

Men of God

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being influenced by men of God, highlighting the lives and teachings of John Sung, Oswald J. Smith, Dr. Francis Schaeffer, and Bhakt Singh.

Duration: 57:26

Scripture: Psalm 119:11, Proverbs 3:5-6, John 3:16, Romans 10:17, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, James 1:22

Topics: "Calling Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal experience with Dr. Schaffer, a man who showed genuine interest in the speaker's 14-year-old son, despite his busy schedule. The speaker highlights the importance of relating to and valuing children, as they are often overlooked by others. The speaker also mentions Dr. Schaffer's strict fundamentalist beliefs and his disillusionment with a particular movement in Miss Janity. The sermon emphasizes the value of learning from spiritual leaders through their teachings and writings, mentioning influential figures like John Son and Buck Singh.

Transcript

I want to speak this morning about important influences upon the Church, especially upon little old O.M. My main burden this morning is to provoke you to become an avid reader of the works and the writings of certain men, who I believe will be a major and healthy influence upon your life. I feel that I can accomplish more in a session like this than I probably could lecturing to you every day for a month. Because as I somehow can manage to get you into some of these books that have been such a blessing to so many, and get you to sit at the feet of some of these men of God through their writings and faiths, I'm convinced that it just can be an enormous blessing to you.

A method of teaching and discipling is when the disciples are able to sit at the feet of men who really know something of spiritual reality. There are such men alive, and there are quite a few who have got to be with the Lord, get through their faith, through their writings. We can just literally have a spiritual feast.

I am at a spiritual feast this morning. Over an hour I'm sitting at the feet of John Summers. Just reading his sermons, reading his whole approach to life, to problems.

A man that lent tens of thousands, some believe hundreds of thousands, to the Lord Jesus Christ. John Summers of China. So maybe I'll use him to start off with, and then launch into other men that I have been able to learn from.

John Summers was a brilliant man, and it would be presumption for us to try to pretend. Most people try to pretend they're going to be John Summers. Supposedly many who tried to imitate him, and most of them failed.

He went to the States, as many did in those days, for education from China. There he picked up a Ph.D., he learned German, and one summer passed an exam in German. He then got talked into going into Union Theological Seminary, where his faith was completely destroyed by Harry Emerson Fosby.

A great liberal, by the way, known by many, many Indian pastors. But an enormous, destructive influence. So John Summers' faith was gone, and then suddenly through the word of God, he had a deep, deep experience of either conversion or coming back to God, in which he got so excited, he openly, in the classroom, opposed Fosby, and told him he was destroying people's faith.

He went shouting around the hallways, his new praise to God, and he was therefore committed to a mental institution in New York City for quite a period of time. I think it was 193 days, maybe I can just find that exact figure. In that period of time, he supposedly went through the word of God 40 times, yes.

In those 193 days, he read the Bible through 40 times. The author went on to say, someone questioned this, saying, I find it difficult to believe John Sung read the Bible through 40 times during his stay there. Dr. Sung told me this himself, and I knew him well enough to believe him.

It would be once in about every five days. My own daughter, at seven or eight years of age, read the Bible through in two weeks, when we three had a contest while besieged by the Japanese in Kooling Mountain. One of my bishops used to read books a page at a glance.

So it does not seem too unusual to me that Dr. Sung read the Bible through 40 times in 193 days. Anyway, through the Chinese council, he was eventually released, and the Chinese council stated this, that John Sung was not crazy. The Chinese council told me later that Sung was sane.

He had met the Lord, and one is always different after such an experience of the reality of Jesus. From then on, John Sung had a one-track mind, and only one purpose to obey God and to fulfill the life plan Jesus had revealed to him. Now, those of us from the West are not always very familiar with people from places like China.

That's why it's good sometimes to get such exposure. It seems many from the West, the only Chinese person they've ever heard of is Hua Chunyi, who is another man of tremendous influence that we're going to mention this morning. But John Sung had a lasting influence.

He worked together with Andrew Gee in the Bethel Band, which, of course, was used to bring tens of thousands of people to Christ, right down to this modern day. Men like Dr. Timothy To, who is indirectly almost a disciple of John Sung. And the movement among many, many, many Chinese people can be traced back to John Sung and some of those who worked with him.

In fact, Edwin Orr, who wrote an introduction to this book, claimed that there was a definite revival going on between 1927 and 1939. He says, It is not commonly known that there occurred a revival of evangelical Christianity in China between the years 1927 and 1939. There were missionary leaders in the movement, especially Marie Monson and Anna Christensen, but the far greater instruments of awakening were Chinese themselves, chiefly the Bethel Bands, directed by Andrew Gee, and the lone figure of John Sung.

And he goes on to speak something of that revival. So here's a man whose writings I would challenge you to get into. Leslie Lyle, I believe, has written the most well-known book about John Sung, which I read many, many years ago.

