want to quote someone who would be the least suspect of quoting to defend this particular point. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, my favorite British, actually Welsh, teacher. The British without the Welsh, it would be a bad scene.

And the thing that makes Britain is the amalgamation of many cultures, Scottish, Welsh, and now, praise God, Arab, Pakistani. It's going to make this place one big, well, I'm not sure yet. Depends on your prayers.

But listen to this from Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones. Nothing is more obvious about the teaching of the New Testament than this. That the Christian life is a life of activity, a life of vigor, a life of exertion.

The strength is given to us by the Lord, but we must act. And that's where we are in this conference. We want you to go from here and do something.

Do something. And so it will not be vague. I'm now going to go back to my notes, because I've departed from them.

And I'm going to give you my list. Things you can do. Top of the list.

Go visit an older person and tell them what a blessing they've been in your life. My heart aches in this age where we have neglected the elderly. I'm very radical in this.

I don't even believe in youth movements. I was listening to a lecture on tape two days ago where one of the outstanding on-fire Methodist preachers of our day was describing the fact that most of the people converted in Methodism when it was burning across Britain were adults. This kind of youth movement that's so popular today did not exist in that day to any great degree.

Now we almost think that conversion is something that must happen in grammar school or in university. I long to see more adults converted to Jesus Christ in Britain. And I long for a ministry among the elderly.

And you can start that tomorrow. One of the greatest blessings I had this week was visiting the elderly. One 80-year-old lady, actually her brother went out with C.T. Studd.

She's a prayer partner of mine. She was in the sickbed. And I will tell you I was humbled when I found out she followed my itinerary and prayed for me day by day.

She knew more about my itinerary than I did. And I just believe that there needs to be a breaking down of this generation gap. And I believe as young people you have the greater amount of energy to begin it.

Visiting the elderly, loving them, going to old people's homes, going into hospitals, go to your own grandmother or your own aunt, go to your own parents who may now be elderly, spend some time with them and tell them you love them. That's something you can do. D.O. I had a lot of trouble with spelling.

Something specific. Because you see as you're faithful in little things, God will open up bigger things. But if you're dreaming about being a cross-cultural communicator in West Bengal and you haven't even had a conversation with your own grandmother in five years or you're not sensitive to the people around you of different cultures and different age groups because we have created age group ghettos, age group ghettos, intellectual ghettos, class barriers.

And we, if we're going to obey Jesus, have got to break them down. Let me give you something else you can do. You can go and start a prayer group.

Where two or three are gathered in His name, He's in the midst. Some of you from big families can start it right in your own home. Don't have a prayer meeting with your sister.

You may have to lead her to Christ first. Start a prayer group. Or at least join a prayer group.

I want a letter. Peter Maiden wants a letter from many of you in the next couple of weeks saying you've just joined a prayer group. It could be a wet group, an OMF group.

It could be a revival praying group. Get involved in actual prayer. Stop talking about it.

Do it. Get involved in your church prayer meeting. If your church has a prayer meeting, give five hallelujahs because it's a miracle in the day of folding up prayer meetings.

And if it's a dead prayer meeting, then go in there and start praying and loving and reaching out and communicating to help it become a live prayer meeting. Go to your pastor, your deacons or elders and offer your services. Third thing you can do.

Offer your services in any way to help in the church. Sunday school teacher, taking the offering, cleaning up on Saturday morning. Anything to demonstrate that you mean business for Jesus and you want to learn what it is to be a servant.

Check the toilet if it's dirty. Clean it. If you think that will cause a major crisis, get permission to clean it.

Some of you may be in groups where there's a heavy submission teaching. You need permission to clean the toilet. I hope you're not in one of those groups.

I lose track of my numbers. The next thing you can do is... Where's my watch? You know I'm accused of being one of the longest preachers in Europe. I'll never forget that experience in Germany.

It's my favorite, favorite experience. I was going on and on and the young people were taking it in as they usually do. One elderly gentleman, you know, he held the watch up trying to get me to stop.

