

Leadership 2

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of focusing on people, leadership, scripture memorization, and cultural immersion in OM's philosophy and practice.

Duration: 50:06

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

Topics: "Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of hard work and job training in the basics of Christian living. He highlights that many young people today lack the experience of working hard for extended periods of time. The speaker also discusses the different strategies and actions taken by the organization in various countries, such as planting local churches in Turkey and working with existing churches in India. The ultimate aim and purpose, regardless of the outward strategy, is for men and women to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ through spiritual revolution.

Transcript

Father, we do thank you that we can bless your name this morning and that we can go through this day with our eyes on you and our eternal hope, not on the things below but the things that are above, realizing we are seated with you in the heavenlies and realizing that in your Son dwelleth all the goodness, all the fullness of your headship bodily. We praise you, O God, we worship you together and ask that we may learn together from your word and from biblical principles how we may be more effective in your work and that much more honor may come to your name in all that we do through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Now I'd like you to turn again to the last page in this little manual. I hope you will perhaps put your name on this, keep it. Sometimes these manuals get very, very scarce.

In fact, we've had conferences when we ran out of them. So we would appreciate your taking care of it, bringing it again tomorrow morning and of course studying through it. I hope you'll be taking notes as we go along.

If you don't have a notebook handy, there's quite a lot of blank space since the end of the chapter on food and clothing, you have a blank page that you might want to jot things down. As I mentioned yesterday, we're not going to be sort of commenting on each chapter. We don't have time, but just try to deal with some major issues.

I've already sensed greatly that I didn't cover really enough material yesterday. I'd like to read a passage of scripture, one of the passages that we base a lot of our thinking on. It's 2 Corinthians chapter 6. To me it's one of the great chapters for those moving into the ministry or in responsibility in God's work.

We then as workers together, verse 1, workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee. Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation.

Giving no offense in anything that the ministry be not blamed, but in all things commending ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watching, in fastings. By pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfamed or genuine, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, as dying and behold we live, as chastened and not killed, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing all things. This is what I would like OM to be in terms of our ultimate goals and aims.

I realize this is more important to some people than other people. There are all kinds of people. It's amazing, it's quite thrilling to be in my situation and receive letters and memos from people probably from at least 25, 30 different nationalities, different backgrounds, sharing what's on their hearts.

But it is good, it is important to every so often just make sure of the basics. What are we really aiming at? I shared the other day in one of the meetings here, how the work especially right here in Bromley can become such a drudgery, we don't know really where we're going and why we're going there. I have to remind myself, I do it quite often, Lord, we're after souls.

Maybe that's a cliché for you, but it still means something to me. Our goal is people, to reach people. And in reaching people, our goal is people because we believe in multiplication, that as one man catches fire, that fire is going to spread.

I know sometimes when you're working away eight hours, maybe more, and it seems no one may be appreciating what you're doing, that you may get the idea, well, this is all a lot of talk about being people-centered, nobody seems to be centering in on me. But of course, we could ask, who are you centering in on? Who are you ministering to? Do you remember that little leaflet we distributed so many thousands of copies, we reprinted it? Not to be ministered unto, but minister, a little message out of Keswick, certainly helped me especially stay away from the deadly mire of self-pity. Years ago, we debated whether we should even continue the STL side of the work.

The other side of the work seemed to be going so well, there was some criticism of the literature side, some were saying, well, we've discovered now this is not really our main calling. There were organizations, once this thing became very successful, and even in business terms, STL has become a successful Christian literature agency, there were those who were willing to buy it. But as we discussed this quite a few years ago now, we felt that wasn't the Lord's will, and we felt that one of the aspects of the work here, we wanted to emphasize that if a secular, semi-secular group bought us out, you remember one Christian publisher was actually purchased just as another company by a main secular agency, that it would lose this focus on people and on training people.

And though we have problems because we have to keep putting new people into jobs, that is a problem, it is also a blessing. It is also a great blessing. And with it comes a price tag, sometimes we're not always happy about paying.

