

Make Your Life Count 2

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual balance, faith, and the shield of faith in overcoming discouragement, worry, and other fiery darts of the wicked.

Duration: 51:47

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 10:17, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Ephesians 6:16, Hebrews 4:2, James 1:6

Topics: "Counting The Cost"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of understanding how God works through people, rather than relying solely on one individual's ideas. He emphasizes the need for a fellowship of people who love and support one another. The speaker also addresses the challenges and discouragements that can arise when doing God's work, particularly in evangelizing the Muslim world. He encourages listeners to lay down their lives for others and open their homes as a powerful evangelistic center. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the rest of faith and the promise of a radical, loving, and compassionate lifestyle.

Transcript

Let's pray together. Father, just minister in the different tents. Minister to those who don't feel they should be in other meetings that are doing other things.

We thank you for this time together. Some may be tired from journeys. Lord, quicken our mind.

Show us what the true nature of the spiritual warfare is. What it is to really fit in to your will. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Now there's a little confusion as to whether I'm to repeat what I said this morning or to move on. It would help me to know how many of you were here this morning or do we have all new people. So I think it's obvious that I should move on.

And I want to get into some of the real basics about spiritual balance. As we see God's commands and as we understand God's Word, we see that the Christian who perseveres 10, 20, 30, 40, or how many years, is the Christian who has learned spiritual balance. He is a committed man.

He is a Spirit-filled man. He loves Christ. He's not afraid to speak.

In some ways he may seem to be extreme, but in fact he is a balanced man. He's a man that can take things that seem to be extreme, like liberty and discipline, freedom and authority, evangelism in the regions beyond and the local church, and he can put them together. And he doesn't come out torn apart or jumping from one group to the next or from one theological extreme to the next, but he goes on from victory to victory.

Now I've noticed how some, for example, go from an extreme Arminian position, and I'm very happy with people who are Arminian or moderately Calvinistic in their theology. I'm sure you realize we have both kinds here. We have both kinds in our work, and we've been working together 20 years.

People with a moderate view and love can work together even though they may not agree on certain issues. But I've noticed how some people go from an extreme Arminian position with perhaps an over-emphasis on emotion and free will, flip out and go into an extreme Calvinistic position, which is very much on the increase right now in North America. You know, rarely now on the other end, in which of course they cut off fellowship with almost everybody, apart from Calvin, he's dead, and they really do get caught up in extremes, saying of course if God is going to save the heathen, he will save the heathen in his good time.

And I've noticed the way people so quickly go from one extreme to the other, and I have this great burden to see God's people understanding one another better. And we need to be careful even here in these three days of immediately categorizing people. We as Christians tend to categorize people.

Oh, he's this type, and she's this type. Instead of getting to know people, a majority of Christians seem to get to know very few people in an in-depth way. It takes time.

It takes fellowship. Let's look now at the Word of God again. We were in Ephesians chapter 6 this morning, and I want us to go back there again.

Some of you are new to this session, and this morning we saw the reality of the spiritual warfare. We saw how clever Satan can be. We were exhorted and saw from the Word of God that we must not be ignorant of Satan's devices, his ability to get people into extremes like the children of God, his ability to polarize and therefore paralyze Christians, and we realized afresh God's grace.

You know, one of my favorite quotations from A. W. Tozer, my favorite author, is that God knows all about us, and he loves us still. That's what keeps me going. Ultimately, it's not rules and regulations, challenges, or any of that keeps us going.

It's the grace of God, the mercy of God, and this is what we want to even draw on as we hear the Word of God this afternoon. I'm not going to read the whole passage again in Ephesians 6, but I want us to look at verse 16 because we've got to talk about faith. You cannot live for Jesus without faith.

Faith turns on what we're talking about. It says in Hebrews, the word preached was of no value because it was not mixed with faith, and the challenge as you hear the Word of God in these days is to mix it with faith. It's to say, Lord, I believe.

Maybe someone is speaking about bitterness, and God begins to convict you about bitterness toward a loved one, toward a friend, toward an enemy, toward a pastor who manipulated you, something else. And as you hear the message of bitterness, it's of no value unless you mix it with faith. So we're going to talk about faith.

We're going to look at two men, one Caleb and the other Joshua, and we're going to see what faith can do. Verse 16, above all, taking the shield of faith with which ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. Boy, that's one of the greatest promises in the Word of God.

You probably have heard the story of the man who went to the store. He was a millionaire. He had three checkbooks in his pocket.

He owned two banks. He was making several million a day. He went into a Woolworth's, and he saw a water pistol he wanted to buy for his son.

It was 59 cents. He reached into his pocket. He only had 50 cents.

He became very, very upset that he didn't have the money. He had 14 credit cards. He walked out of the shop very sad because he didn't have the money to buy the water pistol.

It may sound like a stupid story. It is. This is the way a lot of Christians are.

