

Lahetyskonferenssi 2001 (Pt1) (Dutch)

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon calls for urgent prayer and action in global missions, emphasizing the need for compassion and involvement in reaching the lost.

Duration: 49:44

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 9:35, Matthew 9:37-38, Mark 16:15, Luke 10:2, Acts 1:8, Acts 13:1-5

Topics: "Dutch"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the topic of what God is doing around the world. While he acknowledges that there are others who may be better at sharing about God's work, he feels called to talk about what is not being done. He emphasizes the importance of praying for countries like Tibet and being more effective in sending missionaries to unreached regions. The speaker also shares his personal testimony of how prayer and evangelism impacted his life, and encourages the audience to have the love of Jesus as their motive for reaching others with the gospel. The sermon concludes with a discussion on the need for more workers in the harvest field and the importance of compassion and action in following Jesus' example.

Transcript

3 Philippians 2 About the Lord Jesus leaving the Father, leaving all the glory of heaven and coming to dwell among us as a human being, as a servant and then to die on the cross for our sins I'd like us just to pray for a few of the nations in the world where the suffering is really beyond description Let's just pray together Father, we thank you for the privilege of prayer Thank you for the power of prayer Lord, as we look into your word, we ask you to speak to our own hearts Lord, the news of the earthquake area in India is very much upon our hearts It does seem that at least a hundred thousand have been plunged into eternity We pray for the great relief and rescue work and healing ministry that's going on there even right now Lord, we pray for the crisis in Afghanistan We pray for a team that's praying in Kabul right now Lord, it's hard to believe that in this nation there is still no functioning church Lord, we pray also for the neighboring land of Pakistan where more and more pressure is being put upon Christians Lord, we pray for Sri Lanka Somehow that little land that had over 50,000 dead in the civil guerrilla war Somehow this killing may end and that the gospel could penetrate that little island Lord, we pray again concerning the crisis in Sudan where at least a million souls have been killed and slaughtered and murdered where tens, hundreds of thousands of children have no parents We pray, Lord, that the horrendous killing, that this may stop And Lord, we think of the neighboring Somalia where there is hardly any church whatsoever

Lord, what can we say about these countries of Africa where sometimes 20% of the population has HIV or AIDS Lord, we thank you for some churches that are responding to this challenge Lord, we pray for many more churches in Africa that respond to the challenge of the suffering that is right at their doorstep And Lord, we pray again for Mozambique and the flood that has again hit that country, drowning many people Lord, we pray again for Mozambique and the flood that has again hit that country, drowning many people Lord, we pray for the crisis in Angola that has continued for over 20 years Lord, we pray for your suffering church in Angola Lord, there are many nations that are our hearts this afternoon Lord, help us to see each other today together Lord, help us to go the extra mile out of our comfort zone into the prayer closet to do business with you And Lord, we give you all the glory in the name of Jesus It's great to be here again.

I've been here in Finland about 20 times And I'm a little embarrassed that this is the first time I've come so far north And I know that even further north there would be even more It's great that we can be here with you this important weekend Lord, you continue to give me these opportunities to speak to hundreds of thousands of young people We want to be praying that many, many young people will be greatly ministered to in the power of the Holy Spirit this weekend We live in amazing days And we see God bringing literally millions of people to himself Especially in parts of Africa and Latin America Especially in parts of China and a few other parts of Asia And especially in this great Muslim megazone, sometimes known as the 1040 window We have places like Libya Where all the believers can

sit in this one bench All the believers in the nation We have places like Tunisia Where, well, we need three or four more benches for the Tunisian believers We have places like Saudi Arabia Where there are great breaches of human rights against Christians Of course, mainly from other countries Because there are no known Saudi believers that we have heard of secretly We think of places like Socotra, the little island of Socotra, right here where I'm pointing Not a single missionary, not a single believer, not a single church on the island We think of the Maldivian Islands here to the west of India We went there with one of our ships, but we were not able to do very much We know of no church of Maldivian believers What can we say of places like Tibet, near the north of Nepal After many years

the church in Nepal is growing My wife and I, after living in India, had the joy of living in Nepal for a number of years We used to have a few thousand believers back around 1960 Now we have hundreds of thousands But just north of Nepal we have the land of Tibet Where most have never heard the gospel There is almost no missionaries, there are some that are going in and out So we live on a globe of six billion people Of tremendous contrast And of course we always love, as we go speaking in different churches We love to tell about the wonderful things God is doing I just a few months ago spoke at the big Urbana student mission convention in America Twenty thousand gave five days to intensive missionary thinking and prayer This is about the fourth time I have gone to that event over the