So we want to continue, number one, to be a fellowship of like-minded believers. And I won't read this again, except maybe the last sentence. For this reason, most young people are encouraged to unite with us for a summer or a year-long campaign before continuing on with the main line of ministry to which God has called them.

I might insert here something that isn't emphasized perhaps enough that we refocused on in a leaders conference not so long ago. That OM is a fellowship of both short-term and longer-term people. From the very earliest days, a number of us felt this was our longer-term ministry, though we didn't dwell a lot on that.

And when we went to India, we soon discovered that if a person left a good job, it was a little difficult ultimately to just talk to them about a one or two year program. So the work in India especially has been built on the concept of short-term and long-term. In fact, we got so many people wanting to be long-term in India, we had to develop a quota system.

And now a new family can only come in when something very unusual happens. And there's room within that quota because we had to look five and ten years down the line to see what it was going to cost us when these families who came in with great zeal ten years later had five children and maybe not so much zeal. And their children needed education and their children needed a job, both of which usually takes quite a heavy fee or bribe and other complications in India, a culture five times more complicated in some ways than we face here.

This is why it is important to think and pray ahead and to count the cost. Many Christian movements have been in great difficulty because of too rapid growth, especially where there's a lot of money. In a fluent society, rapid growth is often a greater problem than slow growth because if you get into fundraising and you have Christian leaders that get a degree in the psychology of fundraising, you can raise money.

Now of course there's plenty of failure in that as well. Some people have had some big surprises even in places like the States. You think just anybody can go to America and raise money, you'd be in for a very big surprise.

It's a very unpredictable art and some seem to be very, very successful and others not successful and then they are forced into all kinds of problems. A book I recommend, if you can get your hands on it, by Charles Blair, *The Man Who Can Do No Wrong*, the story of his great huge church operation in Denver and how it collapsed. Another little bit of history you may want to read is the bankruptcy and collapse of the Lagos Publishing House.

The Publishing House had emphasized miracles more than any publisher in America that later went bankrupt, losing a lot of money from a lot of people including old age pensioners and all the rest. So we feel it's important to have the long term and the short term but to try to keep it under the control of the Holy Spirit, to try to count the costs. Where are we going to be ten years down the line? This is why we've encouraged some people after a time with OM to pray about perhaps leaving, especially if they didn't have support and didn't have church roots because though they were willing to stay on OM for a couple more years, we had to ask where are they going to be ten years down the road? Who's going to be taking care

of them? We are committed, especially for longer term personnel and to some degree to everybody, to take care of people.

Once people are involved with us on a longer term basis, there's no way that we can let them suffer without us being involved in helping them. We've had some opportunities to prove this, serious illnesses where we trusted God together for huge sums of money. People are not just expected if they have a serious illness to see this come out of their support.

They can aim for that but meanwhile we have to pay the bill. When Captain Padgett was dying we didn't get in great discussions about the finance but we took care of him right to the funeral, right to the grave. He didn't have hardly anyone else except us.

Every situation is different. Some people have a strong local church and they will come in and take care. We were there also ready to help but we actually didn't have to do too much because the local believers mobilized.

But there are other cases like Brother Kanan in Turkey, eventually after we helped him get a kidney transplant, you can imagine the cost of that, when he did eventually die, we were very much involved. Again the Lord used different people in his situation. So OM is both long term and short term.

We don't have to debate one or the other and I think it's important. Some people are attracted to the short term. We like to emphasize that more because we don't want to lose that focus on training people for other missions.

It's one of the reasons so many other missions get on so well with OM. They don't feel we are competition generally because they've got workers from us. They come to our meetings, they recruit right from under our nose and we praise the Lord because this is part of the policy.