I saw this watch in the back. I was preaching on discipleship and world evangelism. And I saw this watch and I said, Oh, praise the Lord, here's a man donating his watch for world evangelism.

But one of the next things you can do is write a letter. Now I want to take a survey. I'm a great man for surveys.

How many of you have written a letter to anyone apart from your boyfriend or girlfriend? That's excluded. Anyone in the last week. Raise your hand.

That's not too bad. Half of you have written one letter. All right, keep your hand up if you've written two letters.

Wow. Three letters. Not too many left.

Encouraging one another. You know, some people, they have lofty goals. I remember in a prayer meeting in the early days of O.M. in Mexico.

Suddenly in the middle of the prayer meeting, this very emotional girl, always watch out for those in any movement. One thousand souls. She started claiming one thousand souls.

I stopped the prayer meeting and said, Hey, wait a minute. We've been praying for a few and a dozen. Has the Lord, you know, really told you to claim one thousand souls? Some of you want to go back to your

Christian union.

You want to go back here and there. You want to see great things happen. Revival.

University turned upside down. You can't even turn upside down in your bed to get out of it in the morning. And I think it's very important, if we are going to grow on God's growth rate, to sometimes lower our goals.

Why don't you ask God to give you a ministry of encouraging people? You may not be the great dynamic soul winner. That was my thing. It was natural to my temperament.

I led people to Christ and got them to pray, to accept Jesus, whether He wanted to or not. I had a background. You wouldn't believe.

They weren't conversions. They were decisions. Now, some I followed up on and I showed the love of Christ to.

One converted into a jail. I went and visited him three times a week. He, seemingly, became a true follower of Christ and a few others in that jail.

But I believe at times, when you're young, it's good to lower your goals a little bit. The ministry of encouraging, by letter, by phone, to call someone up that you love, that you haven't thought about. They may wonder, Oh, what's wrong? Why are you calling me? You know, it's like the husband who was so insensitive to his wife and so tight with the money, never bought her any flowers.

Finally, you know, he read a Christian book. You know, so many Christian books on marriage, you go completely crazy if you read them all. He decided to buy some flowers and he brought them to his wife.

You know, she just passed out. She thought he was crazy. I don't think that's a true story, actually.

But after the initial shock of the phone call, just tell him you were thinking about them. You're concerned. Considering one another.

Esteeming others is better than yourself. If you want verses, you'll find a whole New Testament filled with them. Being kind, tenderhearted, loving one another, forgiving one another.

1 Corinthians 13. This is what it's all about. This is why Paul said, if we don't have love, whatever else we may have, we don't have anything.

It is a revolution of love. And as that revolution takes hold in our lives, we will be involved in a practical ministry of encouraging others. We will become, as Selwyn Hughes speaks about in his wonderful little book, people helpers.

Let's be people helpers. You think crossing the English Channel is going to make you spiritual? Forget it. You might as well go up to the Lake District.

If you're carnal here, you'll be carnal there. The only thing going to a foreign country may do is what I talked about initially. Begin to expose certain things in your life.

Throw you in a situation that's a little deep. You know how the Russians teach their little babies to swim even in a couple of months? Just pitch them in. And most of them actually float.

I don't know if that's a Russian phenomenon. I wouldn't want to try it with Americans. But there is a sense where we need to be willing to take risks.

I fear that the Church has become a no-risk, basically an establishment movement. We got insurance from the cradle to the grave. And we're being brainwashed into a no-risk way of life.

We got to get a career. We got to get a job. The worst thing, the most horrible, ugly thing in the world today is unemployment.

Yeah. Endless articles about unemployment. Now, I know unemployment is hard.

And I'm concerned for unemployment. And we're trying to give unemployed people a help. But as a Christian, I will tell you you're never unemployed.

And if somehow you can't get a job, I can give you 50 things you can do while you're waiting for that job. You write to me. I'll send you the list.

Encouraging one another. Taking the initiative in being a people helper. Another thing you can do is visit a prison.

