

(Om Orientation) Our Situation - Warfare - Part 1

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding our situation and responding to the crisis of a lost and dying world by counting the cost of following Jesus Christ and mobilizing to take action.

Duration: 22:47

Scripture: Matthew 9:36, Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 14:25-32, Acts 1:8, Romans 10:14

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the current state of the world and the shocking reality of billions of souls suffering physically and spiritually. He emphasizes the need for individuals to have a transformative encounter with God, just as Paul did on the road to Damascus. The speaker also highlights the power of prayer and the impact that believers can have in shaking the foundations of society. The sermon serves as an orientation session for upcoming crusades in Mexico, Europe, and the Middle East, urging young people to count the cost and fully commit to following Christ. The speaker calls for a deep understanding of the Bible and a willingness to live out its principles in order to reach millions of souls for Christ.

Transcript

This is orientation session number one in preparation for Semmelweis and Operation Mobilization Crusade in Mexico, Europe, and the Middle East. Because there will be young people listening to this tape from a number of different lands, some of the facts included herein will be more pertinent to some than to others. The textbook for these sessions is the Bible, God's Word.

We also would request that you keep a notebook and especially keep track of all the Bible references given throughout the message. The subject of this first orientation session is our situation, warfare. Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we pray that with all of our intellect, with all of our heart, with all of our emotion, we might give ourselves to the understanding of your Word, to what the life of Christ is, and to how you would have us live out the principles of the New Testament in our daily life and in these crusades to reach millions of souls for Christ. For we ask it in his name. Amen.

No matter what phase of Christian work you're going into, no matter what kind of a crusade you are going to participate in for Christ, you need to, and I need, to have a full understanding of what our situation really is. If one goes into a building not knowing that the floor is weak and is about to cave in, he's going to find himself in a very difficult situation. It's important in all of life to know what our situation is, to know what's ahead, to know what we're going in for.

This is clearly pointed out in Luke the 14th chapter. In Luke the 14th chapter, Jesus Christ tells his listeners that they need to have an understanding of what they're getting into. They need to count the cost.

They need to realize just what's ahead of them. Let us look at Luke chapter 14 and see what Jesus Christ said. Luke chapter 14, starting at the 25th verse.

And there went great multitudes with him, and he turned and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it? Lest, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him.

Same, this man began to build, and was not able to finish. For what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while there is another yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Salt is good, but if the salt hath lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill, but men cast it out. He hath ears, let him hear. The Lord Jesus Christ clearly tells us here, that we need to count the cost.

We need to know what our situation is. Are we going up against an army of ten thousand, or an army of twenty? Are we going to build a fifty-story building, or a five-story building? We need to know our situation, because it makes all the difference in the world. It will make the difference between tragedy and success.

It will make the difference between defeat and victory. And how many Christians have been destroyed, have been put on the shelf, and had spiritual deceit, simply because they did not count the cost. Some young people have been defeated in Bible school, because they just didn't realize what they were going into.

Some young people have been defeated in the ministry, because they didn't realize the hellish battle that was involved in taking on the pastoral of a church, or some other task in Christian work. And before you go on a crusade in Mexico, before you take part in follow-ups in Europe, or in the Muslim world, you need to sit down, as Jesus said, and count the cost. You need to sit down and realize just what is your situation.

I beg of you young persons, and I beg of myself, to use the wrong expression, that we sit down and count the cost. That we sit down and see what's involved in following Jesus Christ. Jesus didn't mix words.

And if Jesus were preaching today in some of our evangelistic meetings, I'm not sure if his appeal would be quite like ours. I'm not sure if as many would respond to the appeal of Jesus Christ to forsake all, to take up the cross and to follow him, as appealed to some of our evangelistic meetings, in which we make

Christianity sound like sort of a bed of roses, and sort of an opportunity to get peace, happiness, and joy in a capsule. Might we sit down today and count the cost? Might we sit down today and analyze our situation? And this is why we've chosen this as the first session, for this orientation, for this preparation, for what you're planning to do this crusade.