We like of course a little bit of fellowship and dialogue especially when they go for the main leaders which has been a tendency in the last couple of years. But even there we've said for the last few years, every year we expect at least one really outstanding trained OM leader to perhaps be led to join some other fellowship or movement. In that way this vision, this burden, if it is significant, if it is needed by the whole body and we believe it is, we believe also many had it before we ever came along, then it can be disseminated and it can spread and it is spreading and it's very exciting.

When we think about OM and growth, we have to look at internal growth, we have to look at external growth. If you were running a seminary, suppose you were teaching at a seminary, how would you measure your growth? Just by the new seminary buildings? The increased number of students? That would be a factor. That's the way some people think.

But I think you would also consider the number of graduates and what those graduates were doing. I dare to say as a teacher, your greatest joy would be your graduates because only then would you know how much they had really gained from their training at seminary. Our greatest joy in OM in many ways are the OM graduates.

Only as we follow people through life, long after they leave us, can we discover how much they received when they were with us. And 37,000 people scattered around the world who have sat in the same chairs where you're sitting, spiritually speaking and sometimes physically. As you can see these chairs are quite old.

Seldom in OM's history have I seen any new chairs. I'm always amazed by the price of a chair. I prefer the floor I think when I see the prices.

But so many of these people are being used, my dear God. Over 100 new fellowships and agencies have been formed as the Holy Spirit has worked through ex-OMers or graduates. So we're long term, we're short term and even that doesn't really show what the growth and what the development is.

We need to increase our effort among our graduates. We now have that little paper in touch. We have a lot of personal communication.

I'm hardly ever in a meeting when there are not ex-OMers there. But I feel there's a lot more we can do. We want to be careful and we want God's wisdom as we go forward.

Then number two, on our real purposes and aims, to offer an opportunity to people who wish. And here are six areas where we provide an opportunity for service and training. Spend their vacation or holiday time or even a year, here's a key word, in all out training and evangelistic programming which will reach others while giving training for a lifetime of effective Christ-centered witness.

Whether God may lead them, wherever God may lead them. The key word in all this is on-the-job training. People ask you when you take a church meeting, what is OM's training program? Don't immediately tell them about the study program or some other program, reading books, listening to tapes.

Don't go into that first. Immediately emphasize on-the-job training in the basics of Christian living. Hard work.

Do you realize many young people today don't know how to work hard? Any of you in that category? If you're honest, before you came here, you never had too many opportunities for eight or nine hard hours of work every day over a long period of time. I know there's a great variety, but some have really had life quite easy. Some were not even working hard in their studies and they didn't do so well in their studies.

We've had some even tell us they only came on OM because they couldn't go anywhere else. That doesn't always warm our battery, but we like to be compassionate. I realize the Lord Jesus didn't necessarily get all of his recruits from the local university, but on the other hand, those fishermen, I think, were hard-working people.

I find the more people have really worked hard before they've come on OM, sometimes the easier they find OM. In fact, some find it too easy. That's another problem.

But we are an opportunity for on-the-job training and what we do depends completely on what field you go to. You've got to emphasize that because it's very important. People down in the engine room on the Dew House are in a different work than somebody on the interesting Brussels team, by the way, working among Muslims that has responsibility for all the cleaning and domestic affairs at Zalmton and many hours, I think most days, out in the streets in evangelism plus study program and other requirements that Fred Perry has put on them in their unique on-the-job training program.

I think what's happened there in Belgium recently is a fantastic proof of how an operation can change its strategy and a lot, of course, is hinged on the leader, on the vision of the leader. You'll never understand OM unless you understand the emphasis we put on finding the right leader and giving him liberty to develop the work as the Lord leads him and his co-workers. Now there are all different kinds of leaders.

There's no sense one leader who may be a more phlegmatic person functions perhaps better in a number two position than he would maybe in a pioneer position. It's good to get the combination and we've discovered that it's dangerous when one leader just tries to copy another leader. It's been fantastic to watch the development of the work in France and Belgium.