Visit a prison. Do you know God is working in the prisons in this country? Do you know what's happening in Manchester? Do you know how some of these people could be blessed hearing maybe some of your testimonies? So many of the things that I learned wasn't through reading textbooks. I learned them before I ever got to Bible college.

That's why the moment I got there, somehow I became a student leader. And people were all flocking around me and launching out to Mexico. I learned them because I was involved between the age of 17 and 21 in about 20 different ministries with people.

Prisoners. Drunkards. I worked with them for three years.

Down and out in poverty. Stricken children. And I just somehow feel this kind of on-the-job training that, by the way, Jesus engaged in is still the best.

I don't see it as a substitute for Bible college. We wouldn't bring Michael Griffiths here if we believed that. But I see it as a complement.

And my two years in Bible college were worth solid gold. I got in a lot of trouble. I wasn't a good student because I took on too many practical Christian work assignments.

Moody Bible Institute, very strict. Only two practical Christian work assignments. I didn't know it.

I didn't read this in the rule book. The rule book was rather thick. I was out winning people to Christ when they were passing out the rule book.

But I will tell you, when the dean of men came to me and said, you can't do that, I humbled myself. And I apologized to the dean. Also, when I broke the social policy, I don't like to talk about that.

And that dean of men became one of my lifelong friends. And I want to tell you, if you're a rebel, and I was a rebel, God is going to break you. So get ready.

God is going to break you. He may use London Bible College. He may use Michael Griffiths.

He may use your mother. With me, he used my wife. Now he's using a dog.

17 years I was anti-dog. I could have written a book against dogs. Think of all the food that we could buy if we got this money that's going into dog food.

I used to go through the dog food section in the supermarket, almost growling. But I discovered something was more important in my family than my convictions. My children.

And I decided to throw one of my convictions out the door. Out the door, when my 17-year-old daughter said, could I get a puppy? She'd worked on me for years, and finally at that right moment, I say, okay, okay, okay, get the puppy. And I will tell you what I have learned about my daughter and myself through that dog.

I will tell you. I haven't got time to go into that. What else can you do? You could try giving out tracts.

Now I can hear the reaction, oh, extremism! There may be a few yet in the room, the old-time OMers still believe in giving out tracts. But OM was whitewashed because we believe in giving out tracts. That is the height of superficiality.

That is the ultimate of youthful zeal. That is the height of being on the wrong strategy. But if you study a little missionary history, you'll discover a few little people like Buckingham, William Carey, Hudson Taylor, and a host of others believed emphatically in giving out Christian literature.

Give out some tracts. I remember a testimony of a girl in Birmingham, took her over, weak to get courage to give out one tract. I'm not asking you to blitz London.

There are ten different ways you can give out tracts. And if you're really scared, you're frightened, lose one tract. Lord, give me the grace to lose one tract.

And go to the washroom in prayer. And go secretly, quietly in and just leave one. Now make sure, men, you're in the men's washroom.

Take that little book, Literature Evangelism, and read about how you can have a fruitful literature ministry. It's only a tool. But let's use the tool.

Because thousands and tens of thousands are in heaven as a result of Christian literature. Prayerfully, carefully, sensitively distributed. We have a losing ministry in Turkey.

It's not our main ministry in Turkey. Our main ministry in Turkey is to learn the language, relate to the people, and plant churches. But we send in teams in the summer, sometimes, to help the longer-term people by losing literature.

We find some of the most forgetful characters we can find. We cut holes in their trousers' pockets. We put Gospels in their trousers and send them down the streets.

We've lost five million pieces of literature. More, actually. And it has been the major source of people enrolling in Bible correspondence courses.

And that has been one of the key sources of the few Turks who have come to Jesus Christ. Give out some literature. Maybe even try selling books.

That's a really bad term. Selling? But I believe some of you would discover that through selling books you could have an ongoing ministry. Because instead of giving away and running out of money, you could put the money back into books and you could sell books.

It may be a church book table. It may be door-to-door. As young people, you can give some of these things a try.

