

# Make Your Life Count 1

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer emphasizes the importance of prayer, intellectual honesty, and perseverance in spiritual warfare, and encourages listeners to build a firm foundation for their faith.*

**Duration:** 25:18

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 6:5, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Counting The Cost"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of building a strong foundation in the faith. He dismisses the idea that faith is merely a religious system or an emotional drive, but rather a conscious decision to follow Jesus. The speaker also warns against being deceived by false cults and extremist groups, urging listeners to put on the whole armor of God and use the word of God as a weapon against Satan's deception. He concludes by highlighting the need for Christians to go out into the world and evangelize, using the example of evangelizing an entire country as a challenge.

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## Transcript

One woman persevered for my high school 14 years, prevailing, prevailing, passionate prayer. Our whole work was born as a result of that woman. There's two and a half thousand of us this summer, reaching into about a hundred nations.

Not all of them this summer. One woman prayed. Spiritual warfare.

We want to be in much prayer during these days. Wherefore, take unto you, verse 13, the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Above all, taking the shield of faith, with which ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The importance of the Word of God. I wonder how many here, let's be honest, one of my themes these days is going to be honesty, and I'm going to share some of my own struggles, some of my own failures.

You know, sometimes we meet a Christian leader, especially if we hear he's supposed to be a missionary, or missionary leader, whatever you call it, however you pronounce it. Canada always seems to be

somewhere between England and the States. And sometimes we meet Christian leaders, we hear about them, and we think, boy, they got it all together.

Boy, evangelizing the world, thousands of people coming to Christ. I tell you, you're looking at a very weak, feeble instrument, who even comes here in fear and trembling, and in a great sense of inadequacy. Later I'm going to share some of that struggle.

You know, it's always wonderful to testify, oh, when I was a young Christian, I had tremendous problems, I had the lust problem, I had the fear problem, and I had this hang-up and that hang-up, when I was a young Christian. But 23 years later, to testify about your lust problem, ooh, wait a minute, how did he get into the speaker's book? And I believe that one of the great ways that God works among His people is to get them to take off the mask, is to get them to be real. I can't say that I'm as real as I want to be.

That is one of my greatest goals. Satan is very subtle. Out of 10 or 11,000 people I've written to, as a result of my book, so many have said the same thing.

I go to church, I go to Jesus festivals, I read my Bible sometimes, but it's not real. Prayer is not real, witnessing is not real. And I believe, in many ways, the theme that God wants to burn into our hearts these days is reality.

Reality. Whatever it costs, reality. Real with one another, real with God, real with our parents, real with the ones we love, real with the ones we don't love.

Oh, may God burn it into our hearts. If you'll be honest, I'd like to ask you, how many have never yet read the Word of God through once? You've not yet finished. I know you've started.

You haven't read the Bible through once. Raise your hand. About half.

I want to just give this challenge to you, that the Lord, I believe, has asked me to give you. It could be the only thing maybe you'll get from me. Would you promise Jesus to read your Bible through once this year? You come at Jesus 79, if he tarries, you'll have read God's Word.

I think God is concerned about this. Some places, people are always going on, this is the Word of God, and I believe it's worth going on about that. One of the greatest attacks of the enemy in America today is to reduce confidence in the Word of God.

Where will we be? Where is David Moses III, after he reduced confidence in the Word of God and produced 100 mole letters? And the young people involved with this false cult, the cogs, so-called children of God, have moved further and further from the truth, so that now the Moses letters are teaching the girls to go out in the streets and give their body and sex to the men to win them to the truth. That is happening all over Europe, all over Europe. I am not exaggerating.

God hates exaggeration. I've been in first-hand contact for a long time with that one false cult. You remember last year, I was asked to speak here in this tent, in the side tent, on the cults.

Many people expressed to me that this was a message that helped them so much. I didn't give great lucid descriptions about all the false cults, but I spoke on how to mark a false cult, how to know a false cult, and how to know an extremist situation so that you can avoid it. That tape has been reproduced and has gone all over the world because many, even Christians, are being deceived into these extremist groups and into

false cults.

They don't understand. And the Bible says that Satan comes often as an angel of light. He comes with a religious garb.

Many are deceived. So we have to put on the whole armor of God. We have to use the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

Verse 18. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. The emphasis of prayer.

It was when I was 17. I was converted through the prayers of this elderly lady, the reading of the Gospel of John. I was wondering, what is the true nature of spiritual life? What should I emphasize as I went off to college? In the quiet of my room, through the Scriptures, through other literature, at 17, I said, I want to learn how to pray.

I want to learn how to pray. I want to learn how to worship. I want to get a degree in prayer.