Oh might God grip us in this next three-quarters of an hour, and bring us into a knowledge of just what we're headed into. To me it's very difficult to completely describe what our situation is right today. What our situation is as we look out over a world of three billion souls.

We can look out over the physical situation. And as we look over the physical situation of the world, it's so shocking, it's so unbelievable, it's so incomprehensible, that we can only sit down in trembling before God and say, what should I do? This is what happened to Paul, when he met God on the road in that earth-shaking experience. And he said, Lord, what would you have me do? What must I do? This is what happened to the Philippian jailer, when he encountered the gospel, when he met these revolutionary people who shook the jail through their prayers.

He said, what must I do? And so it is with us in this day, that as we look out over the world of the starving multitudes, a world which Prince Philip described recently as, in this way, when he said that half the world was going to bed on a diet that would reduce the average Westerner to skin and bones. Think of it, half the world hungry tonight. As you listen to this tape, half the world with a pang in its stomach for lack of food.

The United Nations recently reported that every day 10,000 people die of starvation. Think of it, every day the population of a large-sized town passes into eternity from starvation alone. How can we, living in 1963 and 64, realize and know that there's starving multitudes around the world? Know that there's people passing off the earth, starving to death, and be so content in our loose, lavish living.

Oh my God, grip us with the world situation today. The scientist, the doctor, the engineer, the astronaut, the president of a country, the king of a land. This man today, these men today, are conscious that they're living in a crisis hour.

They're conscious that they're living in an age in which a button can be pushed and a city can be blown off the face of the earth. Why is it that men in the world are so conscious of a crisis hour and we seemingly are so conscious or unconscious of anything going on around us? Might God grip us with the fact that we're living in a desperate hour. We're living in an hour when we cannot play, when we cannot take things lightly.

We're living in an hour that is almost indescribable. I find it difficult to even describe the situation of the world today. We've been just speaking for a second on the physical situation.

The situation of multitudes that are starving to death without physical bread. But who, who in all the earth could begin to describe the spiritual situation of the world today? The spiritual situation of cities like London and New York, the spiritual situation of cities like Paris, Madrid, Rome, Bangkok, and all of these other fantastically large cities where people live in sin, in morality and degradation beyond human description. Who could describe the situation along the Ganges River tonight? Who could describe the situation in Moscow at this very hour or in northern Siberia or in southern China? The spiritual situation, who could describe it? Only Jesus Christ walked the earth with a full knowledge of what the situation really was.

Only Jesus knew the real score here on this earth and when he looked over Jerusalem he knew the situation and he wept and he wept. Oh might we come to grips with what Jesus Christ meant when he said they were a sheep without a shepherd and how shall they hear the book of Romans says without a preacher. And we see that the world today has not heard.

For 2,000 years we have taken lightly the commands of Christ. For 2,000 years it's been a tiny little minority. It's been a little handful at times of professionals who've gone out and tried to take the gospel to the masses and it has never worked nor will it ever work.

God did not begin a religion of professionals in which a small group of paid clergymen and paid missionaries were expected to take the gospel to three billion people which is the approximate population of the world today. God's plan was that every Christian, every believer would mobilize in the name of Christ to carry the gospel to every creature. That all would be his witnesses.

His promise in Acts 1.8 isn't to a little handful of people who've gone through Bible school or seminary. It wasn't to a little handful of people who were called so-called full-time Christian workers. That promise was to every man, woman, and child who believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

And oh how we need to realize the spiritual situation in the world today is indescribable. Half the world has never received even a gospel tract. Some of you have listened to my voice or are listening to my voice now.

We're on operation mobilization in Europe and you were in villages where they had never seen a Bible. You met people who had never seen a gospel tract or a Christian pamphlet and there's still millions and yag half the world that walks in a similar situation in Turkey and Iraq and Iran, in Russia and China and India. Who can describe the situation? I talked to a leading missionary from North India recently and he said he estimated that there were still at least a hundred million souls, half the population of the United States, twice the population of Great Britain, in North India today that had never seen even a gospel tract and knew nothing of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Oh might God open our eyes to the situation in the world today and might we realize that it's a desperate one. It's an emergency situation. We know what happens today when a has an automobile accident.

