

Lukewarm No More - Part 13

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the importance of prayer, confession, and community bonding through the lens of Nehemiah's leadership and his own ministry experiences.

Duration: 9:53

Scripture: Deuteronomy 28:64, Nehemiah 1:3-4, Psalm 119:176, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 5:22, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Lukewarm"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the life of an evangelist named Roy Hesham who was transformed by the East African revival in the 50s and 60s. The revival emphasized personal repentance and a deep walk with Jesus. The speaker then focuses on Nehemiah's prayer in response to the distress of the remnant in Jerusalem. Nehemiah immediately goes to prayer, confessing the sins of the people and seeking God's help. The speaker also shares his own experience of practicing confession and brokenness in his marriage, emphasizing the importance of humility and surrender to Jesus.

Transcript

I'd like you to turn to the book of Nehemiah. I get excited about Nehemiah. And when I was first launching the ship ministry, here I was on this old ship.

We purchased this old ship up in Denmark. We had it towed down to Rotterdam. It even broke loose from the tow rope outside the Netherlands, floating around in the sea.

Hey, get the ship! We got a hold of it and towed it into Rotterdam. And I, with my family, moved on board. And we had a lot of difficulties.

People from 30 nationalities living on the ship with these professionals. We had to recruit professional seamen. Amazing.

We had a Pentecostal captain who had been through divorce. He'd been afraid to even tell me that. He never wanted to be captain.

He was a first mate. The man I had as captain, when we actually went to purchase the ship, he got nervous. He left me.

I left this work, though. He's always been a good friend. And I called up this Norwegian whose Pentecostal church was a bit legalistic.

And so he was frightened to tell me he'd been through divorce. And so he shared with me. He said, you know, I've been through divorce.

How can I be captain of God's ship? And I said, well, I don't see anything in the New Testament that says you can't be captain of the ship. We're not asking you to be chief elder of the ship. You've got to be the captain.

You'll work under me. So he was an interesting guy. I just love that brother.

He's in heaven now. Chief engineer was a hard-hitting Scotsman, Plymouth Brethren. Plymouth Brethren are known for attacking Pentecostals all over the world.

And he was the chief engineer. Anybody who knows anything about ships, and Houston is a great shipping place, you know that chief engineers and captains as it is, they don't get on. But both of these men loved the Lord Jesus.

And I had the joy of living on the ship as a director and seeing these men grow in their faith, seeing them in the nights of prayer, seeing them in the word of God, seeing other professionals, seamen from different merchant navies of the world, including the United States, come into the ship ministry. And probably the most unusual man that ever came in our ship ministry was a man named Mike Poynter. Our engine room at that time was dominated by Brits.

That's British, short for British Brits. And they heard about this guy Mike Poynter. They heard he was big.

They heard he was a graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point. And they heard he was a Texan. And I tell you, they were gunning for him.

They were gunning for him. He came with a full chief engineer's credentials. But this particular Texan was smart, laid back, and he had the life.

Not just skills in the area of engineering, he was also a marine architect, but he had the skill of communication and Christian life. He lived the life. We all know the song.

You like that rap music? You know, walk and talk and talk and walk and walk and talk and talk and talk. Oh, I'm not into it. But Mike Poynter won the hearts.

He won the hearts of those engineers. This is 24 years ago. Mike Poynter has been with his wife, Carol, with the ship ministry ever since.

I don't know if you take notes in meetings, but if you want to write the name of Mike Poynter down, pray for him. We almost lost him years ago because he had difficulty finding support. People don't want to support technical staff.

They want to support church planters, if anybody. Here was a technical person, and he was battling discouragement because he didn't have church support. But we rallied together with him, and God has wonderfully blessed him and his family.

He has handled a high percentage of all of our conversion work, all of our marine engineering, marine architect. He's done it all. We've saved probably a million dollars for that one person.

God lent out into the ship ministry. He came after. We got to India with his first ship and took eventually the responsibility of the Scottish man who returned to Australia.

And I can't go on more and talk to you about the ship. But I just remember in those days trying to get the engine room repaired, trying to get the lightboats repaired. It was a new adventure.

Everything seemed to be against us. We ran out of money. We didn't have really enough people.

We kept praying. And I remember when we finally launched out of Rotterdam, I thought, Lord, we're headed for India, around Africa. It's a long journey with an old ship.

It goes about 10 mile an hour. That was great because I could preach at them all the way out. And we had some exciting times.

But often during those days, I would turn to the book of Nehemiah. And I want you to do that with me right now. We're just going to have to look at a few verses and share from those verses.

Nehemiah's prayer, picking up really at verse 3. They said unto me, Nehemiah learns of the distress of the remnant in Jerusalem. They said unto me, the remnant who are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach. Nehemiah saw the need.

People reported the need. Just as in this missions conference, we are attempting to report the need about the unreached, about the 1040 window, about the Muslim world. So Nehemiah got this report about the state of the Lord's people in the state of Jerusalem.

The wall of Jerusalem also is broken down and its gates are burned with fire. Tremendous mess. And the world we live in is a mess.

What was his response? Nehemiah's response was immediately to go to prayer. And it came to pass when I heard these words that I sat down and wept and mourned certain days and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. And I said, I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and awe-inspiring God who keepeth covenant and mercy for them who love him and observe his commandments.

Let thine ear now be attentive and thine eyes open that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel, thy servant, and confess the sins of the children of Israel. A little bit strange. What's he doing, confessing other people's sins? But you see, there was a love.

There was a bonding. And one of the most exciting things I've experienced in God's work is the bonding with the Lord's people wherever I go. In Brazil, I seem to be a Brazilian.

In Argentina, I seem to be an Argentinian. In Korea, I bond with Koreans. In India, I bond with Indians.

There's something miraculous about the work of the Holy Spirit in bonding us to other brothers and sisters in Christ. And when we see them fail, we feel with them. When we see them sin, we want to pray for them.

And if it's part of the body of Christ that's offended someone, we want to sort of confess with them. And confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against thee, because both I and my Father's house have sinned. I long for people to be more realistic about just confessing sin, just confessing sin.

I shared this morning how my marriage was really, it was, humanly speaking, a misplaced, what is the word, misfit, mismatched, that's the word I want. But because we learn how to confess our sin, because we learn the reality of that little book, Calvary Road, when we first got to Mexico after we were married, I didn't believe in honeymoons. We just went right into the action.

We sat down and read this book. And there's a chapter in this book called Revival in the Home. God had already brought this message to my heart.

And for 35 years, my wife and I have practiced this message and have hardly ever gone to sleep with anything against one another because it teaches brokenness. It teaches confession. I'm sure we're all aware of how we men can have such a powerful ego, especially when a woman is trying to tell us something.

The one cure for the male ego is the same cure for the female ego. It's the reality of Jesus. It's Jesus on the throne.

I knew this author very well. I'm now linked with his widow. We've set up a trust.

All the royalties of these books go into this trust. We give it away to put these books in other languages. And I watched this man's life and others that were linked with him because Roy Hesham was a very arrogant evangelist until he was touched by men that came out of the East African revival back in the 50s and 60s in Kenya, where thousands and thousands of believers repented and confessed sin, dealt with sin, and entered into a sweet walk with the Lord Jesus, often referred to as personal revival and the message of grace, confessing the sin.

We have dealt very corruptly against thee and have not kept the commandments nor the statutes nor the ordinances which thou commandest thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the people. What an amazing prophecy!

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20797.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-verwer/lukewarm-no-more-part-13/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net