They've got God's checkbook. They've got hundreds of promises, and yet again and again they come up against things in life, and they say, well, we can't do this. We can't do that.

I can't become a missionary. I can't go here or do this, and they fail to learn how to draw upon the promises of God, upon the promises of God. The Lord told us about 12 years ago in our work that we were to buy an ocean-going ship, not a little boat, but two and a half thousand ton liner that would have room for 100 or 200 people.

We didn't have anybody in our work who knew anything about ships. We didn't have any engineers. We didn't have any deck men.

All we had was God's Word and a vision and a burden. Now our work had already existed for 10 years before that ship burden came, and without those men, hundreds of men that God had trained and disciplined around the world who were faithfully locked together, one heart of one mind, of course there wouldn't have been any ship. Often the Church looks for better machinery, but God looks for better men, men of prayer, men who know Him.

We wonder why some of the great projects launched in North America over the past 10 years haven't exactly had the success that the people thought they originally would have. And I believe one of the reasons is a lack of understanding of how God works. He works through people, not just one man who has an idea, but through a fellowship of people who love one another and who are willing to give themselves to one another.

Faith is the victory that overcomes the world, it says in 1 John. When we leave this great time together, there will be fiery darts. What are some of the fiery darts you can expect that are going to come against your shield? The fiery dart of discouragement is going to come.

I don't believe you can be in the work of God without getting attacked by discouragement. We have been committed to evangelizing the Muslim world for the last almost 20 years. We have had discouragement upon discouragement.

Sure, some have been converted, some churches have been planted, but in the light of the original burden and vision, in the light of our prayers, we meet for prayer and our half nights of prayer every week. Some

of us have been doing that for 20 years, even though sometimes the last thing we want to do is pray. You can pick up a free pamphlet, which is a copy of an article I wrote for a Christian magazine, called, What Happened to the Prayer Meeting? I hope you'll get that.

It's free. Because I am convinced that Satan has a subtle plan to undermine the Church of Jesus Christ in North America, and that plan includes deceiving people concerning the importance of the prayer meeting, and the very fact that many of our churches no longer have a real prayer meeting. I'm not talking about a Bible study with five minutes of prayer.

That is not a prayer meeting. I'm not talking about a prayer breakfast, which everyone eats for an hour and prays for three minutes. That is not a prayer breakfast.

That is a food breakfast. I'm talking about a time when people pray. It may only be a half an hour, but they pray.

And the Spirit of God moves through people, and they pray. And you'll find this on almost every other chapter in the book of Acts. The trouble is, we don't know the book of Acts.

If I had about 10 hours, we'd go through the book of Acts. No, you need 100. People are ignorant of this book, even people who claim to be book of Acts Christians, and New Testament Christians, and whatever other high-sounding phrase they may have.

I've been in churches, and I've said, we're going to talk about the book of Acts. Please turn to Acts chapter 29. And 80% of the congregation, including the pastor, they're flicking through for Acts 29.

They want to get in on the study. There is no Acts 29. It ended in chapter 28.

Of course, you all knew that. You are Acts 29. We, well, probably Acts 5,682.

But the Holy Spirit has been moving every year, every decade since the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the church. And we all know Pentecost, and the reality of Pentecost. But it's interesting that some of the same people who were at Pentecost were there in that prayer meeting in Acts 4.31. Do you know that prayer meeting? Have you been in any prayer meetings like that? When they prayed, the place where they were gathered together shook.

And they were filled with the Holy Spirit, went forth, and spoke the Word of God with fullness. And you know what happened? People started to sell their possessions. Wow, that must have been an embarrassment.

People started to love one another. They were of one heart. They went out, and they preached the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

That's the kind of prayer meetings we need today. A.W. Tozer said, we are professionals at the game of words. We get all the words, beloved.

We get all the hymns. Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war. Is that a picture of your life? May God grip us with the reality of the life of faith.

If you want to see God make something of your life, if you want to be something more than another evangelical statistic, if you want to be something more than another evangelical fish floating downstream

with the tide of pleasant, easy believism, then you will learn to hold high the shield of faith. And you will learn how to stand against the fiery darts, whether they're discouragement, or depression, or lust, or bitterness, or cynicism. You know, as you go on in the Christian world, and you get to know a little that's happening, there's a danger that you can become cynical.

And Tozer says, the cynic is often right, and yet frightfully wrong. And he recommends as a cure for cynicism, thanksgiving and praise. And when things seem to be a little black after you've looked at the morning newspaper, or after you've heard about another church splitting in two, or after you've heard about another Christian leader who's gone off in adultery, and things look a bit black, that's the time to get on your face and just start thanking God.

Because most people are not going that way. And because Jesus Christ is working in a mighty way in the world today. Well, let's look at Caleb and Joshua.