And it will be a challenge to your own heart. The next person, and these are in no particular order, but the next person I want to mention is the name of Oswald J. Smith. Few people can begin to understand the influence of this man upon the whole world of missions.

You see, a lot of influences you now have, you don't even know where the stream began. You think someone is saying something original when the stream may have begun way, way, way a long time ago. But Oswald J. Smith was one of the great missionary leaders of our century.

He's still alive, a very close friend of the land. In fact, he felt very sad one day announcing to his congregation that he was going to have to turn down this invitation to go on Lagos. He is, of course, very much limited now because of health.

He's in his 80s. He's still preaching. The message of Oswald J. Smith was missions, missions, missions, and evangelism.

His two best books are *The Challenge of Missions* and *Passions for Souls*. Actually, these two books, a lot of their chapters used to be combined in the old book called *Passion for Souls*, which has now changed. If you can get an old edition, it's very interesting.

But he was very, very strong on mass evangelism. He's written many dozens and dozens of hymns. Like many great men of God, he's multi-gifted.

He can write poetry and preach and write and organize, all kinds of things. He did not agree with George Mueller about the whole area of funds. He was very strong, as was D. L. Moody and many others, in taking offerings and raising money for missions.

I don't think we should despise people who had that burden, if God gave them that burden. We may not agree with everything, but such men were needed to teach the Church what it was to give. And they went around to churches and taught the Faith Promise Plan, which was a plan of people learning to give by faith.

Instead of thinking, well, I have so many rupees, I'll give one. The message was, what are you going to trust God for? What are you going to trust God for? People would promise before the Lord to give so many hundreds during the year, and then they would pray through it, very similar in some ways to what we believe, but on a local church basis. A man greatly influenced by Oswald J. Smith and his type of teaching was a man named Norman Lewis, who wrote *Go You Means You* and a number of other missionary-related books.

He was linked with the fact of the Bible broadcast, another very major influence on 20th century Christian thinking that we may be able to comment on later, if we get as far as Theodore Epp, the founder of that great work of faith. Norman Lewis has written a number of books, and, in fact, Norman Lewis is one of our strongest prayer supporters, and the Lord recently has been to loosen from some board of directors of some group that we never heard of before, the largest single gift for the second check, apart from the gift by YWAM. And a good chunk of this particular gift has temporarily been invested in India on a revolving fund basis.

Oswald J. Smith has written many books. Of course, like many of the very Bible-believing men in his day, he has a strong opinion on subjects that perhaps you would no longer agree with him on. His books on prophecy, of course, very clearly take one line, though recently the rumor is that he's changed his viewpoint to some degree on that.

So, I would strongly recommend his writings. You can glean a lot of sermon material from his books. And, again, passion for souls and the challenging missions are just essential.

Oswald Smith had a great influence on the famous Park Street Church and men like Harold Ockingay. In terms of the fact that this church started this faith promise plan and started to pour tens of thousands out to the mission field. Oswald Smith was originally turned down by English society.

And so he took on this motto, if you cannot go, send others. Eventually ended up going. Now, do not think of men like this sitting back in North America.

He's a Canadian, by the way. Sitting back there, telling us what to do. Oswald Smith has traveled all over the world.

He's had revivals in the communist world, all over Latin America. He drew massive crowds and has been very, very much involved in evangelism. Even to this day, he's one of the quickest persons to respond to any letter.

There's only three or four OM leaders in the whole movement that will respond to my letter quicker than Oswald J. Smith. And he may even have a few other burdens, I'm sure. So he's a challenge in many, many different ways.

He was thrilled that his church has finally hit the one million mark for missions. In one year, this was last year, his one church in Toronto had committed themselves and had seen or are seeing a million dollars, Canadian dollars, most of it, come in for missions. I will be preaching in his church on the 25th of July.

They do not support OM very much, just in case any of you get wrong ideas. But they do support OMers, a few OMers out from their church, and also do supplies with some literature. Another man I want to mention to you is, of course, still alive today, and his name is Dr. Francis Schaeffer.

Some of you are very familiar with him. Others are almost totally ignorant. Dr. Schaeffer is another one.

These men have tremendous influence, especially in the contemporary scene, who also we have had the privilege of having quite a close relationship to. In fact, at one of our conferences some years ago, just over ten years ago now, he spoke to us three days straight, an average of about six hours a day. Quite a list we put on film.

We were the first persons to ever film Dr. Schaeffer. We had this great burden. It's interesting that right now he's in the midst of what some people believe is going to be the most powerful series of films in the present-day Christian scene.

He's just done about 13 half-hour films for television and is involved in the premier showing of these films across North America. And it is a very, very big thing on the state of history and mankind, weaving in all of his various viewpoints on the Bible and philosophy. Schaeffer is a difficult man to understand.

Whole books are now written about Schaeffer, dictionaries are produced on how to understand his terminology, like truth, truth, and all the rest. I am not a student of Dr. Schaeffer. I am not qualified to lecture on his materials.