Two very different men with quite different strategies. Roses, Evans, I could write a book about it. The discussions, some of the controversy, the differences in approach, the different publicity both these fields got.

As for a while, one field got far much more publicity and seemed to be going so much better and then it changed. And each field has its strong points and its weak points. Just like here in Bromley, we have strong points and weak points.

And it's beautiful to see God working in such a variety of ways in different countries. On-the-job training, this is our goal and it will be different in different countries. Though we hope the basic ingredients of what we're trying to train people will be true in each country.

Basics in prayer, basics in learning how to relate to people, relationship, some basics in evangelism, some basics in the word. You know people talk about all kinds of things they'd like to get from the word. You know the one basic of all of O.M.'s philosophy about the word of God, do you know what it is? Memorizing the word of God.

You know how many do it? Less than 70, less than certainly 25% in a way are regularly memorizing the word of God. That's a very weird generalization but I think it would be worse in some places. And in the churches where I take survey, less than 5%.

To me it's just such a basic thing. Whatever other bible study method you have, whatever other books you're using, you should be memorizing scripture. That's a very basic feature of this work.

And I hope perhaps as a result of our time here this week you might reconnect yourself to scripture memorization. There of course are other basics that we'll be touching as we go through this manual. I know enough about these is to know that now being a permanent resident for me is a great answer to prayer.

I don't have to be treated like a Mormon when I arrive at Heathrow. And I believe every one of you who come from other countries need to see just being here in a foreign land is a training program in itself. If you were just here working as an au pair, that's a good word for you to look up, or working down selling hamburgers in central London, just being here would be a training.

To get out of your own culture because we are so brainwashed by our own culture. I think of how from the smallest child I was taught every day at school to be a good little right wing flat flag sleuthing American. I didn't know what was going on.

And I'm not saying that's wrong. I expect the country to train their people to be loyal citizens. It's part of culture.

I'm not opposing that. And I was very patriotic. In fact, I became the chaplain of the state government of New Jersey when the youth took over the government.

And I was involved in politics when I was first converted. One third of my whole message was anti-communist. If you ever heard early Verwer messages, some of you modified left wingers, your hair would go up.

I'm still receiving a letter from the Christian Anti-Communist League. It's been following me around for 27 years. And it was only when I went to Mexico and then Spain that I discovered how offensive I was in some of my ways.

I began to discover the negative things about Americans. And then a little book was written back in my day called *The Ugly American*. I got depressed just looking at the cover.

And I was going to write an equivalent, *The Ugly Missionary*. So, it's so good to get out of your own country. I went to Mexico when I was 19.

It was like a second conversion. And perhaps coming to Princeton for most of you, especially if you're common market and you're all so similar, hasn't been as life changing as going to Mexico. There's still so many things you can learn.

I feel everybody I meet is a teacher. The other day I was getting on a bus here. I was wondering why the man wasn't opening the door.

It was a 138 Coney Hall bus. I was standing there. It was a little cold.

A fellow was sitting in the back. Finally he came forward and opened the door. He looked at me and said, are you George Verwer? I said, yeah.

I said, maybe if he had done that before he would have opened the door. He said, well, I've just been listening to your tapes. Come on in.

He did take my fare. We had quite a good chat. He was, of course, a believer.

Wherever I meet people, I'm learning something. If you feel that OM's training program is failing you, why don't you re-enlist in God's training program and learn from the many, many different experiences. In fact, you'll discover the things that go wrong in OM's shaky knee training program might be the very things that God is trying to teach you about patience, about plan B and plan C. You've all heard my illustration about that by now.

You know what happens when plan C caves in. You've got a lot of other letters yet in the alphabet, so don't give up hope. Practical missionary training in a foreign land.

When we went to Mexico, there were no notebooks, no manuals, no leaders. There was no structure. We didn't know really hardly what we were doing from one day to the next, but we had a training program that turned our lives upside down.