Ever found a seminary that gives a degree in prayer, in intercession, in worship? Imagine somebody get a PhD in worship, praise, prayer, intercession, thanksgiving, and yet they are the basics of spiritual life. This is a challenge that I believe God wants to lay upon us in these days. We're going to be speaking a little bit about the crisis and the process.

In many ways, these days together here will be a crisis. Hours praising God, hours fellowshiping with God's people, meeting all kinds of Christians from all over the world. And we'll go away from here, many of us, just on a new level of joy and praise and reality.

But then we go back into the deserts, back into the front lines of spiritual warfare. I go to Spain where we got thousands of towns and villages with not a single Christian witness. We've got provinces without a single church.

Imagine if I assign you, just you, to evangelize all of Canada. Twenty-some million people. I meet you after the meeting.

I say, look, I've just done a survey. There's no other Christians in Canada. Just you.

Just you. I want you to evangelize Canada because I got to go somewhere else. We distributed a little set of prayer cards.

I happen to have them in my pocket. I carry them wherever I go. Fifty-two of the most needy nations in the world.

Some of these countries do not have a single believer that's alive. Mauritania is one of them. Imagine, send you to Mauritania, you're the only believer, evangelize Mauritania.

There are other nations where there are ten believers. Afghanistan, we've been laboring there for fifteen years in that most impossible land. There are now maybe fifty believers in Afghanistan among eighteen million.

Turkey has maybe fifty believers. There are more believers in this tent than the entire land of Turkey among thirty-eight million people. You know, there are some people that do not want this message at this kind of gathering.

You know why? They say it makes people upset. People want a blessing and we don't want to bring anything in that's unpleasant. We don't want to tell the people of God that others are lost and that we need to be doing something about it.

And presently, the North American manpower force is ninety-nine point nine point point point, if you have a computer, is committed to North America and less than one-tenth of one percent is committed to the rest of the world. And then people wonder why my wife and I haven't taken our first furlough after eighteen years on the field. Ninety-nine point nine percent of God's people remain here and continue to go for the blessings summer after summer and year after year.

Don't misunderstand me. I believe in blessing and if God didn't pour a blessing into me, every day I'd blow away with the first wind from the smallest demon the devil's got. But blessing and praise and worship will lead to commitment.

It will lead to dedication. The Holy Ghost brings a holy goal and if you're not going somewhere for God, you know nothing of the Holy Spirit in your life. You've been deceived into an ego trip that's greater even than the children of God because it's more subtle.

We're so boastful in the United States especially. Canadians are a little more sane. But those of us down in America, we're so boastful.

We've got the biggest churches in all the world. We've got the biggest Sunday schools in all the world. We've got more Sunday school buses than anybody in all the world.

And we go around patting ourselves on the back until we break a bone. I want to tell you, I'm ashamed. I'm ashamed of the church in North America.

There are many, many people who shuttle into the sanctuary on Sunday morning that have never once denied self, taken up a cross to follow Christ in true spiritual life. What is Ephesians 5 about? What is 2 Corinthians 6 about? What is 1 Corinthians 4 about? What is Hebrews 11 about? As I read through my New Testament and I've been through it a few dozen times, the hard part is that it's been through me like a knife cutting into areas of the self life, exposing me for the selfish person I sometimes am. And when that New Testament goes through you, you've got to come out realizing that we have nothing to boast about.

Yes, God is working. Praise His name. The Holy Spirit is moving.

Praise His name. Some of the things I say, if you don't listen carefully, I may sound a bit pessimistic. Actually, I am an absolute neurotic optimist.

Otherwise, I would have been wiped out. If you live in India for six years as I have, without being an optimist, you're through. As you watch millions and millions of Hindus and Muslims, as you stand in the streets year after year to reach men for Christ, you've got to know what it is, as it says in Philippians chapter 4, to think on that which is pure and that which is lovely and that which is of good report.

And as we keep our eyes on the Lord, that we can battle through the impossibilities of the Muslim world. We can pray through a set of cards like this, in which we discover one out of every seven people in the world is a Muslim. Now, maybe there are some here that have never had any great intellectual difficulties.

As a foundation for our thinking in these days, I wanted to share with you briefly some of the intellectual reasons why I have walked with Jesus 23 years, despite many temptations and many doubts. You know, a lot of people are afraid of doubts. Have you ever gone to somebody with a question, you know, about the Old Testament or about this or that, and they said, Oh, no, no, it's the Word of God, brother.

We shouldn't be asking these questions. Just trust the Lord. And we wonder why quite a few thinking people end up throwing the whole thing overboard.

