

Lukewarm No More - Part 2

by George Verwer

George Verwer challenges the church to overcome lukewarmness and actively participate in sending missionaries to fulfill the Great Commission.

Duration: 9:54

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Acts 13:2-6

Topics: "Lukewarm"

Description

In the video, the speaker discusses a vision called Acts 13 Breakthrough 2000, which involves churches participating in missionary work. The speaker mentions that 25,000 churches in the United States are needed to support the goal of having 200,000 new missionaries. The speaker shares that during a meeting, 80% of the attendees made a missionary commitment. The speaker also talks about their personal struggles with unbelief and cynicism, but emphasizes the importance of proclaiming the word of God.

Transcript

Let's read the passage, Acts chapter 13. I'm sure you've read it many times. Now there were at Antioch in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene and Menaen, who had been brought up with Herod, the Tetrarch, and Saul.

And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "... set apart from me Barnabas and Saul, for the work to which I have called them." Then when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent, there's our theme, they sent them away. Verse 4, our theme again, so being sent by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. And when they had preached, or when they had reached Salamis, they began to proclaim the Word of God in the synagogue of the Jews, and they also had John as their helper.

Many, many times over these years I have preached from this passage. But on the airplane that day, in a state of struggle, in somewhat of a state of discouragement, to give the background, I was at the O.M. Love Latin American Congress in Cordova. The numbers were not as high as we were hoping.

I met with some key Argentinian Christian leaders. I speak Spanish by the way. And it's obvious that the great numbers of missionaries they're hoping for from Argentina, they are not coming, at least not yet.

There's a lot of talk, there's a lot of hype, there's a lot of exaggeration about what supposedly God has been doing in Argentina. And God has been doing wonderful things, but some of it gets a bit exaggerated. There are many struggles in the Argentinian church.

There has been major immorality. And the young people that have wanted to go so far, many of them have not been able to raise their support. We had Brazilians at that meeting.

I talked to the Brazilians. I minister in Brazil. And in Brazil as well, a much bigger country than Argentina, considered the great future missionary sending country of the world.

It's obvious that the big numbers some are dreaming about are not yet really in the pipeline. So humanly speaking on that flight, I was again struggling with this number 200,000, wondering if it was even from God. That number wasn't something I thought of.

Remember, I'm the one that brought it down from a million. But I had agreed. I had in a sense, reluctantly taken ownership of this vision.

I was asked to speak to 75,000 people at the Olympic Stadium in Korea. And here I am challenging all these Koreans to consider world missions. And 80% in that meeting stood to make a missionary commitment.

I'm back to Korea again this summer for follow-up meeting among many thousands of students. All kinds of things have happened in my life, especially in the last 24 months that are really quite scary. And as I wrestled with unbelief and wrestled with my doubts, I have a heavy negative streak.

I wrestle a lot with cynicism. I'm a borderline agnostic. I'm not a natural spiritual person.

I'm a natural backslider. And if God doesn't meet me every day, somehow I start to get a bad attitude, even concerning missions and Christian leaders and AD 2000 and OM and whatever else. I don't know if any of you have any of that kind of struggle in your life.

But you might as well understand. You don't have come some kind of spiritual Holy Ghost, laser beam, some kind of combination of converted Clint Eastwood, Madonna and Prince combined here to share with you about world missions. You've just got a needy character that God saved in a Billy Graham meeting.

I didn't even seem to have that much to do with it. You know my testimony, most of you. One little old lady heard about my trouble with the police and my trouble with my swearing and my pornography, put my name on her hit list, prayed for me not only I'd become a missionary, but that I'd be... No, not only that I'd become a Christian, but I'd become a missionary.

Amazing. She just prayed this. She didn't even discuss this with me.

You know, I like to decide what I'm going to do with my life. Send me a gospel, John, through the mail. That led me to the Billy Graham meeting, March 1955, where I was converted.

Somehow on that airplane, some ideas began to come into my mind. I began to just write things down. And I saw for the first time it could be done.

In fact, getting \$200,000, if we consider the whole picture, it's not that hard. It's not that many. If other churches your size around the world would do what you have done, it's finished.

We got \$200,000. But you see, we don't have that many churches, relatively speaking, like First Evangelical. That take mission seriously.

That raise hundreds of thousands. That send out workers. They have missionary working groups.

But if it can happen in one church, and we know across America it's happened to many, and it's happened to quite a few in Great Britain, we're still talking about a small percentage. Only a small percentage of the churches in the world today that love the Lord are sending churches, especially here in the southern part of the USA. But the potential is there.

And my heart was just filled with the potential of the number of churches in the world today. Somebody said it's several million churches in the world today. I don't have the exact statistics.

There seemed to be some contradiction. But to carry on this strategy, as God put on my heart, though it's subject to many adjustments, you know, God didn't give me the numbers in a revelation, we need just 100,000, just a little more than 100,000 churches. And 75% of those churches only need to give one missionary in the next four or five years.

Our goal, let me remind you, is 200,000 new missionaries launching out, hopefully many of them into the 1040 window, but we're not going to tell them where they have to go. It's way too complicated. 200,000 from the whole body of Christ, whether they're in any network or whether they're independent or whatever, with a special focus on having the gospel for every person and the church for every people in the world, which is the motto of the AD 2000 movement and many other movements.

We only need 100,000, a few more churches. I pointed out sort of recommendations of what size church should give or send forth a certain number of missionaries. I have overhead.

Maybe I'll show you those sometime. I should have brought them here tonight. I went back to the night of prayer of my international coordinating team in London, England, and I shared these things and that tape is the tape that's going all over the world.

I'd be happy to send you a copy. I've called this vision so far, we may change the latter part of the name, but up to now it's called Acts 13 Breakthrough 2000. We've got a number of other names because it's still in draft stage.

This is still being discussed, still being prayed through. Then I made a list. God, just as I was on the plane, began to put the countries on my heart.

I don't know whether I had my global jacket. This is a very handy jacket, by the way. I know some of you probably think it's a bit weird if you're sitting in the back.

This is a map of the world. This is not just any old color. I was on a flight, actually, from Brazil down to Argentina a couple of years ago.

Went up to the cockpit to talk to the pilot and they were having a discussion as to where they were. And the pilot, the co-pilot said they were flying over Ecuador, which is way up here. I think you can see it better with the globe.

Latin America flying here down to here, Ecuador's up here. They used my global jacket in the cockpit of a jumbo jet to see where they were going. They were flying right over Uruguay.

It's a story, true story I'll never forget. I've been flying with other airlines since that experience. But there I was again and I spend a lot of time on airplanes and hate it most of the time though.

I learned to make the best of it. That's the story of a lot of things in my life. That's another message.

But I just began to write down the key potential sending countries, Korea, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Germany, Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia. I've been in most of these places. And then I started to put numbers down.

And all the numbers that I expected each country to send, I put the number mainly of churches, sending churches. It was quite amazing. It's not that many.

In fact, in the United States, according to my vision, and I know big visionaries here in America will be insulted by it. We only need 25,000 churches to participate in this. Now, this is difficult for a church that is already sending a lot of missionaries and battling to support them.

Because that itself is a huge task. Because we want 200,000 new missionaries. But in those kind of churches, people are returning, new people are going out.

And so I'm sure churches like First Event will very much be involved in this program, which I believe is God's program, based on this simple concept of Acts 13. So when I came back, I put those numbers on an overhead projector. And now those numbers by World Wide Web email and other methods of communication are going all over the world.

I happen to have a video camera there as well, the night that I spoke.

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