I believe we need to continue both sides. God's training program, very spontaneous, never seem to know what's going to happen next, ready for anything, anytime, anywhere. That would have been true if you were in the Libyan embassy yesterday applying for a visa.

Oh my, what a training program that would be. We've had people go to Turkey. Tremendous plans to reach souls for Christ.

They've ended up in jail for most of the summer. If you think that's just an adventure, romantic experience, you should talk to some of the people who come out because I tell you some of them emotionally were hurt and damaged and did not recover very easily. So going to prison, that's a little adventure to put sort of a cherry on your OM Sunday training program.

Enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. OM was born as a missionary movement. You know, when we say the word missionary, it still, I think, communicates certain things.

I wrote some things down here. When I say the word missionary, it communicates to me sacrifice, suffering, passion, the extra mile, trust, total abandonment. These were the watch words of OM.

And by God's grace, they must continue. And we must learn the realities that we read about here in 2 Corinthians chapter 6, in stripes, in imprisonments, in toolments, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, long suffering. And on the list goes.

There are other similar lists in the New Testament. This is not easy. I think we have to see that in some ways, OM is still very much going against the tide.

A lot of what we are still teaching and saying is not popular. If you read a lot of Christian periodicals, which I do, one of my favorites is this new women's magazine. Have you seen this fantastic, well-produced, slick, 6,000 colors, or at least 6 colors, women's magazine? Christian women.

Quite amazing. Very good articles. But also very interesting, the whole general thrust of some of the articles on the whole prosperity movement.

Christians, we're going to infiltrate every area of society, and we're going to be prosperous, and God's going to bless our businesses, and we're going to have the best makeup kit, and we're going to have it all together. The total woman. Some who have tried that direction have become the total women.

So you might want to keep it in balance if you get down that street someday. And then D, serve the already established local church through evangelistic campaigns and church-centered visitation, in which literature is used to reach the maximum number of people with a full message of the gospel. Now we're getting here into more details.

This is a definite strategy to work with to serve the established church. Now the moment we say this is one of our goals, we must incorporate the flexibility to keep that as one of our goals. And that means that our work will not only change from country to country, it'll change from team to team, because we have got to submit to that church.

Some churches have not even let us sell books when we work with them. They say we don't need to sell books. We can give out literature, and here's our literature that we have prepared with our address.

You can give this out. Now sometimes these days we negotiate about these things before we commit ourselves. But I fear OM becoming too structured, too rigid.

I fear we are trying to define things too much, which will create maybe better organization in some ways, that remains to be proven, but with it inflexibility to really be able to submit to the churches and to other groups that we are working under and that we are working with. We will have everything neatly typed out, neatly in print, but it will be too rigid. It will become inflexible, and therefore it will ultimately hinder our

relationships with the churches.

For example, if we too finely define the whole charismatic question, what exactly is OM teaching, actually that could do great harm, because the fact that certain things are a little bit vague helps us to move wherever the wind is blowing in a particular situation. And I think the words of the Apostle Paul are very relevant. I am all things to all men to win some.

As we go into different churches, we have got to try to adapt to their church situations. You realize churches create their own culture. There is one strong group in Kerala where I would not be able to preach if I had that ring on my finger, just that simple engagement ring worth a couple of quid.

They are against ornaments. That is a major doctrine, against ornaments. If I am trying to bring a message into that church and share with them the message of love and balance and spiritual evolution, it would probably be better if I just took my ring off.

My wife, she does let me take it off when I play golf, because it gets caught in a club. But I was discussing this when I was in India again. It is very, very complex.

I think, for example, if you go into a church on Sunday morning where it is just the tradition of teaching that all the women have their head covered, unless it is a major trauma for you and you are going to have a heart attack, putting the head covering on, it is just simpler not to get into a hassle about that. Because, first of all, any church we can get in is a miracle when you consider the problems and the church relationship difficulties. I think one of the things people presume on today in OM, or take for granted is the word I want, is the fantastic relationships we have with the churches.