I have a fear that there may be some of us here today that our Christian faith is just a late adolescence ego trip. It's something nice to do now, but God's not just concerned about now, next year, five years from now, ten years from now, that we may be going on from victory to victory, resisting temptation, worshiping the Lord the rest of our life. That's our burden.

I'm sure that's your burden. 1 Corinthians 15, 58. Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

And one of the most important things we want to emphasize in these days is perseverance, going on for God through trials, through difficulties, through all kinds of things that sometimes come. And I believe our faith must be built on a firm intellectual foundation. I began to doubt the faith, especially when I met a lot of Christians.

I was converted from a non-Christian background. We'll tell about that tonight. I didn't know many Christians.

The few I met my first year at a secular college, they were on fire for Christ. Their lives rang with reality, prayer, love. That's how they'll know that we're Christians.

Not because we carry huge Bibles or not because we got a Jesus saves pinned on our forehead or hanging on our toes. Because we love one another even though we're all different. We love one another.

We even love those that switch us off. I'm sure even as I speak, I must switch some people off. I've learned to accept myself.

I've learned to know that when I speak, some get switched on, some get switched off. Because we're all different. One of my greatest problems as a Christian was I switched myself off.

One look in the mirror and I thought, oh dear. And I had this tremendous hassle accepting myself. And I'm going to speak tomorrow, Lord willing, on accepting yourself.

That is a very, very ABC foundation truth to know God and to persevere. Accept yourself. You say, what's the biblical basis for that? We're going to look at that.

Because it's there. And it's very clear. So I had many doubts when I started to meet God's people.

Especially I went to Bible school. I'm not against Bible schools. I believe God uses Bible schools.

But when I went to Bible school and found there were so many people who said so much and did so little, I thought, this can't be true. When I was at this liberal college, it was very consistent. They believed nothing.

They did nothing. Beautiful consistency. I had no intellectual troubles with that.

They denied the virgin birth. They denied the Bible. They believed nothing and they did nothing.

Then I went to a nice good Bible college. And there they believed everything and did nothing. And I found somewhat of an inconsistency with my friends.

And I thought, how can Christianity be true? Where are Book of Acts Christians? There are now 200 books about the Apostle Paul. There are hundreds of men across America expounding the life of the Apostle Paul, writing more books about the Apostle Paul. And as a young Christian, admittedly I was a little bit of a rebel and God had to do a lot in my life because my tongue went faster than my brain and all the rest.

And I had a question as a young Christian after going through these books and sitting to lectures on the Apostle Paul and the epistles of Paul, I had one little question. Where are the pearls? Where are the men who live with this kind of passion and reality and fervency and balance because we see Paul, not only a dynamic person, over the wall and basket, in jail in the middle of the night, praising and worshipping Jesus. You know, it's one thing to be here, beautiful atmosphere.

I spent most of my life living in crummy, smelly, stinking cities. Bangkok, Bombay, Brussels, London, about 20 others. I hate cities.

Whenever I pray, I look for the nearest woods, climb the nearest tree. I love to get out where things are green. And there were not too many people.

I get overexposed to God's people and I begin to shrivel. I don't know if any of you have that unspiritual problem. But all the blessing to be out in the woods and to praise God.

Yet, we have to get back into the palace, back into the city, back to do the will of God. And I praise today to know the kind of balance that the Apostle Paul knew. Over the wall and the basket, midnight, in prison.

Yes, praising the Lord here. That's wonderful. And what would you do if you ended up in one of our teams in Turkey next summer and you were in prison for the whole summer.

Summer in prison with a rat nibbling at your feet. That often happens in prison. Oh, beloved.

The Apostle Paul has found and so I had a lot of intellectual questions. I wondered, is it really true? And I thank God for that. I thank God for this little book, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, that answers dozens and dozens of questions.

And there's another one called More Evidence that Demands a Verdict. I praise God for books that give us tremendous truths about prophecy. That's one of the reasons we know the Bible is the Word of God.

Prophecy. I praise God for the books about the Resurrection. That's another reason we know the Bible is the Word of God.

The Resurrection. A man like Morrison went to write a book against the Resurrection, ended up getting converted and he wrote Who Rolled the Stone to prove the Resurrection. Another man named Lou Wallace.

He went to write a book to prove this Jesus thing was a myth. He just goes, so look Wallace, we've got to expose this Jesus myth. So he went to write a book against Jesus.

You know how Lou Wallace came to, famous General Lou Wallace. He knelt by the side of his bed after his research for Jesus Christ as his Savior. And he wrote Ben Harry's testimony that he believed in the Eucharisticity of the New Testament.