Let's go back into the Old Testament. I hope you have your Bible with you. I know some of you are tired from the journey, and Bibles are heavy, but it's good if you can bring them.

Let's look at Numbers, chapter 13. How many have your Bible? Let's hold up the Word of God, even a New Testament. Hey, praise the Lord.

Get that from out under the blanket. That's encouraging. That's great.

I want to again mention, because some of you are, many of you are new, I want to again mention, my burden is to have some personal interaction with some of you. Can only do that with a limited number here, people running from tent to tent. But I hope you will engage in Operation Feedback.

How do you do that? You take a piece of paper, you write my name on it, George Verwer, don't worry about the spelling, and anything you want to ask, anything you want to say, exhortation, question, put it there. Sometimes I get carried away and I offer a free book, catch a chance, bang. I was very busy for a long time after the Jesus 77, sending out different materials, because I got some carried away, people started praying, and I get more carried away.

But we really want to be able to correspond with some of you in the coming year. So keep that in mind. I ask you to keep that feedback until tomorrow, give it at the book table or to me.

You know, George Whitfield used to preach to 20,000 people in the open air. And when he was preaching, he would ask people to send feedback up as he was preaching. They'd hand notes up to him, I'd just been saved, praise God, he'd probably preach with greater fervency.

I'd ask people always to keep their notes to the end, because I had a note once when I was preaching and said, your time's up, would you please sit down. Numbers, chapter 13, the spies came out of the promised land. Most of them came out with a shaky knee disease.

This is a common disease among Christians, the shaky knee disease. They're all right in the meeting, they're all right at church, they're all right when they invite in the latest Christian group, they're all right when there's a Christian film going on, they're all right when there's a Christian puppet show going on, they're all right when somebody's doing a gospel handstand. But you say to them, we're going to go door to door for Jesus on Monday, and they get Operation Shaky Knee.

Say we're going to go out witnessing the streets, and they get a case of the excuse, or the argues disease, or some other major evangelical blight. That's what happened to most of the spies. Verse 28, nevertheless, the people are strong.

They got their eyes on the enemy. You ever do that in your life? Dwell in the land, cities are walled, very great, wow. Moreover, we saw the children of Anak there, the Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negev, the Hittites and the Jebusites, the Amorites dwell in the mountains.

The Canaanites dwell by the sea and by the edge of Jordan. I believe, so often in history, the majority of God's people proved to be wrong. Now you got to be careful of that, because you can get into a dangerous extreme, just reacting from other people.

And that's not the way of love. But in this case, the majority of people were wrong. There are only two men, there are only two men that were right in this situation.

One was Caleb, they were the only two to ever get in the Promised Land. If you know your Bible, you know that these people perished in the wilderness. They never got in the Promised Land.

Caleb, despite all the enemies and all the problems, he stilled the people, verse 30, before Moses, and he said, let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it. This is victory. This is God's way.

The greatest giants in the land today are not the communist giants behind the Iron Curtain, not the Muslim world giants in the Muslim world that's much upon the heart of some of us. The biggest giant is not the giant of liberalism or the giant of the false cults. These are giants in a way, they're world cities, they're problems, we have to cope with them, but the greater giants are within.

And I want to ask you about the big giants that I have seen destroying Christians in the past years. How are you handling the giant of worry? So many of God's people are trapped by worry. They're not sleeping well.

They're not handling this strong emotion of worry. They're worried about their job. They're worried about the future.

They're worried about their children. Now we have to have legitimate concern for these things. You say, what's the difference between legitimate concern and worry? Legitimate concern is controlled by the Spirit.

You may have to think about your children and make plans and do some sensible, sane family planning in the broad sense. You may have to do some in the narrow sense too. It's amazing how many children you can get when you just go at it.

A friend of mine was with me two weeks ago. He was going strong last time I saw him. Fifteen children.

So you know, you may want to consider that one. Anyway, that's not my subject this afternoon. But when we're planning, when we're thinking, when we're involved in legitimate concern, we control the situation.

In worry, your emotion is run wild. And worry creates many different forms of tension and there are probably fifty different diseases you can bring on your body through worry. So if you're engaging in worry and operation worry, what you are doing is saying, God, which one of those wonderful fifty diseases are you going to give to me? My wife, as a result of a difficult family background, tension, worry, lack of love as

a child, when I met her, had four psychosomatic illnesses.

That's not something in the head. That's real. And they didn't disappear right away when she was converted.

Even when she had a deeper experience with Christ, somehow these things hung on her and she was taking various medicines. It was through that amazing book, *Release from Tension*. There's a few of them on the table.

There's a similar book called *None of These Diseases* by Dr. McMillan about psychosomatic illnesses and how worry and fear and tension can tear our lives apart. This isn't just here in the home country. We're having a high percentage of nervous breakdowns on the mission field.