I'm happy. I meet someone who's 40 years of age and he says, Look, I tried book selling. That's not my thing.

I say, Praise the Lord, brother. Fine. What is your thing? As long as that man has something in which he's active for Jesus in sharing and loving in what we're talking about, I'm happy.

O.M. does not want to lay a big guilt trip on you or anybody else. But as young people, you can try new things. Operations stretch.

And then after some years, you will probably in God's timing find your particular style and approach that you're happiest with. I had to do that. And then I believe as we go from here, we can learn to organize.

Line up a meeting for someone. It's harder to line up a meeting than take a meeting. Arrange a showing of a film strip.

We have got to be involved in spreading the missionary vision or it's not going to be spread. If we can't count on a group like you, who can we count on to spread this vision? Taking the literature, not just for yourself, for others. And if you can't get involved in evangelism this summer, and there's plenty of it right here in Britain, we have our own efforts here in Britain.

Other groups have efforts. Pocket Testament League, Beach Mission, Scripture Union, InterVarsity, the UCCF. But if you can't, will you recruit others? Would you pray about that? Would you say, Lord, I want to encourage two or three others to be involved in something this summer? Low profile, sensitively, using literature, film strips, sharing.

And if we're going to get this great job done, we need recruiters. You may not be ready for cross-cultural communication in a life commitment, but you could probably help others to catch that vision. People that may be able to learn a language faster than you, you're still having trouble with English.

But you know people who are gifted. You know people who've got what it takes. You might be used of God to win them, to recruit them.

D.L. Moody, it says in a worldly encyclopedia, depopulated hell by two million souls. And he got on the road through an ordinary, weak, feeble, layman Sunday school teacher visiting him. Well, our time has gone.

My time has gone. I have another meeting tonight out in South End. Let me just give you these few other things I wrote about.

Have you ever thought about developing a practical skill? Learning how to type. I learned how to type when I was 14. No, I think I was 16.

It's been one of the most important little weapons God's given me, how to type. You know, right now the greatest need we have is people who can type. We live in a complicated world.

And we need people with those skills. What about mechanics? Some of you men could learn to be mechanics. Some of you could learn bookkeeping.

Accountants are needed on the field. For every one man that goes forward, several people are needed behind the scenes. Pray about it.

Think about it. And there are many other things, of course, that you can do as you go from this place. The enemy will attack.

There will be failure and you're going to have to learn to cope with failure. You'll probably get into extremes as I did. But you know, every great work of the Holy Spirit that I've ever read about in history has been marked by some extremes.

And the Lord will have to bring it and bring you back into balance. And beware of the fiery dart of impurity, especially as you get involved in depth with people. And beware of the subtle pitfall of fear and worry and unbelief.

And beware of the fact that the good so often becomes enemy of the best. And some of you know that you're not going to be able to do some of these things unless you start to chop some of the good things in your life, even some of the good television programs. The problem with television are not the evil, bad programs.

That's problem enough. It's the good programs. That's why I don't have a TV.

I'm not disciplined enough. I see some TV. I'm not anti-fanatic TV.

But I believe the good could become the enemy of the best in my life. And by God's grace, I know where I'm going. And I want to go there.

The Bible says, redeem the time because the days are evil. That's why I listen to cassette tapes while I'm taking a bath and while I'm driving and while I'm shaving. That's why I just believe that time is the most valuable thing that God has given to us.

Even more valuable than money. And I want to make use of it in a relaxed, hopefully balanced, mature, sensitive way. And I think some of you, if you're really honest, the biggest enemy in your life is the good, the good things.

And somehow, some of them, not all of them, not all of them, some of them are going to have to go to give yourself to more prayer and the Word, the Word of God. And God and being a people helper and becoming an unselfish, spiritually sensitive, spiritual revolutionary whose citizenship is in heaven and who will eventually, slowly, become less American, less Chinese, less British, and more Christ-like. They're the people that are needed in world missions today.

Let's pray. Now I finished an hour before I expected. It's only 3.08 by my watch.

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