The Resurrection proved that the Bible is the Word of God. The moral teachings of Jesus prove that the Bible is the Word of God. The unity of the Bible written by so many different men over hundreds and hundreds of years and yet one beautiful picture of the bride of salvation of God is the proof that the Bible is the Word of God.

Every Christian that has ever had his life transformed by the power of the Holy Ghost is a proof, proof that the Bible is the Word of God. Every answer to prayer, think of George Mueller. His book is over there as well.

It's an incredible biography. It's unbelievable. The end of his life, 30,000 answers to prayer.

Still going strong at 80 years of age. 30,000 specific statements, answers to prayer. He never took an offering but he's praying in what would be equivalent today to 15 million dollars.

Not bad. That's not bad at all. How are you doing? Keeping any records? Answers to prayer? No book? Men like George Mueller, Huck and Taylor, T.C. Stubbs, hundreds of other men who I've had the privilege of studying, reading their books are a proof that God is real.

The Bible is the Word. It is Word, prayer, Israel, God answers prayer. Sure there are problems.

I remember I had a seasick one day going through the Red Sea listening to Dr. Schaefer's tape on the five problems of a man who doesn't believe the Bible. You see there are problems for the man who believes the Bible, most of us. There are some problems, let's be honest.

Some expect a finite mind, understand the infinite mind of God is what we need. But God is real. And I was listening to this tape by Dr. Schaefer, only got a few minutes more, a little bit of a late start, and I was so challenged by that.

I remember telling him about this unbeliever in Scotland who wrote a book against the Book of Romans. And Time Magazine reported this. And you know, unbelievers, it was a Bible they thought.

Time Magazine said a book had been written showing that the Book of Romans was not written by Paul. And how can we believe the Bible is the Word of God? This may not be a problem for you now, but many of you in the future will face struggles along this line. That's why it's good to lay a foundation now, intellectually, as well as emotionally, and in every other way, because God demands a total man.

The Bible says love God with all your heart. Hallelujah. Soul, the will, the mind.

The mind. God wants our mind. That's why men like Dr. Schaefer have been used to bring thousands to Jesus, even though he's an infallible.

And he told about this man who wrote the Book of Romans. He did it through a computer. He wrote a book against the Book of Romans.

He did it through a computer and showed it to Romans for 15 offers. He could do anything. And so in any event, New York, I believe it was New York, took this man's book against the Book of Romans and used the same computer program method, which was a problem, it was a false method, and he showed that this man's book was not written by this fellow at all, it was written by several people.

And I believe, I believe there are hundreds of thousands of agnostics and unbelievers in our nation, in our universe, who would come to faith if they were presented the basic facts about the Resurrection, the Book of Acts, without infallible proof, infallible proof. Men and women, brothers and sisters, we are building on a firm foundation. This is not a religious shift.

This is not an emotional joyride. No hallelujah, there's emotion. So many people are afraid of a little emotion.

Joseph said, this is like sending a squadron out to the cemetery to guard against a midnight demonstration by the residents. I don't think that's really our great problem in most cases. When I fell in love, there was emotion.

When you fall in love with Jesus, I know most of you are, there will be emotion. And now, after 18 years of marriage, my three-something teenagers have discovered that emotion didn't provide me with all the answers. It takes a mind.

It takes a will. It's the crisis, the wedding, how do I leave myself on the other side of that white dress at the beginning of the week and start pinching myself to keep from crying at my own wedding? But you know, I don't have to pinch myself anymore. Marriage is a reality.

I believe that Christian life is the parent's life, the intellectual, the emotional, the discipline, the blessing, the joy, the struggle, the suffering, the victory. And God, I believe in these things, wants to put some of this paradox, apparent contradiction, text into their minds. God wants to put it together.

God, when we go from here, it will be a success. It will be following in the steps of men like Paul who had the bachelor's degree and the prisoner's degree but who also was as a nursing mother of many families and was 10, 13, 13 years. Perfect father.

Two sisters going on for God and at the other side in this nation. Let us pray. Our God and Father, we thank you for your word.

We thank you for the balance of your word. We thank you for the way you can put these things together. We thank you for the many intellectual reasons why we know your word is true.

Why we know that Jesus Christ died and rose again. And that if there's someone here even this morning that has never surrendered to your will, that has never really been born again of your spirit, may they come to you in humility and repentance this morning. We thank you, our God, for the reality of walking with you, for the power of your Holy Spirit.

We thank you for all the different beautiful people you have brought here from all over the world. And as we learn to relate with each other and love one another and share one another and lay down our lives for one another, may we in turn go away from here for six of years and every month and every year a lifetime, a lifetime for our blessed Lord Jesus Christ in whose name we pray. Amen.

God bless you.

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