Some of his followers are more gifted in communicating than he. Clark Pinnock, a man who wrote your case. He was a student of Schaeffer and seems to be able to communicate some of these truths very clearly.

Oz Guinness, another student of Dr. Schaeffer, who is making quite an influence. He was recently a speaker at the student conference we had connected with the ship visit to London. He has written famous books like *The Dust of Death* and his recent book on the subject of doubt.

So Dr. Schaeffer now threw a whole chain of disciples. Rockmarker in Ireland is a real unique character. We had him on the ship, puffed his cigar the whole time, I think, when I gave his lecture.

I am sure that he would go over well in Indiana. There are quite a range of people. Now, Schaeffer is unusual in that in some ways he is so totally liberated, and LaBrie is a rather liberated place.

That can give some people the wrong idea about him because, in fact, he is a strict fundamentalist. Very strict. He spent 13 years under Carl MacIntyre, who told me that it took him 13 years, and after 13 years he discovered that the movement was entirely spiritual bankrupt.

That was his evaluation in that particular segment of Janity. Don't quote me as having said that. Dr. Schaeffer, mind you, he said that privately.

It may not like to be quoted. He completely lacked that because he saw the lack of love. He is a man who realizes that fundamental doctrine without love is the greatest of all noises.

That's why one of his best little books, which I think you will be able to understand, is called *The Mark of the Christian* by Dr. Schaeffer. Also, he has a very basic Bible doctrine, which most of you should not be afraid of reading. The guy who is there, in books like that, you may find much more difficulty as you get into the lower story and various concepts that he speaks about.

I got quite seasick coming to India years ago, I guess in 1960, around that time, so I listened to a lot of his tapes aboard the ship that I was on. I especially enjoyed his series of tapes of the man who doesn't believe the Bible. I wouldn't say that is the strongest area of apologetics, but it certainly was a great help to me.

He takes a very strong stand on inerrancy. Inerrancy means that the original documents of the Bible were without error. This, of course, is a major controversy going on right now, which has divided our evangelical seminaries more or less into two sides.

Those who are more inerrancy and take the position of Harold Lenzel and Dr. Francis Schaeffer and many, many others, and those who are a little bit less dogmatic. This controversy you're probably going to hear more of in the days to come, and there are quite a few books out about it. Dr. Schaeffer is a man that I think is well worth reading.

His book, *The Church at the End of the Twentieth Century*, to me should be required reading. Absolutely got enormous insight. Dr. Schaeffer influenced a number of people in India, people like Vishal

Mangalwadi, who I guess would consider himself a disciple of Dr. Schaeffer, and there are a few others.

There is always a danger of anyone who becomes a disciple of such a person in that they can become, if they're not careful, pseudo-intellectuals, and they can start spouting out all kinds of things that they're not even that clear about and become like a pirate giving out second-hand materials. That should, however, cause others to react and not glean something from such great men of God. I'm especially impressed with him because he's not just a man with a great apologetic or standing for the historical truths of the faith, but he's a man with love, with character.

I think I told some of you the other day how when I met him recently, we were having a time in the World Congress of Evangelism where he was extremely busy. I went to his question and answer sessions, which were very explosive. Any opportunity you can get to sit under his feet is worth it.

Most people go to LaBrie, all they get is tapes. You can get those even around O.M. But he came up to me and he took a personal interest in my son who was only 14 years of age and related to him in a matter of minutes. It's really impressed me because so many people, you know, children mean nothing to them.

They're just two-legged little things that get in the way. They don't know how to relate to children. And here was a man with a terrific schedule and he had time not just to say hello but to relate to my son an experience he probably will not forget.

The LaBrie story is worth reading, believe it or not. Dr. Schaefer is very similar in some of his ideas to O.M. About money, very much a work of faith. Today, of course, it has become very, very famous and that's provided them with a whole new chain of problems.

Actually, most people don't know all of their ideas when they first get in contact with them. But because of their very strong conservative view, they in a number of places are trying to start new churches. Most of them are having quite a struggle.

There was one in Milan, Italy after many years barely got off the ground. So that might help us to understand that there's not always an easy answer. Some of these things are powerful when it comes to, for example, reaching people of a Western culture, sons of missionaries and pastors.

But when you take it into indifferent agnostic northern Italy which very much represents the kind of culture that Schaefer is able to explain, so far they have not been able to see any major breakthrough. I've listened to some of Dr. Schaefer's lectures also about India and Hinduism and it's very, very interesting. He believes that what's happening in the West is the same thing that happened a couple thousand years ago here on the subcontinent.

The amalgamating of different religious views which led to the Hinduism we have today, the pan-everythingism that we find on every corner of India. Well, maybe that will whet your appetite to try to read and study some of his materials and listen to some of his tapes. Another man of tremendous influence, if we jump east, is Bhakt Singh.