Because people out on the field, when they were back here, never learned to handle worry, fear, tension, bitterness, anxiety, stress. We live in the age of stress. Through many months of soul-searching, through that book, my wife, in the quiet of her own room, fell asleep with a deeper knowledge of the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ.

A psychosomatic illness is not one that's just in the head. It's an emotionally induced illness. In other words, though it may be a real physical thing now, its roots go back somewhere into worry or tension or lack of love.

Now, I am not saying that God works in everybody the way He worked in my wife. She fell asleep that night and woke up the next morning completely cured of these four illnesses. That doesn't mean life has been a game since then.

That doesn't mean there still aren't struggles. In fact, some months ago, about eight months ago, my wife went into a depression that she had never had in 18 years, for months. And we didn't know what was happening.

God's people started to pray for us. You know, God's people are so wonderful. And I'm so thankful for people that have stood with me in prayer over the years.

And we saw God bring her out of that some months ago. And I think in some ways she's still suffering from the after-effects. This morning, I mentioned that book.

I love it so much. Eugenia Price's *No Answer*. There's another tremendous book on this subject just written by a man named Bill Heimer, the same man who wrote *Destined for the Throne*, a book called *Don't Waste Your Sorrow* on the subject of suffering and healing.

And so we saw God just come into my wife's life and take her out of those four illnesses and prepare her for 18 years of service overseas. Faith is the answer to the big giant of worry. And I want to tell you, there's about ten books on that subject that I didn't have in my day on the subject of worry.

I have had tremendous struggles with this. If I'm honest, I've been worrying today. I've been thinking about that 7,000 ton ship with its 1914 rudder, one of the few steam rudders left anywhere on a ship anywhere in the world.

We hope to convert it soon, but we haven't been able to yet. Sailing through the Bay of Biscay. Last time our first ship went through the Bay of Biscay, it was one of the roughest storms in the history of the Bay.

They spent three days in an emergency situation. Not a joke to operate a ship with 225 precious lives. And the tendency for me is to start to worry.

Now tell me, how am I going to help the ship in the middle of the Bay of Biscay, here in the middle of Canada, worrying? If you know how I can help the ship through worry, you give me a note on that, because then I'll worry even more. And the last time the ship was in the Bay of Biscay, despite all of my messages on fear, all of my messages on worry, somehow the evil one got in and I was in a state of shock almost to three hours when I thought maybe the ship was really going to die. I was really in trouble.

And I grabbed on to the word and I talked to my wife and I wept, and yet I didn't come totally out of it. It took several hours. I know a little bit about this giant.

He's tried to leave me laying on the side of the road many times. Of course, the trouble with these giants, they work together. Fear works together with worry.

One of the things I liked about Joyce Landorf, when she spoke here last year, was her honesty. I get tired of people just giving false impressions about the victorious life. And you hear this tremendous message about the victorious life.

You find out two years later the guy's wiped out. Boy, that sure was a nice theory. The victorious life, which I also believe in, and sanctification which I also believe in, and holiness which I am called on to, includes knowing what to do when you sin.

And many Christians have never learned that ABC. Know what to do when you sin. Sin isn't just outward things.

It's not just beating up your grandmother, robbing banks. It's not just intensive gossip. We can sin with our disposition.

Some Christians, Sunday morning they get a beautiful, even-jelly smile, but they get a disposition like a rattlesnake. Just poke them in the wrong place and you'll find out how lovely they are. Talk about all God's peculiar people.

God is concerned about our disposition. God is concerned about our attitude. Our attitude toward other people.

Our attitude toward the fellow who belongs to the church down the road. That we don't really fellowship with them. They're not as spiritual as we are.

One of the greatest plagues in the present-day Christian scene in America is super-spirituality. And if God reveals a beautiful truth to you, and if you have a powerful feeling or an experience with the Holy Spirit, that should cause you to be more humble, more broken, more concerned to find out the truth about somebody or their fellowship before you condemn it. That's the real test.

Whether your experience with God has been real or false and soulish. Because if you don't think the devil knows how to give out experiences, you haven't been around too long. Yes, I saw the giants.

And I'm sure as we gather here today and we're exposed to the Word of God, some of us will see the giants. One of the giants in my life, and it still is, is the giant of lust. Now I thought that after I was converted, it's less problem.

Because at 16, before my conversion, I was peddling pornography and doing a few other things which exactly wasn't the way to live. Not much, just enough to warp my mind. And I thought, well after my conversion, wow! Deliverance of that.

I had no trouble with the pornography. Just took a match and up and smoked. What do I do with my mind? What kind of gasoline do I pour in my ears? How do I get all the garbage out of my mind? The things I started to see from the age of four.

Then I saw God's Word. The way of the Word of God to deal with lust. Five ways to deal with lust.

Let me give them to you quickly. Two, discipline. Jesus said, if any man come after me, let him deny himself, take up the cross, and follow me.