There are many a Christian group in a place like Brown, where all the churches around are against what they are doing. How would you like that situation? Do you think that would cause any ripples? It is a continual tension if a Christian organization has that, and often pressures them into becoming more and more cult-like. They react from the criticism, they become more and more close, and we are seeing that happen right now in some groups in Britain.

It happens in some ways with the children of God. I don't think the churches helping that would have changed it, but it was interesting how it did develop in those early days. So a high degree of flexibility is needed in fulfilling this particular goal and aim, and a lot of wisdom.

And then E, see New Testament churches planted in areas where no Bible-based Christ-centered group exists. It's amazing, we've had people say, oh we hear that OM now is interested in planting churches. That was a major goal of OM dating back to 1963.

That's 27 years ago. But we decided not to make a lot of publicity about this, because it isn't the main thrust as far as the majority of people who come into OM in the first couple of years. It is a main thrust of certain fields, and certainly certain aspects of longer term work, and it's also a goal that we may have, but not always reach as an organization.

Follow me in this. In India, we don't feel that we as OM should be directly involved in planting churches to any large degree. We have some of that, especially helping others.

But we feel that we should be training men in the principles of church life, discipleship, church planting, so that when they leave OM, they can be involved in church planting. And it's amazing the number of OM

graduates who are in church planting. It is a major occupation or goal of many OM graduates.

That's why it's important not to judge other groups. If you see they're not doing the whole New Testament work the way some people describe it. Maybe they're laying the foundation.

Some of you went to a good Bible college. They don't plant churches, do they? But if they taught you something about church life, missionary principles, Bible, they have help in the ongoing process. Your Bible college is not planting churches, but ultimately through you, they will have input into planting churches.

OM is the same. In some countries like France, we're directly involved in planting churches. True in Turkey, true in Bangladesh, true in a number of countries.

Now this is not easy for a movement like us. We've had seminars on this. If you want to read a lot of notes on this subject, I can give you quite a lot of material.

Because we have the discussion, what kind of church? And so that is largely left to the leader of the country where it's happening. This is the advantage of sometimes having things not so spelled out so carefully. Exactly what kind of church? Two page doctrinal statement that everybody who goes to that church must sign.

I think of a friend who was planting a church in a particular country. He'd been reading a lot of books of a certain kind and he tried to plant this church and generally speaking it didn't go anywhere. He had a two page doctrinal statement.

It was right down to what you ate for breakfast. It drove people away, including one of his best friends. So even in church planting, flexibility sometimes is very, very key.

We've heard the disadvantages of church planting in the context of OM. I could write equivalent number of pages on the advantage of planting churches in the context of a fellowship like OM. In everything there are positives and negatives.

But it can be done. It is being done and will continue to be one of our goals with moderation and again with unity. Now that OM has become so large and there's so much growth going on and so many visions and ideas, projects, plans, there's got to be a little more control.

And that means we wouldn't go into a big church planting program in a country without strong unity from a wider range of people than before. And then F, receive a year of practical spiritual training coupled with a steadfast, that's an interesting word, I don't remember putting that in, a steadfast study of the word under the unique OM study program. It is unique that people who basically are here in on-the-job training and, for example, have a lot of work to do every day, take an entire hour out of the heart of the day, best part of the day, to get in this room and study.

Now in a study program, of course, it can always be better. No matter what we're doing it can always be better. Plus we'll never make anybody happy.

In our little ICT leaders meeting yesterday, we again discussed some of the ways we can improve the study program. We hope you won't hesitate to pass in, hand in some of your suggestions. We have continually changed the study program in an attempt to improve it.

In India, we stopped some of the efforts in the day-by-day work of sitting down and teaching the team. They still study on the teams. We stop everything and we have 10-day study seminars.

No doubt in a couple of years some will be thinking about returning back. So many new people, they think often they're going back to something new. That was a major policy several years ago.

People want to return to it. Things change. I praise God that so many have at least developed an appetite for the word of God through the study program.