years It takes place once every thirty years This time, for the first time, they asked me to speak on the first night And they told me what I had to speak about They wanted me, with my big globe, to speak about what God was doing Tell the story of what God is doing around the world And of course I feel there are other people that can do this better than I can do People that know me know I have a different gift I'm better at telling people what we're not doing This is what is burning on my heart What God is doing is already done Of course we always have to follow up on that So these things are not simple to talk about But it's my prayer that during these days together That yes, we will praise God for all He has done But we will also consider the unfinished task The countries that we seldom

pray for All over the world I've taken surveys How many pray for Tibet, I ask people Only a few hands ever go up Millions of people were not even praying for them Even though they're somewhat well known through various films Well let me try my survey here How many of you pray for Tibet?

Raise your hand Well that's better than most places God bless you What about the majority of you however that didn't put your hand up? Would you be willing to pray for Tibet? People have often told me I need to be more gentle I need to be more sensitive because I go around offending people So let me be a little more gentle How many of you are willing to consider The possibility of praying for Tibet?

I'm not asking much Just willing to consider the possibility of praying for Tibet I believe one reason some people don't always pray for these places Is because they're afraid that as they pray For a particular place The Lord may tell them to go there I wonder how many of us would be willing to go to Tibet To serve Jesus Christ Now I'm told that our first two or three days We have leaders and people of responsibility And it's a privilege to speak to you And then on the weekend we'll be bringing in the young people And we're going to challenge the young people to go into world mission Now that's okay But I wonder where we got that idea from I of course was involved As a young person of nineteen years of age Leaving my comfortable little hometown And my business and my money to go to Mexico

So surely I am not against young people going into world mission And I want us to look into the book of Acts chapter 13 To see one of the pictures of God sending people out into world mission Those of you who are preachers you've already preached from this passage No I'm only going to touch on it We'll just read and finish from verse 1 through verse 5 Five verses from Acts chapter 13 Acts chapter 13 When we read a passage like this We can begin to feel a little bit uncomfortable Especially if we are a church leader Some of you have a Barnabas ministry You're a pastor, you're a disciple of people, you're an encourager Some of you have a more Paul type of ministry Maybe you've been pioneering, maybe you've been attempting to do something new In your particular part of Finland Can you

imagine waiting upon God And the Lord telling you, the Holy Spirit speaking to you And telling you that you are to go some tremendous distance To proclaim the gospel to other people Isn't it amazing that in the book of Acts there's so much information about travel Traveling on ships, traveling here, traveling there, suffering in travel First it's because we live in a huge world We're not going to reach the world with the gospel If we are determined we will stay in our hometown no matter what That's why we have those strong words in Matthew chapter 9 Where first of all we have that picture of Jesus leaving his comfortable area where he was To go into all these sweaty hot villages Let's read that verse 35 And Jesus went to all the cities and villages and taught them the synagogues And

healed the evangelicals of the kingdom And cured all kinds of diseases and all kinds of anger This is a great inspiration to me That Jesus was such an active person He wasn't just a hermit He was certainly not just a theologian He was certainly not just someone who sat back, taught people and told them they should go But he was an example He went out into the streets He went out and ministered in compassion and love to those who were sick I would ask you through this weekend To give some thought to the hundreds of millions Hundreds of millions who are ill in the world tonight With tremendous illnesses of every possible kind We realize that we are not called just to evangelize the world The word of God is clear that we are called to build the kingdom everywhere And that includes right here

in this city And if God has led you to remain in this city That is not God's second best That's God's best And we must not judge those who feel led to remain at home Or who seem to be in a situation a little more

comfortable than other people We must not judge such people That is not our job At the same time, those who have a biblical concept and a biblical passion They will want to see other people go They will get a hold of books like *Serving and Senders* And they'll have the humility to study and see How they can be more effective in sending people out to the regions beyond And they'll study and, as an enthusiast, they'll look for ways How they can be those who send others So that they can reach others I took this rather interesting book in your Finnish language It's a story of people

going out of their comfort zone Into the streets And house to house In one of the other meetings, I will be sharing my own testimony Of how a lady prayed for me Sent me a gospel, John How that prepared me for a one-night meeting in New York City with Billy Graham How I was born again in the Spirit of God that night Then I went door to door in my own hometown Trying to win people to Christ So when I heard about this movement called Evangelism Explosion I thought, praise God, what a tremendous work of God But all through these many years I found very few people who were willing to move out In consistent evangelism into the homes, into the highways and the hedges It's often uncomfortable, it's often embarrassing And we sometimes experience rejection And yet we've seen false cults Going door