You will never, never live for Jesus until you learn that. Number three, fellowship with others. Sharing your problem.

Praying together. I've seen so many people, people who have been Christians for 7, 8, 10, 15 years, still being tripped up by lust. Still getting into the lust pit from time to time.

I've had them come to me even out of our Bible colleges. Finished Bible college, still in the lust trip. And when they've started to share, started to talk about it, you see, so easy to bottle this up.

It's the last thing we talk about is our sex problems. 300 verses in the Bible on the subject of sex, but we don't talk about that in the church. And a lot of young people have been brainwashed from childhood that basically sex is dirty.

And it's private part is dirty. And so he thinks, he grows up to think that masturbation is a sin unto death. Or is a blasphemy.

I've had someone come to talk to me about masturbation, thought it was blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Because when he was little, maybe even 3 or 4, he discovered this little thing between his legs, and he started to play, which is quite normal. His mother screamed, don't touch it! The little kid the rest of his life.

Burned into the subconscious, this is dirty. In counseling married couples that have come apart among Christians, I've discovered many of them came apart because they didn't have a fruitful, beautiful, healthy, happy, disciplined, overwhelming sex life. Some didn't have any sex life.

Why? Because the girl from childhood was taught it was dirty. Reminds her of animals. And she didn't tell her husband before they were married that this was one aspect of marriage she had a few hangups about.

But she was sure that because they were heavy on Bible study and heavy on prayer and soul winning, surely this other thing would fall into shape. And we wonder why one half of all the marriages in North America are ending in divorce. And we wonder why it's now becoming as common among Christians.

Even Bible-believing Christians in some cases almost as among the world. Something has gone wrong! We have failed to teach the whole counsel of God. We have failed to see that the Bible, if it has 300 verses on the subject of sex, we ought to study them.

We ought to see God's way and get our life in tune with God. If there's no answer to the lust problem in this book, I don't want it. Because the majority of the people we lead to Christ all over the world have lust problems.

Some of them have sex lives. Some of them have been in bed with more than 50 people. And you're going to come up to them and say, now look, the main problem in the Christian life is the length of your hair.

And I'm convinced, and I remember Billy Graham speaking about this in 1957, if you don't get victory in this area you will never live for Jesus. You will become another casualty statistic. And though God is merciful, God can pull you up, God can forgive you.

And though your sin be as scarlet, it shall be made as white as snow. Hallelujah! At the same time, God wants to give you victory in your marriage, in your home. And so we've got to learn to fellowship and to share and be honest and pray together.

What does it say in James? Confess your faults one to another and pray for one another that you may be healed. Do you have at least one that you're walking in the light with? I have several. If I go into the railway station and there's some real interesting pornography and I go on a little five minute lust trip, which is the last thing I want to do, but sometimes it happens, fortunately I never end up buying it, I'm too cheap.

But what happens when you're on a train and you go into the WC, we call it England Maloo, and there's a twenty dollar pornographic magazine thrown on the floor. Now I admire beyond all words the man who has no trouble, he doesn't even give it a second look, just nothing. Of course he may have another problem, but I mean the fellow who's normal, he kicks it away, there's nothing.

But if I do, most of the time I get the victory, but I don't always get it. Then I go to one of my brothers and co-leaders and I say, look, you know, this afternoon I had a little lust trip, I want you to pray with me, God will give me more grace and He forgives me. And it's not easy for me to tell that because I know that surely somebody misunderstands me and I know my reputation will probably go down a little.

Well I will tell you, I'd rather have my reputation go down and you go up! Because I'm tired of people pretending they're living up here when they're living down here. And if we got more concerned about the battle with the mind, we'd never get into the trouble with our bodies. It's all sin, but there are levels of sin, obviously.

Because with some sin we drag the whole church in the scandal. And the name of Christ is blasphemy. There's two Old Testament characters I love to study.

One's David. Remember David? Up on the roof. He shouldn't have been on the roof.

He was looking for trouble. He knew there were women living around him. He knew that girl took her bath on the roof every once in a while.

You think he was a jerk? David? He should have been out in the warfare. The Bible says he stayed back from the warfare. And he went up on the roof, you know, he didn't even have any binoculars.

And Beersheba came out, and that was it. He ruined his life. He ruined his ministry.

I tell you, just read it. Just read it. Never the same again.

He was forgiven. That's why we have Psalm 51. And if some sin is hanging on your conscience, then bathe in Psalm 51.

Renew unto me the joy of my salvation. But you know my favorite story? Joseph. How many know, really, the story of Joseph and his big temptation with this real, incredibly chick from Egypt? How many know that story? There, many of you don't even know it.

What are you reading? Are you reading novels? You want to get out of these dull novels and get into the real stuff. Anyway, Joseph was in Egypt. He was lonely.

He was frustrated. He didn't have a wife. He was away from his family, a natural situation.