Again, many of us in OM have had the privilege of spending long hours and good amounts of time with Bhakt Singh under his ministry, traveling with him. He spent more time in OM trucks than probably any of you in this room apart from maybe four or five of you who have been with us a long time. We're only sorry that because of the limitation of our trucks and having to leave now every six months and all that, that it is difficult to keep a fleet of trucks at Hebron.

I understand they now have one of their own vehicles. If you want to understand Bhakt Singh, you have to go back a long way. You have to go back to a man named Austin Sparks.

You have to go back beyond that to a woman named Jessie Penn Lewis. Jessie Penn Lewis is probably one of the most influential persons in the religious scene in the history of the British Isles. Most people don't know that because men shy away from women and so they'd rather get their Jessie Penn Lewis via Bhakt Singh or via Watchman Nee.

One third of all Watchman Nee is rehashed Jessie Penn Lewis. She was the greatest influence on Watchman Nee. If you think he got all of his ideas from China, you haven't read very much.

Jessie Penn Lewis was involved in the very beginning of Keswick. She was greatly influenced by many, many mystics and many other people. I'm afraid my knowledge gets scanty past that stage as to who are all the influences on her.

Some of you know the Welsh revival in 1905 and the fact that Evan Roberts soon got himself in difficulty. He then went and lived with Jessie Penn Lewis. Jessie Penn Lewis at that time seeing how Satan counterattacked the Welsh revival and hearing some of the experiences of Evan Roberts wrote that incredible book War on the Saints which is not always the most healthy book for the average new believer to meditate on since after reading that you may feel the devil is getting the upper hand and coming through every window.

But she did see a lot of Satanic attack and she very much emphasizes how Satan can try to copy the true work of God. That's why you'll see in a lot of Watchman Nee's writings the emphasis on the soul, on things being soulish. One of the pupils or students of Jessie Penn Lewis was a man named Austin Sparks.

It was missionaries from Honor Oak Fellowship under the leadership of Austin Sparks which split away from the Honor Oak Baptist Church in Forest Hill that went to India and that were the major influences on Bucksing. I don't care what anybody will say the work of the Hebron Fellowship was not just founded by one Indian. There were two missionaries, Fred Flack and Mr. Goldworthy who were completely locked together with Bucksing only they were very wise and they let Bucksing always take the lead.

Being a somewhat stubborn person you can be sure he took the lead in any case. And in recent years they've had a fair number of encounters that most people don't always know about. There was a dear elderly lady who lived in the Nilgiri Hills named Lady Ogle.

Hardly anyone knows this story but she was an extremely wealthy person. She built a lot of the Honor Oak Fellowship Center. She poured a lot of her money into some of these assemblies and she was a great prayer warrior.

I got to know her toward the end of her life and in fact she became very friendly to O.M. and before her death even shared some of her wealth with us. So nothing that huge. Austin Sparks, because of certain doctrines especially perhaps his mid-rapture theory which eventually got silenced because it became a separate movement and a separatist movement within Britain came under tremendous criticism.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones turned against it among other people. The Mara Shah, the daughter of William Booth turned against it and a number of other leading men in Britain turned totally against Austin Sparks and branded him as a heretic. Booklets even to this day are distributed called the Sinister Movement about Honor Oak Fellowship.

And there was a lot of confusion. What they tried to do in England failed but the very same thing when attempted in Andhra and Tamil Nadu grew like weeds in a field and a whole new movement was born in India which today is called Hebron Fellowship. They were trying to do it harder in England.

It didn't work. There's only a few remnants of these fellowships. Now they have basically just become local churches.

In fact Graham Scott is now more or less the leader one of the main leaders of the Honor Oak Fellowship and in some ways almost could be considered one of Austin Sparks' closest friends in his latter years before Sparks went to be with the Lord. I had a number of interesting times with Mr. Sparks who was probably one of Watchman Nee's closest friends on the earth. We'll go to Watchman Nee next.

But in India these assemblies really grew unlike Britain. India was right. It seemed to be God's timing.

And I think in all that we do and all that we try to understand concerning revival and evangelism a very important thing must be considered. God's timing. God's timing.

Seemingly it was not God's timing for this new thing to be born in England. Maybe England had enough. But it was God's timing for Andhra, for Tamil Nadu.

Jehovah Shema was the first assembly. And a good book to read, anyone interested in this fellowship is Monsoon Daybreak. Actually Dr. Ingus Kinnear the unofficial OM doctor one of our very closest friends married Austin Sparks' daughter.

You see how all this gets weaved together. I don't know about these things. But he has written Monsoon Daybreak.

Ingus Kinnear, the same man, also has written the biography of Watchman Nee which is well worth reading and gives a great balance to Watchman Nee who people tend to almost elevate to some kind of a saint. Because we're all saints in one sense. Super saint.

And failed to realize that he was a human being who made a fair share of mistakes and many problems himself. The influence of Bhaktzen has been mainly in India but through his writings this wave of church-centered teaching has gone in many, many different parts of the world. And it has been, I think, a helpful contribution.