to door around the globe Winning millions to the false religions of Jehovah's Witnesses Or Mormonism or other cults I'm not saying, of course, that's the only way to evangelize the world In fact, I was trying to give a heart cry For those who are ill For those who are sick For those who are sick For those who have HIV or AIDS across Africa And to say that reaching these people Helping these people, bringing healing to these people Is part of fulfilling the great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ I've just talked to one of the leading persons Involved with dealing with AIDS And he recently came back from India A country that is sort of number one Of all the countries I'm involved in, India is number one That's where God sent my wife and I back in the mid-60s To live and to help start OM

India Which now has some 700 workers HIV and AIDS is growing so fast in India That in 20 or 30 years Maybe 10% of the population could be infected By this horrendous disease In about 20 years, about 10% of the population might be infected It's an unbelievable situation It is the worst human disaster in the world today There's nothing near it unless we start using the atomic bomb 25 million people are affected in Africa 25 million precious people created in the image of God And yet we as spiritual people know That the epidemic of sin is 100 times greater than the epidemic of AIDS And as God's people in modern mission work We have to be willing to face both challenges The spiritual challenge and the physical challenge We hope in the future that our teams around the globe Can have the word

of God in one hand And a book about health and prevention of AIDS in another hand Or at least a video or a leaflet In the land of Uganda, the church and the government Have responded to the AIDS challenge And they're one of the few nations in Africa Where they've been able to change the statistics And begin to bring a drop in the number of infected people A miracle in Uganda in answer to prayer Our Savior was a person of compassion and a person of action And it's interesting what it says in verse 36 For when he saw the crowds he had compassion on them Because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd There we realize the greatest thing that will motivate people Into going the extra mile to reach men and women with the gospel There we see the picture and the example Of

how we can be motivated to reach people The motive has to be Jesus' love His love demands it It's very easy to talk about it It's even easier to write about it I've written a book on this subject The basis in the family, in the factory, on the field That is the greatest challenge of Christian leadership in our day And then look at verse 37 He said to the disciples, the harvest is plentiful The workers are few Ask the Lord of the

harvest to send To send out workers into his harvest field I know that many of you are involved in that ministry I'm sure that's one of the reasons you're here right now You are people of vision I don't need to come here to give you a vision You already have a vision I come largely because you asked me to come Sometimes when I go to a place I'm not sure why am I

going there It reminds me of this great meeting in Amsterdam Where these evangelists, 10,000 evangelists from around the world I didn't go as a main speaker I just went there to learn and to meet people and to just obey God But I had the privilege of meeting with the India delegation And many of them had come to Christ or had their early training through OM in India They wanted to thank me for my involvement in India And I'll never forget one man, he came to me, he seemed a little older than others He said, oh, I want to thank you I got all my training in India through OM And now I'm an evangelist And he mentioned that he had baptized a few thousand people George, would you please lay hands on me and anoint me for the ministry So without thinking I did what he asked me to do And I laid

hands on him and I prayed for greater anointing And when I was done, I realized that was a mistake He needed to lay hands on me Because I have not baptized thousands of people around the world But we know God is working in different ways in different people And perhaps some of the ideas that are on my heart Will help crystallize and expand ideas that you already have from the word of God But on the basis of this scripture that we have just read I want to ask you How is your training?