And the boss's wife, when the boss is away, gets his eye on him. Now, you can imagine the wife of this top Egyptian. You know, I don't think she was the ugliest thing in town.

And you can imagine. Don't imagine. It can be a stumbling block.

Anyway, Joseph was there in the house alone. And this girl came out. And she said, Joseph, lie with me.

Now, you've got to understand the King James terminology. Lie with me doesn't mean what you did in the kitchen. You know, as a kid, go down to the beach and lie there holding hands with your girlfriend drinking a milkshake.

Lie with me in the King James means come to bed with me and have intercourse. And Joseph refused. It's as simple as that.

He knew this would be a great sin against God. And so he refused. And she tried it again.

Eventually, she tried a reverse rape and tried to seduce him. And he ran away. Now, a lot of people think when you do something great for God and you resist temptation, then the Lord is going to bless you.

We're always looking for outward blessing. It's a mistake. When you stand for Jesus Christ and you pass the big test as Joseph did, you may go to test number two.

Test number two for him was what? Prison. Now, can you imagine after winning this tremendous victory, how many of you would have won it? Don't answer. He won this tremendous victory.

So God puts him in prison. Everything is getting worse. Then these men even forget all about him who promised to tell somebody in charge about him.

And there he was seemingly wasting away. But God had not forgotten. And I believe the story of Joseph, in some ways a poor example of Jesus Christ, is one of the most beautiful stories in the Old Testament.

Because God raised him up and in God's sovereignty, he became a blessing to his family and to his nation beyond words. But if he had fallen into sin on that one temptation, it would have all been different. So one of the things that I believe is going to keep us from the sin of lust in any of its forms is feeding on the Word of God and following the example of the Word of God.

And then lastly, there are some other things, but I've got to move on. Repentance. Learning to repent.

Instant repentance. I may say this again at another meeting, but it's worth repeating. I think there is a danger out today among God's people that presumes that everybody has to backslide now and then.

We hear so many testimonies of backsliders. I came to Christ ten years ago and I've been away for the last five. Or I came to Christ so many years ago and I went away and I came back.

Now, praise God when they come back. And I just love to hear a backslider's testimony. But at the same time, there's a slight danger.

Again, it's the balance. Because we get the idea, don't we, that all of us are going to backslide. And the devil gets that negative charge running around our mind.

We're all going to backslide. And I just share this very carefully. That from the day I accepted Jesus Christ 23 years ago to this afternoon, I've walked every day with Jesus.

Every single day. I've had my hours, I've had my moments, I've just shared those. There are many other things.

Discouragement coming in, depression, a quick word, an unkind word. But you see, if we say an unkind word, which is a sin. And by the way, do you know the way you handle the masturbation problem? Put it together with all the other sins.

It usually does involve lust, doesn't it? It usually does involve impatience. And I think it should be treated as impatience. You don't see people getting so hung up about their impatience factor.

I wish they were. Do not allow the devil to make that thing into a special kind of extra ugly sin that in turn depresses you and discourages you and wipes you out. Many young people have allowed that.

Especially weird and strict Christian hoes. Put it on the level with lack of love, with impatience, with the sins of the tongue, with unkind words, with a bad disposition, with wrong attitude. All of those things are sin.

And yet they do sometimes creep in. And when they creep in, we don't get depressed and give up because maybe we had a little wrong attitude towards someone. Or we said something unkind.

Or we engaged in a little gossip. Actually, those things are condemned more in the Bible than this other thing. Oh, if only Christians would learn how to bounce back and to stand firm in Christ.

Learning to repent. Learning to keep a short inventory. And by learning this as a young Christian, through some of these books and through men of God, every night I've gone to sleep these years knowing I was with Jesus in fellowship.

My burden is that some people will go from this great gathering with the determination and the conviction and the faith that you will walk for Jesus every day, 365 days a year, until you meet Him. I wonder if you'd make that commitment. I wonder if you'd believe God has that much keeping power and therefore keep a short account and instantly repent when temptation, and temptation is not sin, you've got to go past the temptation, meditating, enjoying it, engaging in it, then sin.

You've all heard the old illustration, you can't stop the birds from flying over your head but you can keep them from nesting in your hair. And you may not be able to stop temptation, wild temptation. Many young

people write to me.

They feel something's wrong with them. They have such terrible temptations. They have bad dreams.

They get ugly desires. Look, that's normal. Every person, minus none, has a certain degree of hostility.

Some of the most Bible-believing people I've ever met, I've seen in five minutes, I could see their hostility. They wind their hostility right into the Bible. They're on their path.

They're ready, you know, ready, jump! And somebody doesn't believe the same way. Do you think that's Jesus' approach? And we as Christians have to learn how to handle our hostility. Now, many of you can be so thankful.