In the early days Bhaktzen was always considered being anti-missionary and very hard. But in recent years there's been more peace and of course as they have taken their place among the denominations and they are a denomination. You can't get around that.

They now have a constitution. They are now called the Hebron Fellowship. They have a trust.

They have trustees. Of course they don't like to be called a denomination. No one does.

But it's bound to happen. That doesn't mean it's not good. It is good.

It's one of God's great movements in India. Amazing man. I think the greatest mark on the life of Bhaktzen is faith.

Faith is a man, through all his years of complicated work, a man of simple faith. And these people demonstrate simple faith, trusting God for wells to come in their property and then walking off to a particular corner being led of God and drilling and the water starts coming out. And certainly it's one of God's great movements and one that we can learn from.

He has many, many books. He's a little narrow in his view on literature. He believes people mainly should read his books.

But he certainly was always very polite to me in my book selling and gave me unlimited liberty to do things that the assemblies never had ever had before and never had too much since either. But those were great days. And we had many, many, many friends among the assemblies.

Let's move on to Watchman Nee. Now in speaking about all these people, all I'm giving is just a few, just a little taste. Watchman Nee, of course, you can read about him in his biography.

But in the early, early days of that movement, he was just moving as a mighty evangelist. He came under the grips of what is known as the Exclusive Brethren and a man named Jim Taylor, who's the father of the late Jim Taylor, who died a blaspheming drunkard in Glasgow in Scotland living in immorality. Incredible story.

And maybe we'll get back and give you a little history of the Brethren to help you understand some of that. But Watchman Nee came under the spell of Taylor. He never met a man who knew so much of the Word of God.

Knowing the Word of God completely does not necessarily bring reality. Many, many men who have been led into false cults were students of the Word that none of you will ever be. There's more than just knowing the Word of God.

Because Satan is a deceiver of the Brethren. And if our ego doesn't stay crucified, our ego can be mixed with the Word of God and we can become a heretic. Jim Taylor held Watchman Nee spellbound.

That's why they became known as the Little Flock Movement. Where do you think that comes from? It comes from the Exclusive Brethren hymn book, the Little Flock hymn book, by the way, which is basically a book filled with some of the greatest hymns that have ever been written. Because the most subtle thing about the Exclusive Brethren movement is that it's about 90% true.

But it's the 10% that has made it one of the most sad movements, especially the Taylorites have. Exclusive Brethrenism has divided into many, many groups, the Taylorites being the most well-known and the most divisive. Watchman Nee came to England sponsored by the Exclusive Brethren.

Somehow, he made contact with Austin Sparks. Austin Sparks, of course, was a separatist himself, but nothing compared to the Exclusive Brethren. And because of Jesse Penn Lewis, because of some linking with Keswick, he in fact took Watchman Nee to Keswick.

And Watchman Nee's ideas, which had become more and more closed, especially about the Lord's Table, began to open. And he committed the unpardonable sin and broke bread at the Honor Oak Fellowship with Austin Sparks. And the Exclusive Brethren distributed a letter worldwide declaring him anathema, an excommunicant.

They have such a monopoly and such a control that in a matter of days, now in hours through telephone, they can wipe a man completely out of their movement. It is one of the most closed shop movements in the whole world. Very highly sensitive.

In fact, recently, before his death, Jim Taylor got the burden from the Lord that dogs were not from God. He had pets up to that time, but maybe one bit him or something. I don't know what happened.

But he decided all dogs must be removed from the homes of the fellowships. With a series of telephone calls from Hong Kong and right around the world, they say within days, every single dog was removed from every home of every Taylorite follower in the entire world. Such is the power such men wield.

It's incredible. And I tell you, when religious men get lifted up, they always come in danger of becoming mogul maniacs. Mogul maniacs, people who are power crazy, people who will destroy anything that gets in their way, always in the name of God.

This is why, to me and God's word, every man should be responsible to someone. And we all need to be able to take correction and exhortation from one another. Anyway, that was the end of Watchman Lee as far as his relation with the exclusive brethren, which is one of the best things that ever happened.

Unfortunately, it was too late. Many of the assemblies in China had already become exclusive and never gave return to any kind of open fellowship. In fact, to this day, a new man following in the steps of the Jim Taylor mentality, a man named Witness Lee, has managed to split almost every Chinese Watchman Lee fellowship in Asia.

Witness Lee, based in California, misusing the writings of Watchman Lee has infiltrated all over the world. He has very unusual doctrines, very appealing. We've even lost an UN leader through his doctrines.

Though later on, the man cooled down and didn't seem to do very much. But they seem to have so many of the answers. They can explain why all the churches are dead.

One of the greatest dangers in the world today is overreacting to all the dead churches. The whole Witness Lee movement is filled with people who have overreacted to all the dead churches, ended up basically saying all churches are not walking according to God's plan. And so in California, in Los Angeles, where there already are a couple of thousand churches, they started the only New Testament church in Los Angeles.