It's an emergency. The sirens roar, the ambulance comes to pick up the wounded people, telephone calls are made, people fly here, people fly there, blood is given. We know what happens when there's a national emergency.

The Red Cross moves in, the Boy Scouts move in, all different charity organizations move in. This past summer there was a national emergency in Yugoslavia. It was hard to believe but 10,000 people perished in the earthquake in Sofia, Yugoslavia and when that happened the army mobilized, the Red Cross mobilized, Boy Scouts were moved from Greece over into Yugoslavia to help.

Thousands of pounds were sent from Great Britain and from other countries to help in this tremendous state of emergency. So it was in Iran not too long ago during the great earthquake. So it is whenever there's a great hurricane in America or a great national windstorm or a tidal wave in some country, a state of emergency is declared.

That's why they have in certain countries what's called martial law in which the country during a state of emergency can be completely taken over by the leader of the country and martial law goes into effect

which means that leader of the country can do what he wants with factories and with business in order that the whole country might be aimed at conquering and winning during that national emergency. We've seen it in Great Britain, we've seen it in America. War is a state of emergency and we see what happens during a war, rationing, sleeping in the underground, having one's sense taken off the front of the yard that it might be melted down and used for war weapons.

And so it is whenever a state of emergency comes there's mobilization. People begin to move, people to begin to do something, people begin to take desperate action, people begin to do things that they would have never done under normal conditions. People begin to say things they would have never said.

They go places they would have never gone. They're sleeping conditions they never slept in and they work hours that they would have never dreamed of working under normal conditions. The communists believe that they're working in a state of emergency.

They believe that their situation is worse. They believe that their situation is desperate. And a recent article, not so recent any longer, which I quote in my book on literature, Evangelism, states that the communists are winning in World War Three because they believe they're in it.

And what we call peace, they call war. And they're moving out in a fantastic way, educating thousands of young propagandists and taking the communist poison to the ends of the earth. So we see Cuba and we see countries moving into the communist revolution swept into this so-called warfare, this peacetime warfare that they carry on through bullets made of paper and ink.

And men who are willing to dedicate themselves, who are willing to forget family and friends, who are willing to forget fame, who are willing to forget everything and bury themselves for an ideology. And when I read the life of Lenin and I read the life of Marx, it was like a knife in my side and a sword in my stomach as I saw their dedication and their fanaticism for the cause of communism. And great leaders like Billy Graham have said that the church is being challenged today like never before, for the communists have taken New Testament principles, dedication, discipline, propagation, and all the rest to spread forth their poisoned doctrine.

Oh, might we look at the world today and realize what the situation is at this very hour, right where you're sitting, right in that soft chair or that hard chair, right there on the floor, wherever you're sitting, wherever you're listening to this tape, wherever you're listening to my voice, you're in the midst of a crisis situation. You're in the midst of what I believe is best described as an all-out war. And might God grip us with it.

And when he does, we'll never be the same. A man is not the same in war as he is in peace. There's all the difference between a peacetime soldier and a wartime soldier.

There's all the difference in the world between a young man with a submachine gun on the front lines of a battlefield and the same soldier back in peacetime with a cigarette hanging out of his mouth with a nice young girl in his lap. All the difference in the world. Might we see what will happen to us as Christians when we realize that our situation today is war.

When we look out at a lost and dying world, suffering, yes, without bread, but worse than that, suffering without the gospel of Jesus Christ, we're going to do something. Oftentimes I've given the illustration, and I'll give it again, of what would happen if you and I had the medicine to save a group of people that were dying downtown in the city where we live. Just imagine if the report came back to us and we heard that

there were 10,000 people dying of a dreaded disease in the center of our city.

In our little cabinet, we had the medicine they needed. We had the vaccine. We had the serum.