Many, many, so many, thousands have gone to Bible college after their time. Proof's in the pudding. They developed a hunger for the word.

You know what? Sometimes with the limited time we have, the main thing the study program shows you is how much you don't know of the word of God. I tell you it's a big book. I still am stunned.

I've had a lot of study. I'm still stunned at what I don't know. Don't be too overly intimidated by your lack of Bible knowledge because it is a big book.

As human beings we also forget so much. I've done heavy studies on Matthew. I've written papers on Old Testament books.

If I had to stand up and teach that now, boy I tell you I'd be in trouble. I'd have to get some books before I got here. So that's something to keep in mind.

Then very quickly moving on to main part three, to be a revolution. Of course we get tired of some of these words. You know we use them in OM.

We get tired of them. I don't use this word as much as I used to. That's good.

In OM we can develop new terminology. Some of it that I attempt to get into becomes completely absurd and I need to go back to the old terminology. A revolution of love based on the truth of the word of God.

Revolution means upheaval. It means change. Our prayer is that this work will create spiritual upheaval.

You know one of our favorite texts, Acts 17. These who have turned the world upside down have come here also. If you listen to any of my old tapes, it's one of the most overused verses in prayer word discourses.

So much so that lives coming into contact with it will be turned upside down for Jesus Christ. In fact this means revival. In a very real way this work was born in prayer sessions.

I pray we'll see this and we'll remember it was born in prayer sessions. I'd like to give a paraphrase of something from Galatians. Having been born in prayer sessions, can you continue in committee meetings? That will no doubt upset a few people.

But I have heard in OM situations where there have been hours and hours and hours of discussion and very little prayer. And in the discussion people feel quite free to speak out even against basic principles of the work. So they won't mind, you won't mind if I speak out as well.

Let a thousand flowers bloom. Some of my flowers have thorns on them. I believe in OM.

We need more prayer. We need more waiting on God. I was impressed at reading the CLC constitution that when they have differences of opinion they spend a day in prayer and fasting.

Maybe we need some of that in this work where there's a rapid increase of committee-ization, discussion, all kinds of sessions, all of which over the years I have generally never opposed. Even though sometimes it's taken huge chunks of my own time and not with overwhelmingly measurable results, though certainly I always try to keep a good attitude in all these sessions because I know I'm a wretch and I know I need patience and I know I need to learn. I need to listen more to all the brothers whose prayer letters and reports I still try to read.

And I believe we can learn something from the newest recruit who walks in the door. I'm reminded from a book I read recently called Megatrends, I'm in the middle of it, that the human mind, as we take in new things, other things have to go. They have to go.

You can only take in so much. And it's true of the spiritual movement. We're so idealistic.

We're reading so many books. We want to take in so much. But as we bring in new, some things have to go.

And I believe it's proven in OM that in some cases as we bring in new, prayer has to go. It has to be chopped. We still pay lip service to it.

But those days of prayer and fasting, those mornings of waiting upon God and having our hearts revived are perhaps not as frequent as they used to be. We want to continue as a red hot spiritual revolution. We want to be a revolution of love.

I used to say that spiritual revolution incorporates revival and reformation. Some groups emphasize revival. Some groups emphasize reformation.

One is the work of the Holy Spirit. You remember Lloyd-Jones' message on Dulas? The balance, doctrine and the work of the Holy Spirit, try to get that take. Others emphasize reformation.

Doctrine, we want both. We want both. It's not an easy balance.

That's why on one hand we've got Lloyd-Jones as a guru and other men have had an input with us like John Stott, Josh McDowell, Dr. Schaefer. But on the other side, we get input from Wilkerson, from Ravenhill, from Andrew Murray, a host of men who shoot from that side. Revival and reformation.

The work of the Holy Spirit, strong doctrine and content is our goal as we go forward as a movement. By God's grace, I hope there's an army within OM who are committed to keep OM as a movement rather than a monument. When we cease to be this, OM will be only an empty shell.

