

# Lukewarm No More - Part 3

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer emphasizes the urgent need for a global vision in missions and the potential of American Christians to lead this movement.*

**Duration:** 8:51

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:13

**Topics:** "Lukewarm"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a global vision in our thinking, praying, and giving. He acknowledges that the current trend in America is to focus on domestic issues and problems, but he believes that we should go against this tide and prioritize global missions. The speaker shares his personal vision of mobilizing 200,000 missionaries to spread the gospel worldwide. He addresses common questions and concerns about this vision and highlights the potential impact of the vast number of Christian workers already involved in missions.

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## Transcript

This is the first time in front of a large congregation that I have ever shared this vision publicly. And I feel it is more significant than any other vision God has ever given me in my whole life. Because all the other visions were mainly to involve the organization that God put me in, O.M. O.M. launched those ships, though other people got ship visions as well.

The vision to send people short term, which goes back to my living in Maryville, Tennessee, and realizing America at least had the opportunity to hear the gospel, but Mexico didn't. And I shared with my friend Dale Roton, let's go to Mexico this summer. That was also one of those small beginning visions, which in those days I used to have about every other month.

But God meeting me on that plane, God giving me these statistics, giving me a number of ideas. I have a memo, your questions answered, about Acts 13 breakthrough 2000, in which I've taken three pages to answer the toughest questions that people can fire at me about this wild idea of seeing 200,000 missionaries mobilized. I answer right off in the first question, what do we mean by a missionary? And I answer in that first question or the second question, why do we need 200,000? I pointed out, by the way, that in the United States, we have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of Christian workers.

Why do we need so many pastors and missionaries and Christian workers? I think the number has gone way over 1 million full-time workers in America. And we're all excited about 200,000 more for the rest of the world. Now, we are talking about 200,000 more.

There's between 150,000 and 200,000 out there. Some of those are in furloughs, some of those are coming back. We'll never be able to measure it right down to the last missionary, because we're talking about the whole globe.

We're talking about having a global vision. And one of our burdens for this weekend, even though you may not comprehend all of this, is that we become global in our thinking, global in our praying, that we go against the tide, and the present tide in America is against global thinking and global giving and global praying. The present tide is saying, America is such a mess, there's so many problems, there's so many drug addicts, AIDS is growing, crime is growing, prisons are bulging.

Ah! Many are lukewarm in our churches that our major thrust must be here. Let me shock you with something. There is no nation I have been in, and I've been out 40 years, where Christianity is more deeply rooted and stronger than in the United States.

So if you think the church and everything is a mess here, you know what I would suggest? That Christianity, in fact, then, is not true. And some people now in America believe that. I don't.

And I believe the mistake and the reason many are discouraged and confused and praying all kinds of weird prayers and other things is because we have unbiblical expectation as to what Christianity is supposed to do in a nation. And we have departed from the simplicity and the basic teaching of the New Testament, which says, narrow is the way and few there will be that find it, into some kind of concept where we're hoping somehow we will have a Christian nation, even though there are no verses in the New Testament about that. The fact is Christianity has often thrived more in a hostile environment, with hostile government and hostile leadership, than it has thrived when everybody was happy about it and government law was in line with what is taught in the New Testament.

Now, on the other hand, don't misunderstand me, because I'm mega big in salt and light teaching and I believe when there are committed radical Christians, there will be the salt and light and that will influence government, it will influence society and I am committed as an American to see that happen in every possible way. And when I speak at a place like Wheaton College, I don't challenge them all to go to the mission field, I challenge them to do God's will and to build a kingdom. And we need to build a kingdom in Chicago and Memphis, as well as in Mongolia or New Delhi.

And we need people in the marketplace, in the banking world, in the political world, in the arts world, in every other aspect of society. And we have more than enough believers now in America to do it all. Of course, people say, well, we need revival.

That's true. That's true in every other country in the world as well. Do you realize how small the church is in Europe, where I spend a lot of my time? And yet on a per capita basis, even in places like Germany and Great Britain and Sweden, the church is relatively strong and healthy.

And they are planning to send out thousands of missionaries. Now, that's not many for countries the size of Britain and Germany, but it shows that God is working there. And this may not seem to be the normal place to start in our mission thinking, but I think we need to be reminded that God has done great things in

our country.

And God is working in our country. And we are still one of the strongest, if not the strongest, potential missionary sending country in the world. I hope Korea passes us up.

I hope Brazil passes us up. But any thinking person knows they have a long, long way to go. And as I go around to all these colleges, next week or the week after I'm at Biola University, I've just Sunday night been at Royal Roberts University, 4,000 students.

I've just been at Priorcrest. I've just been at Bethel. I've just been at Wheaton.

I've just been last year at Taylor University. There are thousands of students with cutting-edge commitment who are thinking about missions or who, if they don't go, want to become senders. So I am excited about what God is doing in America.

Last week, 40,000 pastors gathered in Atlanta. Unheard of in the history almost of the world. 40,000 pastors with basic convictions from the Word of God.

They're not big into world missions yet, but they have that somewhere there in the promise. And promise keepers, I believe, are going to move in God's timing into world missions. And they, together with many others who are not necessarily connected with that, will provide one of the greatest potential missionary groundswells that the world has ever known.

And we can get those 25,000 sending churches, and we can get those 50,000 or 75,000. Depends on how many each church sends. I haven't worked out the numbers to that detail in this strategy.

It's doable. Do you know that term? That's a new American term. It's doable.

When I first heard that word in connection with missions, I didn't like it. Do you know Ralph Winter? Has he ever come to one of your missions conferences? Ralph Winter, surely, with all of his controversial thinking and ideas, is one of the most unique missionary leaders in the 20th century. I just thank God for this man, because Ralph Winter helped us look at the unreached people.

Ralph Winter is an optimist. Ralph Winter is still talking about giving the world, everybody, the gospel by the year 2000. Many have given up.

Many missiologists, and especially the theologians, are writing against this concept. And Ralph Winter is still saying it's doable. It's doable.

And he churns out the statistics, and he churns out the information, and when I read it, I just get so excited. I was sitting with him in the W.E.F., World Evangelical Fellowship meeting in Manila, and he was up in the balcony so that he could work on his word processor at the same time, listen to what's going on, and he was churning out some article to point out that we can do it.

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