We had just what they needed to save them. But we said, well, I'm busy. Well, tonight I've got this activity and I have a date with Sally Q. And I have this and I have that.

They can wait. Let's not get excited about the situation. Let's not go overboard.

Let's not get unbalanced. Let's not rush into things. Let's take it easy.

We need more training. We need this. We need that.

And the 10,000 people pass into eternity and the medicine still stands in your cabinet. Now that's the most ridiculous story anyone could ever tell. Only an insane man would do that.

Only an insane man would speak like that. Only a man who was not thinking reasonably or logically would think of such a thing. Any normal human being would immediately go to his medicine cabinet and verbalize and move out down the street to help those people.

But what if you didn't have that medicine? But not far from you was a storage house. Not far from you was a storage house there. There were literally hundreds of pounds of medicine stored up.

And you went down to the storage house. You knew about these dying people. And you went to the storage house.

And you looked on the door. And on the door there was a fantastic little sign. And it says, ask and ye shall receive.

Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you. This was written above the door, this big storage house in which the medicine was contained that the world needed.

Tell me, how much would you ask for? How much medicine would you ask for? Would you knock on that door? Would you seek? Would you ask? Why, of course you would. Any unsaved, unregenerate man would do that. And yet this is just our situation today, young person.

The world is dying. The remedy, the medicine they need is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the power of God unto salvation. And although sometimes we don't have much on our own shelf, and there doesn't seem to be much potential in us, and we seem to be weak, and we don't seem to really have all that it takes to go out and to meet this crisis situation, across from us and right in front of us, there's a huge storehouse.

It's the storehouse of God's grace. It's the storehouse of God's mercy. It's the storehouse of God's love.

And above the storehouse is a great sign. It says, ask, and ye shall receive. Seek, and ye shall find.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. But we go to the storehouse, and we look. And because of unbelief, because we're self-seeking, because we're trapped into a self-centered life, and because we're mainly interested on ourselves, we fail to read the sign.

And it's blurry and dim. And we're so interested in our own ways, and our own plans, and in our own projects, and we're so caught up into naturalistic thinking, and we're so caught up into the realm of

unbelief, and fear, and murmuring, and all of the things that kept the children of Israel out of the promised land, that we never enter into the warehouse. We never take hold of the promises of God, and they never become real to us.

We read them, and the man comes to the warehouse door, and he shows us a whole list of promises. He shows us promise after promise, as we see them in page after page of the Word of God. But we don't seem to ever want to get to grips with what it's all about.

And Amy Carmichael once wrote a poem, that some of you need to read, about the masses of people that walked toward the great canyon. And there were very few centuries they were placed at very interspersing intervals. And the people plunged over this great canyon, out into eternity.

And the people heard the shrinking and the groaning. But they were busy, they were busy making their daisy chains. They were busy in good little secondary activities, and that's what a lot of you have on your Bible school campus.

That's what a lot of you have where you're working. That's what a lot of you have right around your community. A lot of good little secondary activities that you're busy in.

And we're busy, busy, busy. We're busy even sometimes in the service of the Lord. But it's not that primary task.

It's not warfare. And it's superficial, and it's a and it's a noise to God. Might the Lord grip us, even in this hour, and show us just what the situation is.

Yes, as we look at the world today, we realize our situation is a warfare. As we look at the situation today, we realize it's a warfare. Do you know what happens during war? Do you know what men do during war? You can't describe it.

I've often told the story of the Battle of Iwo Jima. This little island, some five miles wide and seven miles long, or something like that. There's just a little rock in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

But the supreme command of the United States said this little rock had to be taken. This little rock had to be conquered. This little rock had to be won.

And they spent millions and millions and millions of pounds and dollars, bombing, bombing, bombing, day after day, risking lives. Young men, strong in stature. They gave their lives flying over that island, shot out of the air.

And then they moved in, the infantry moved in, the foot soldiers, the men with calloused feet and bent fingers, moved in with the guns in their hands and the hand grenades and the weapons in their hands. And they moved in thousands of them.

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