Are you getting each day those quality times with God? Firstly in worship and praise and adoration of the Lord of Glory And then in thanksgiving And contrition as we humble ourselves And then in intercession And petition as we pray for ourselves as we pray for others When I was about 17 years old I was one year in Christ I was trying to figure out how and why God was using Billy Graham in such an unusual way I was starting to see God answer prayer in my high school And different ones coming to Christ I had discovered this praying woman that had prayed for me And prayed for that high school for 15 years I had read a few books and articles about prayer And I said this to God I only want one thing in life I want to learn how to pray I had no plan for any ship ministry I had no plan to mobilize tens of thousands of Europeans in evangelism and church planting That was not in my mind I certainly had no plan to go to India I wanted to know God I wanted to understand the weapons of the warfare described in Corinthians And I made that commitment to spend that time No matter what else was going on To spend that time daily with God in prayer And I started to organize nights of prayer Which now have gone on for over 40 years around the world Though I am here now 46 years after my conversion I have this feeble testimony That every single day for 46 years I've experienced the grace of God And the reality of His presence and prayer Powerful communion with God is not just for some super special people Not just for anointed evangelists and dynamic missionaries It's for all of us Those of us like me Who have a lot of struggles Who face a lot of discouragement Who often don't see my prayers answered Somehow because I stand on the promises of God I believe these scriptures with such a passion I refuse the discouragement that tries to keep me From effective prayer intercessory meetings Some people say to me, well I'm just too busy I'm a leader in the church I have so many people, so many responsibilities I'm really just too busy to spend much time in prayer Even when I interview some of my own leaders And we have an annual appraisal system Where each leader is evaluated and appraised It's like a fellowship time with a bit of purpose And as I've interviewed and asked questions Of many men and women of God all over the world So many of them Are saying I neglect my prayer life And I don't really have much time for that I read the word, I have to prepare sermons I've got to get in the word of God But I don't pray much And then they usually say something like this They shoot a prayer up Now and then throughout the day they shoot a prayer up At that point I try to

be positive And I say, well praise God That isn't nothing A little prayer is better than no prayer But what does God really want?

Doesn't He want us to spend more time Praying and receiving Him And worshipping Him in our prayer closet? Many have confessed to me That television is taking too much of their time Especially watching sports Again, I don't want to go around condemning people We all need a little bit of relaxation in our lives And sitting by your television Watching someone get smashed in the face, boxing If that relaxes you, I'm not going to judge you You can stand before God I believe as a Christian There's a place for many, many different things And sports is a certain part of it Music is another part of it And looking at beautiful scenes Playing with your children Now I'm playing with my grandchildren My wife and I have five grandchildren Do any of you have any grandchildren?

They are blessings I never forget what Tony Campolo once said about grandchildren He's sort of an extreme Italian guy He said, grandchildren, they're wonderful That's God's prize to you for not killing your own kids There's a place for so many things But all those things should be small In comparison to these other things The Word of God Prayers Winning people to Christ Helping the poor, visiting the sick We discover when we give ourselves to others In an unselfish way, as the Word of God teaches We leave our comfort zone To maybe suffer a little bit in the work of the kingdom We discover that we receive so much I know my wife and I feel we have received so much from God A fellowship with God's people The privilege of seeing people come to Christ almost every day The joy of seeing new churches established Among the more unreached peoples of the world Going back to this passage I want to ask you as we bring this to a close Are you specifically praying for workers to go From your town, from your church to the harvest fields?

This is what Jesus told us to do This is why I'm here This lady prayed that I become a Christian And she prayed that I would become a missionary Specific prayer for me by name She didn't even discuss this with me I mean even a phone call would have been polite About to change my whole life Dutch women of prayer are dangerous They are dangerous to the strongholds of Satan I am reminded as it says in Corinthians That our weapons are not those of flesh But they are used to pull down the strongholds There are many strongholds Sometimes they are in our own hearts Some stronghold of pride Maybe because we've been hurt by somebody in the ministry We don't feel we're getting the recognition and the respect That we should be getting as a man or a woman of God In any kind of leadership of a large mission agency Which is my main responsibility The care, the spiritual care of our workers We have about three thousand That is our number one priority Next to knowing God Himself And with increasing numbers of young people Coming from broken divorced homes And horrible experiences in their childhood We are needing more pastoral care And concern than ever before in mission history Yes, that's one of the reasons And I thank God for you And for organizing this kind of conference We need to get together To consider this world in which we live There are so many things grabbing up our time Many of those are good things I believe we're here this weekend for one of the best things The kingdom of God The glory of God in the nations of the world As we pray together As we fellowship together As we read some of these books, as we search the scriptures I believe many nations in the world will feel the impact Of our days together here And let us in this first day be filled with faith Believing that He will send forth workers That He'll also raise up those Antioch churches With vision and passion and reality That can make it happen for the glory of God Let us pray together Father, we thank You for the power of Your Holy Spirit And we would pray, O Lord of the harvest That You would send forth workers into the harvest That You would especially send workers to those places Where the church doesn't even exist That You would send more workers into the

Muslim world Send workers to places like Tunisia, Libya, Afghanistan And other forgotten places Lord, we would be sure to give You all the praise And all the glory As we surrender completely to You As we obey Your Holy Spirit even as Paul and Barnabas To go where You want us to go and to do what You want us to do Lord, we would be willing to deny self and take up the cross Every single day to make this a reality And I ask in the name of Jesus Amen

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