People actually believe that. And they have a number of other interesting doctrines and have managed to, as I mentioned, split the major assemblies, the big Chinese Watchman Lee fellowship. They would not prefer to, I guess, call it by that name, but that's its root.

Split recently in the Philippines. Some of you know Goh Tiching on the ship. He was from that assembly.

He was sharing the agony of this situation as so many of the young people fall for this. That kind of message especially appeals to the hyper-idealists. He really believes everything should function just as it was functioning in the New Testament.

Actually, if you pin him down, he can't really explain a lot of things happening even in the New Testament. But it's something that's very attractive. So when Watchman Lee moved a little bit into a more liberated position, many of the churches did, and the whole thing continued to be a great controversy.

Though the greatest influence, without question, of Watchman Lee are his writings. His most controversial writing is the New Testament church, the normal New Testament church. This was sort of the handbook for his own movement.

In his own words, it was his burden that this not be distributed widely. It's almost like when we have certain sessions in OM, if they just get published and distributed to the general public, misunderstandings could come. Though not as many because we're not a church movement.

We're, of course, much more broad. But God was doing a new thing in China through Watchman Lee, and he had very strong principles. The mistake has been that people have taken that book and tried to make carbon copies of that in various countries around the world.

I've hardly known of one case where it worked. So that's why in OM we're not so excited about the normal Christian church life. We don't believe it's kept in context, and we feel that people too quickly take it without the necessary balance.

Witness Lee is very upset about the Watchman Lee biography because, of course, the Watchman Lee biography brings things a little more into the context as biographies, true biographies, often do. Needless to say, Watchman Lee, who studied and read a lot of Jesse Penn Lewis, which is especially seen in his three volumes. He wrote these three spiritual volumes when he was very young, very immature in the faith.

He had doubts whether they should ever be printed. Of course, they now had been printed, and we in SDL have distributed them. But, of course, there's a lot of Jesse Penn Lewis and a lot of other rehashed things in there, and then a lot of stuff that came from his brilliant work.

And it's worth reading if you can get through it. Some of his books seem almost contradictory. Some people claim Release of the Spirit could not have been written by Watchman Lee.

So completely different from the normal Christian life. And so the controversy goes on. Also, the rumor is pretty wide that, in fact, he was guilty of this and that.

An ex-exclusive brethren shared that with me just a year ago. Then others passed on the rumor that his tongue was torn out, which is absolutely not true. I have almost firsthand information from people who were with him during his very last years.

He was not mutilated or tortured. Of course, he suffered much hardship from the Lord during those 14 or more years in prison. We need to move on.

I'd like to move on to a man named Billy Graham. Billy Graham, my own spiritual father. A man of enormous influence.

No man in our century has had a wider influence than Billy Graham. Also one of the most controversial influences since some people of very, very conservative nature say that he is the father of neo-evangelicalism. Though I think generally they pin that on Ockingay.

It's interesting when Harold Lenzel, the editor of Christianity Today, supposedly the organ of neo-evangelicalism, is the strongest man in the evangelical world on the subject of inerrancy. So don't try to slap people. It's very difficult today.

Everybody's jumping around back and forth over different theological fences and you can't pin people down like you could in the old days, especially with mass media. Billy Graham, of course, originally went to Bob Jones University, the strongest fundamentalist stronghold in the world. The story is that he was asked to leave there.

I don't know all the details about that. Then went to Florida Bible College where their stories have been learning to preach out in the swamps. We often get people who think these great preachers, suddenly they just got a bolt of lightning from heaven and from then on they preached anointed sermons.

Billy Graham actually spent a lot of time selling brushes from door to door. So the next time you feel you're a humble nobody selling door to door, you can remember Billy Graham, who never got to the elevation of selling Christian books. He stuck mainly with brushes.

Between his selling brushes and his preaching in the swamps, and his education at Wheaton College, his linking and helping to found a movement named Youth for Christ, another very influential movement, Billy Graham soon was to become the evangelist to speak to more people in history than any other evangelist. I don't want to go into detail about him because we're running out of time. His biography is available.

It's one of the most powerful books you can read. The strongest emphasis I can see in Billy Graham's ministry, one, his faith in God's word. Great, deep experience of faith in God's word.

Secondly, giving glory to God. And thirdly, prayer. Very strong emphasis on prayer.

And it's amazing just how many other people have been influenced by him and then have influenced others. The terrific growth of evangelical believers in North America certainly is linked with his crusades and with other people related to his crusades. It's easy for people to say this is all superficial.

We can always say the Welch revival was something very deep, but present meanings under Billy Graham are just superficial. I would challenge anyone as to how much history they have studied who says that. I've studied many, many books on revival.

I've talked to people who've been in revivals. I've also studied a very, very high percentage of things on Billy Graham. I believe it's the same Holy Spirit working.