You don't have these problems that I have. See, I'm a very emotional person. I'm way, way too emotional.

I go to see an animal film. I saw the film Born Free. You know, just a simple animal film about a lion.

I had 15 minutes of uncontrolled weeping. This is an animal film. Some of these new Christian films, I just saw this Christian film, Stranger in the Forest, with this car crash and blood.

My son, he's sitting there. You know, so, please, please forgive me as I speak. Whenever I speak, some of the old verb word dirt gets mixed with the message because this treasure's an earthen vessel.

And because I'm a bit of an emotional case, I've got these problems and hang-ups, and pornographic magazines bug me. I'm not projecting that on you. I mean, the more I look at you, the more holy you look.

Some of you. I'm in such a state that all those over 50 look sanctified to me. All those over 50, they look so holy.

And some of you are all young ones that, well, I won't discuss it. Yes, lust is a giant in the land. And there are other giants.

We've talked about fear. We've talked about worry. We've talked about lust.

But there's a giant of unbelief, comes almost unaware. Suddenly we begin to doubt everything. I find many young people, they doubt God even loves them.

I wonder, anybody here today, you deep down have been struggling, does God really love me? Does God really care for me? Why, that's ABC, you must learn that. We sing that in Sunday school. Jesus loves me, this I know.

For the Bible tells me so. But we think, oh, that's for the kiddies. No, that's for the adults.

And you and I have to daily bathe in God's love and forgiveness. I find people who haven't really accepted God's forgiveness on a gut level. A girl come to me not long ago, incredible situation.

Raped four times by her grandfather. Not exactly the experience most people want. You say, do things like that happen? I want to tell you, when you get involved with people, when you get involved in the ministry of counseling and you can't do preaching without counseling, you're going to discover what a crazy, sick world we live in.

And I've had the joy for 20 years seeing people scarred with every kind of sin and problem and wild thing in their life. I've seen the power of God's forgiveness to restore and to cleanse and to lift up. But it doesn't just happen overnight.

It takes God's therapy. It takes fellowship. The church is supposed to be representing the way of fellowship rather than the triumph of individualism.

And as we understand real fellowship and acceptance and forgiveness and as we become a caring community, then we are going to see people healed and restored. And then we're going to see them being used of God in ways that we cannot imagine. But unbelief can come.

Does God love me? Does anybody else love me? There's some people I meet, they know that God loves them but they sure have their doubts about anybody else. But people love you probably more than you know. In the church we're told to be concerned not just for the 99 but the 1. And sometimes we don't have an opportunity to express our love until there's a problem, a crisis, a struggle and a difficulty.

And sometimes those of us who believe this message, we run out of time. We may put in a 17 hour a day and some of us have been doing that for two decades to run out of time. There's so many needs.

That's why we need more people trained who can counsel, who can love, who can share. It's not a few of us who have been given the gift to speak. We need a great army of people.

They may not be public speakers but they have heart of compassion reaching out to needy ones. 1 John 3.16 is very important. We all know John 3.16 but do you know 1 John 3.16? In this we perceive the love of God in that He laid down His life for us.

So we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Are you doing that? Are you laying down your life for the brethren? Are you opening your home? You know the greatest evangelistic center in America? The home, the home, not the church. We live in pagan countries.

Let's face it. These people aren't going to rush into our churches. Some will.

More will come to something like this. But your home. Have you opened your home? I find some people, they never open their home.

They're afraid that a sinner may come in. I mean, who knows what he could do. Maybe he will get dirt on the carpet.

It's a \$200 carpet. It's the Lord's provision, this carpet. And what if a sinner comes in and steps on it? He'll get dirtied.

That may sound a bit extreme, but I tell you, I find many believers with a closed home policy. And if we open our tents for evangelistic meetings and don't open our homes and our hearts, it's got to go together. Something has gone wrong.

Fiery dart of unbelief. That enemy of unbelief. You know, there was another man together with Caleb.

We have to wind down now. And that was Joshua. And we find his testimony over in verse 8. If the Lord delight in us.

Isn't that beautiful? Isn't that wonderful? God is delighting in us. He delights in us. As I said before, God knows all about us and He loves us still.

He loves us still. Some people give the idea that when you're zooming at 24,000 feet spiritually, Jesus really loves you. But when you fall flat on your face, you've just opened your mouth and said something unkind, or you've just done something wrong, then God sort of rejects you.

Now, you may do that to your children. That'll help them go astray. But God doesn't do it to His children.

His acceptance to us is there when we're up, when we're down, when we're in the middle. And we need to understand God's grace and God's acceptance of us. Doesn't mean we can play at the grace of God.

We can't. For the Bible says also that our God is a consuming fire. That's why to me the normal Christian life is for Christians to be on fire.

We give the idea that the Spirit-filled man, the Spirit-filled man is some kind of an odd character. You know, he's one in a hundred. He's sort of an evangelical Holy Ghost freak.