I remember that little track, others can, we cannot. Perhaps other movements can go a particular way and do particular things and maintain their ministry. I have a sense that what others might be able to get away with because of their goals and their structure, OM will not be able to get away with.

Maybe it would be good if OM were so structured that if the Holy Spirit disappeared, the whole thing would gloriously collapse. Praise God. It's Tozer who said that so often the problem with the church is that long after the Holy Spirit disappears, everything goes on as usual, on schedule.

We might get nice structure and nice organization and we might all have nice titles on our door and it might look all well swept and neatly organized, but I'll tell you, if the Holy Spirit is not there in convicting power and reality, there won't be much left. I've had to bring that into balance over the years because I've seen the mercy of God and the grace of God use almost every kind of crazy organization you can ever imagine. And of course use many, many organizations and movements that might be quite different from Operation Mobilization.

And then number four, to be a company of praying people, hungry for daily revolution, reality, righteousness, and world evangelism, especially in terms of the book Calvary Road. Our emphasis must continue to be on prayer meetings in which we uphold all the body of Christ. No need to comment further on that.

Then number five, to be a simple group of disciples, learners and followers at the feet of Jesus, not depending upon human things or being in OM, etc., but depending on the living Christ. And it is not really important whether we are with OM for a summer or a year or as part of the permanent staff as long as we abide in Christ. We do not need to be members of OM for we are all members of the body of Christ and nothing can be more meaningful than that.

I don't think I'll make more comments. It's interesting that this was written so many years ago and to a large degree is so incredibly relevant right now where OM is in its history and in its growth. I hope that you will study this chapter, just turn the page, and that you will be able to share these things in your own word, not necessarily verbatim, though sometimes it doesn't hurt to quote.

I use a lot of people's quotes. Sometimes it seems to be the best part of a message. Without what we say here on the back page, some of this, like anything, can go a bit out of control.

So let's just read this in closing. In different countries these purposes and aims work out in a variety of ways. Under the sovereign leading of the Holy Spirit, for example, when our work began in Turkey, there was almost no evangelical work among Turks.

Our aim there was to plant local churches, whereas in places like India, where there are already local churches established, our aim has been to work with them. So while the outward strategy and action varies from place to place, the inner true aim and purpose remains the same. Summary, that men and women in every way be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

And only one thing can bring this about, and that is spiritual revolution. At this we aim, and for this reason God has raised up this movement of His Spirit, outward organization is needed for the practical, legal, and financial reasons as in the early church. This organization could easily fade away as the local church everywhere assumes its full God-ordered responsibility.

I'm speaking there especially of individual countries. This to a large degree happened in Spain and Italy. It's been an ongoing controversy ever since, and I think we're beyond the stage of ever getting full unity about whether this should or should not happen, but in fact in some cases it will happen.

Because it's the true of every Christian movement in history, almost every church. But the spirit, the aims, the principles, the practices of the movement must never fade. These must continue to grow in the hearts of those who have experienced them.

And as God ordains, spread from man to man, bringing true spiritual revolution. Let's pray. Father, we know these aims in some ways are so idealistic, but we believe you want us to be men and women with high ideals.

We don't want to be guilty of low aim. And we know it's going to be a fight all the way as we're moving against the tide. So much humanistic thinking has infiltrated our culture.

So much of Madison Avenue and Wall Street has infiltrated our culture. And in our efforts to try to get some of the good out of what we see in different aspects of society, and we know we can, it is so easy to be swayed. And to move away from biblical principles and from the real heartbeat of what you are wanting to do and what you have done.

Not only in this fellowship, but so many other fellowships that we have the joy of working with and having contact with. Guide us, our Father, as we attempt to incorporate these basic goals and aims into our lives. Into our own work here in Bromley.

And into our own churches. In a loving, gracious, compassionate, careful way. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/23/SID23653.mp3>
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