True, there are differences, terrific differences, but it's still the Holy Spirit. I would not necessarily call many Billy Graham campaigns revival, but I would say that the Holy Spirit is miraculously working to bring people to Christ. And it really is exciting to see God working in our day.

I also believe there are many dangers, but I believe there is more to the state of the church, and I believe there is more to the responsibility of people like those who are sitting in this room. God has his harvesters, every generation seemingly only a few, but what those new babes receive will depend on you and the church. This is why I believe that we have the privilege of really being linked together with many men of God who cannot do the work of follow-up, who cannot take, as Owen has now, 900 people in a discipleship training program, trying to take them into the deeper truth and into the whole of the Word of God.

And I feel very, very strongly that the weakness in so much of this is linked with the state of the church and the state even of people like those of us who are part of Operation Mobilization. I guess it's an embarrassment to especially some people to discover that George Burwer and quite a few others in OM

and then indirectly the whole movement of OM can be traced back to a Billy Graham meeting in Madison Square Garden. The Holy Spirit knows what he's doing, and it only takes a spark, a spark to get a fire going, as you were singing that this morning.

Of course, my conviction is no mature believer will ever come into being when he's influenced by only one person. He almost surely will become unbalanced. And just as, of course, Billy Graham is a major influence in my life and in turn in many, many people that I'm in contact with, I was fortunate to immediately come under the influence of quite a few other people, especially books.

Let me move on. A name that I think all of us should remember in this work that should challenge us also to pray and to believe God is the name of a woman named Eugenia Price. Now, I know she's probably not even known by some of you, but her books are some of the most widely read Christian books in the world, and certainly OM is indebted to this woman.

I know that I am because she helped me see something of myself, my ugly, hideous self, and also helped me understand something of freedom, something of how to understand people. She's very strong on understanding people. Her book, *Make Love Your Aim*, her book, *Where God Chooses Freedom*, now called *The Wider Place*, I would love to see them as required reading.

Eugenia Price was an author, a very, very widely read author. Some of you have read her secular books before she was converted to Christ and then began to write Christian books. In many ways, Eugenia Price represents, in my mind, a number of people with similar emphasis.

Rosalind Rinker, a very close friend of Eugenia Price. Clyde Narrowmore, a man of major influence in the area of Christian psychology. When some people phone him up and ask him for counsel on psychology, he says, he must be born again.

Now, he is quite controversial, especially since the appearance of Jay Adams. Jay Adams is over here on one side, certainly with a more Calvinistic approach to things, and Clyde Narrowmore is over here on the other side. Narrowmore leaning a little more on psychology, Jay Adams leaning a little more on a more literal approach in use of the Bible.

I have found blessing from both. And in studying both, I've seen both of them in mighty, mighty, mighty use. Some of you at least are familiar with Narrowmore's book, *This Way to Happiness*, which has been used to bring many people to Christ.

Narrowmore has trained many, many others. Now, I want to be the first one to say that some of these emphases, like the Narrowmore emphasis, just on its own, I believe, is attainable. But when mixed in with some of the other things that you people are getting, from me, from Buck Singh, from John Summ, from these more, you know, these front-line apostolic pioneers who have all made plenty of mistakes, who all were men of clay, mixing these together can be a mighty strong witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Though when I meet a man who is exceptionally anointed of God, my great burden is not to turn him into some totally balanced person. Certainly, he probably could use some balance for his own ministry, but I would never want to dull his cutting edge by, for example, sending him off for a year at Clyde Narrowmore's school on psychology. God is working in different ways in different people.

I don't expect Buck Singh to start rehashing Francis Schaeffer. They're in two different worlds. Is there not room for both? Let us not limit God.

I've only begun, really, to mention some of the names that I want to bring to your attention. How can we measure the influence of men like C.S. Lewis? C.S. Lewis, a converted agnostic, has influenced tremendous numbers of people who probably wouldn't even be believers today. How can we measure the influence of John Stott? I would recommend reading extensively both the writings of John Stott and the writings of C.S. Lewis.

C.S. Lewis, of course, would hardly be classified as a fundamentalist. This is where I perhaps disagree with a few of my friends in that I believe that whereas some fundamentalists have errors in one aspect, some of these other great intellectuals have errors and weaknesses in another aspect. And I believe, certainly, we can learn something from C.S. Lewis.

Another great name whose writings may be a great help to some of you is Paul Tournier. Paul Tournier, the famous Swiss psychologist who, through his writings, has influenced many, many people, helped so many people. His famous book, *The Strong and the Weak*.

His book, *The Healing of Persons*. He is an avid writer and one that is well worth studying, at least to some degree. Another name that comes to my mind, especially as we move over to Britain, is the name of Alan Redpath.

Now, Alan Redpath represents a number of people, though he is totally unique. His books are all worth reading. *Blessing Through Buffeting* and a number of other great books.

Very close friend of Owen. He was converted right from a secular office. Terrific conversion story.