The Spirit-filled life is the normal Christian life. I have people say to me, Oh, we hope, Brother George, you'll have the anointing. We hope you'll be filled with the Holy Spirit as you go to minister.

We pray for the preachers. What about my wife? Oh, she's back in the kitchen. She doesn't need the Holy Spirit in the kitchen.

I want to tell you, the Holy Spirit does not just work in the extraordinary. The Holy Spirit is a specialist in the ordinary. And He wants to invade your kitchen.

He wants to invade your car, especially help you to drive properly because many a man who is an angel in the pulpit is a devil behind the wheel. The Holy Spirit is very practical. And I believe that though God is a God of the extraordinary and we don't want to be nibblers of the possible, as C.T. Studd said, but grabbers of the impossible, so the Holy Spirit is also a specialist in the ordinary and the woman's ministry is just as important as the man's ministry.

And those behind the scenes, those who are cooking, those who are serving, the Martha's as well as the Mary's are needed in God's work. I wish I had time to speak about the 20 major misunderstandings the average American and Canadian has about world missions. They think you have to go to seminary before you can be a missionary.

Or they think you've got to have so much specialized training. You know, in our work, we need mechanics. We need secretaries.

We need ordinary people. We need working people. We use seminary people as well.

We have quite a few men out of Cambridge and Oxford and they've got degrees. But you know, you go to Oxford University and you're not going to find a motor mechanic. You're not going to find a carpenter.

We needed 15 carpenters to get that ship ready. Jesus was a carpenter, but somehow we've got a little twisted today. I think we think Jesus must have been a banker.

And I believe that North American evangelical Christianity has become too bourgeois, too extreme right wing, and too capitalistic. Because we have failed to reach the working people. We have failed to get into the ghettos.

We have failed to reach out to the minority groups and demonstrate that Jesus Christ was a savior of all people and all races. That is very important in the present scene. And I am convinced Joshua had the answer.

If the Lord delight in us, he will bring us into this land and give us a land which floweth with milk and honey. I want to ask you in closing, are you in that land? Are you in the promised land? More than 14 times in Hebrews chapter 3 and chapter 4, it speaks about the rest of faith, the New Testament comparison to the promised land. It's not firstly an experience, it's a lifestyle.

God wants to give us a radical, loving, compassionate lifestyle. It's not a matter of having a new message, it's a matter of having a new message and a new life. A milk and honey life.

I'm convinced that those giants in your land, in your heart, whatever may be hassling you, attacking you, and those giants that continue to attack me, I was so amazed when I read about David Wilkerson, having this incredible hang-up about flying. He is so petrified of airplanes, he gets in his old bus and goes all over the United States in his bus. He still gets in a plane sometimes.

I don't know how he's going to get to England in a couple of weeks. Maybe he's coming by ship. But I was really ministered to through that book of his, Beyond the Cross and the Switchblade.

You'd better read it because you can see the growth of reality in this man's life and the struggles they went through as a family and the difficulties that almost broke his home up, and yet how Jesus ministered. I guess it helped me because I've also had this incredible, ridiculous, embarrassing fear of airplanes. I'd rather go across the Atlantic Ocean on a floating donkey than fly.

You say, well, what kind of a man of faith is that? I don't know. I've been trying to figure it out. But I know one thing.

Nothing has stopped me from getting in planes. Many, many, many times because I don't live by my feelings. My feelings go berserk.

My hands sweat. I get dreams. I start thinking about heaven.

And I got a real hang-up about this heaven because I wonder now, what happens after the first million years in heaven? My mind was getting in what I call vain imagination. And then I repented. And I said, Lord, forgive me and cleanse me.

Up here, 40,000 feet or 30,000 over Thailand. I decided I didn't want to go to heaven. I decided I wanted to stay on Earth.

I repented. You know what? God cleansed me, forgave me, and brought me down to Earth not only spiritually, but hallelujah, the plane landed in Bangkok. Beloved, I don't know what your hang-up is.

Those of you who don't have many hang-ups, those of you who have it all together, don't come to any more of my sessions. But those of you who are weak, those of you who have struggles, those of you who find fiery darts coming in on your soul, those of you who have questions about a lot of things, let's hang in

there because there are answers, and there is victory in Jesus Christ, and there is power in the Holy Spirit as we repent and walk with Him. Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, we thank you for your love for us. Lord, I thank you that you know all about me and you love me still. I thank you that you are the only one that can put it all together.

After I've listened to 155 preachers and all their different takes, I have to just go back to you, living Jesus. Thank you that we can drink of that water and never thirst again. We don't even understand that.

It's so great. We worship you. Search our hearts, Lord, that we may know for sure that we're in promised land living, that we are walking by faith, living by faith, and holding up the shield of faith wherewith we can stop all the fiery darts of the devil.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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