Influenced through Keswick. Had perhaps his greatest pastor in Chicago when I was a student. I sat under his ministry week after week.

In fact, he had me to lunch when I was a student, one of the few Christian leaders that took any interest in our work, and wanted to start a board of references with himself on it. It was quite an experience. As we were in this very expensive restaurant, and I was very stubborn, perhaps not as balanced as I am now, and I asked for a cheese sandwich only.

I also told him that I didn't believe God wanted us to have a council of references, that the Holy Spirit was more than able to handle that side of things. Fortunately, he didn't turn against us, and in fact, we were some of the best attenders of his night of prayer. He started a night of prayer at Moody Church, which in the earlier hours, mainly OMers were there.

Eventually, the elders of Moody Church were upset with him, because they felt he was preaching legalism. In fact, he was preaching the Lordship of Christ, and they could not handle it. The previous pastor of Moody Church was another great influential name, the name of Harry Ironside.

Ironside, though he was a pastor of Moody Church, which he shouldn't have been doing, was Brethren right through. His writings are of the Brethren mold, very, very heavy emphasis on grace, which is good, but I don't think that Alan Redpath's preaching of the Lordship of Christ hinders the message of grace. Unfortunately, some people do.

When you sort of hint that if people don't have reality, they may not be saved, some people begin to move their toes in their shoes, and Alan Redpath had quite a difficult time in that church. Not easy for a prophet to take a pastoring. He tried two more churches after that.

No, I think he only tried one. Ran into some other difficulties there, then spent six months in a bed like a vegetable, wiped out. That's his own testimony, he wrote it up in Moody Monthly.

He was resurrected from that deep experience. Stephen Alford also had a similar experience, linked with his experiences at Calvary Baptist Church in New York City. He had an almost total nervous breakdown as well.

Very few of us can understand what it is to pastor some of these big churches with all of God's peculiar people. Alan Redpath bounced back from that time of illness and has been preaching with just as much strength as ever before. He is now aligned with the Caponry Fellowship.

And when we mention the Caponry Fellowship, we mention another very influential man in the 20th century scene, the name of Ian Thomas, the founder of the Torchbearers. An ex-military man who did some real great heroic feats in Italy against the Germans. And a very strong-minded man with a rather narrow-range message on the subject of sanctification.

I don't think in the early years he was very impressed with OM, to say the least. But over the years, we've become very, very good friends, especially as we're one of the main distributors of his books. And sent a steady flow of new students into the Caponry Fellowship, where we also get quite a few students.

We became much closer, actually, with Mr. Van Dooren, the principal of Caponry, who is a man with a great literature vision. Needless to say, Ian Thomas, who is a classic class class with some of his own very strong views has been a major influence. You'll see many similarities in the ministry of Ian Thomas, the writings of Ian Thomas, and the writings of Alan Redback.

And then there's a whole range of relatively strong men that have grown out of that fellowship. Stuart Frisco now, one of the fastest-growing churches in North America. Billy Strachan, the present leader of Caponry.

Many of his tapes are floating around OM. And there are many others. And this movement especially made quite an impact over in Germany.

Lately, of course, there's also been a lot of crisscrossing of influence from East and West. And I think this is, of course... There we go. Well, we have time for perhaps just a few others.

Let me say a word about George Mueller, J. M. Darby, Captain Hermes, the man that started the movement known as the Brethren. I'd like to get time to talk about a number of different movements, but we're running out of tape. Darby, whose name is anachronized in some circles because connected with the exclusive Brethren, actually was a brilliant man.

I think he was a lawyer. His education was in Southern Ireland. Wonderfully converted.

In his early years, he was in a bandage. Very fanatical on lifestyle. They say there's a description of Darby leaning on a crutch, moving across France, living on bread and apples.

That's a far, far distant thing from present-day Brethrenism, which is one of the most affluent and wealthy of all denominations. Exclusive Brethren, not excluded. By the way, that's one of the biggest distilleries in Scotland.

Big Jim Taylor was quite a drinker, and they had an interesting view about that. Contrary to what many people think, Darby all his life continued to teach child baptism. Bet you didn't know that was still part of the Brethren thing.

Several major exclusive Brethren movements still practice child baptism. Interesting, when one of the strongest messages or teachings of the Brethren movement over the Brethren is baptism. This movement was born in a unique period of time.

Many, many were fed up with formalism. Very simple movement. Very much took people back to some very basic and important truths in the Bible.

And in fact, Brethrenism and the Brethren movement influenced almost every movement that came after it. It just had a way of seeping in everywhere. Many people left the assemblies discontented.

Even today, many, many Pentecostal fellows have strong Brethren influence. So the Pentecostal movement came much after the Brethren movement. A strong wave of Pentecostalism, not being born until around 1905, and the Azusa Street movement, and Brethrenism was born back before that.

But it remained in the number of Brethren who are now Pentecostals.

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