

# Op World 2 Monday 1982

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the urgency of global evangelism and the importance of discipleship, particularly in the context of serving in India.*

**Duration:** 42:47

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Galatians 6:7-9

**Topics:** "Operation World"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of passivity and spectatorism that has infiltrated the church. He criticizes the mindset of sitting back and being entertained rather than actively engaging in the Christian life. The speaker encourages the audience to get angry about the degradation of values in society and take action by writing letters or standing up for what is right. He emphasizes the importance of perseverance and not growing weary in doing good, using biblical verses from Galatians to support his message. The sermon concludes with a reference to a respected Christian leader who visited the speaker and shared a message from the Word of God.

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## Transcript

And I hope that our vision will be truly a world vision, and that must start right here in Great Britain. This is why a lot of our effort this summer is right here in Britain, especially among immigrants, but not exclusively. And I hope that you will have that vision.

I had a quotation from Stephen Alford that I wanted to read to you on the subject of evangelism because it went through me like an arrow. It is characteristic of our natural sluggishness and laziness to put off the work of evangelism. Isn't that true? By cunning calculations and clever rationalizations, we talk ourselves out of the urgency of the past and the demand upon our time, talents and tithes.

Now we need to ask the Holy Spirit to rid us of prejudice, indifference, unbelief, and hard-heartedness. Stephen Alford. That's my question.

I want you to turn now in your Bible to the book of Galatians. I want to just share something tonight under the title of survivalship. You know, when we first started to emphasize discipleship 25 years ago, we started to distribute that great book, True Discipleship.

I hope it's on the book table. I have a load of them in my bus, which they're praying might be here tomorrow night or the next morning. But that book, True Discipleship, when it came out, it was one of the first books on the subject of discipleship.

Oswald Sanders, I believe, had a book on discipleship before that. There were a few others. And in the past years, of course, it became more and more popular to speak about discipleship.

It's good. It is in the Bible. Then a few people used this discipleship term to describe a particular brand of discipleship.

And in parts of the United States, discipleship was linked with manipulating people, with sort of a heavy-handed kind of leadership in which young people and some not-so-young came under strong authority. And that was referred to as the discipleship movement in some places. And when that happened, a lot of people, including myself, we started to wonder about the use of this word.

But I think most of you understand that discipleship is not a narrow thing. Discipleship is as broad as a narrow road that Jesus has called us to walk on. I came from an education system that specialized in making the road wider than it was.

And I never dreamed when I became a Christian that I would soon meet a lot of Christians, some of whom would have the main task, seemingly, of making the road narrower than it was. You know, the little group down on the corner that says, We are the only New Testament church. And there's a lot of groups that feel theirs is the only way.

And they specialize in making the narrow road narrower than Jesus made it. Seems strange, doesn't it? One extreme to the other. Actually, anyone who knows Jesus Christ personally, I believe, is a disciple.

He may not be a good disciple. He may not be living up to the teachings of the Master. That's why he's a disciple.

He's a student of Jesus, his Master. And he may be failing. He may have a lot more to learn.

But if he has been born again, if he started on God's road, he is a disciple. And as I was praying about the meeting and thinking about the meeting tonight, I was wondering if there might be some people that hear about this and they see the word mission somewhere. That word probably is being used.

And they may come in here thinking it's sort of an old-fashioned evangelistic mission. In fact, in the universities, they have a mission. It's a word we don't use in the United States.

We use an evangelistic crusade, evangelistic meetings. Here you have a mission, and that refers to the time at university when you evangelize and you reach out among the students. And maybe there's someone that just is here tonight, and you think, well, this is going to be a mission.

And we're going to start talking about things that you may not understand because we're here to talk about world missions. We're not here, firstly, to preach the gospel to unconverted people in Chester. That is being done regularly in the churches and probably in other meetings.

But we're here to speak about the need to preach the gospel to everybody all over the world. And I'm explaining that for a purpose because as you go out into evangelistic work, I think you will understand how easy it is to miscommunicate. And I hope that in these days you will learn something about being a better

communicator for Jesus, and one of the ways you should do that is by learning to be simple.

You know, that was one of the great emphases of Hudson Taylor, to somehow keep things simple. Simple. Simplicity.

I hope this message will be very basic and in some ways very simple, that everyone here tonight may learn something from what I want to share. Now, the verses I want to refer to are found in the book of Galatians, starting at verse 7, and these verses have helped me many, many times. Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatever man soweth, that shall he also reap.

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us, this is a key verse for tonight, let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. In due season we shall reap if we faint not.

Now, let's be very honest. If we're going to launch out in world evangelism, the Muslim world, the subcontinent, you've been hearing about many of these places. I spent a lot of time today praying for many different countries, as I was going through reports and prayer letters.

I was unable to sleep last night because of jet lag, and spent an hour or two just praying through reports from all over the world. And it's incredibly exciting what God is doing around the world. Then I picked up a manuscript.

People are always giving me manuscripts. I feel so flattered. And they want me to read their manuscripts.

And a dear brother gave me a manuscript on a book, a very basic needed book on the subject of health. The last thing I felt like reading about. And I just read some pages in this book.

And oh, how it gripped me again, the reality of health. If it's not a real place, and Jesus hasn't come to save men from sin and health, then let's close down and move a circus in the tent and make better use of the ground. Because what we're here for doesn't make any sense if men are not lost.

If Jesus Christ only came to die for the British, the Americans, and the Swedes, or people who are so reared in the so-called Christian culture, he didn't die on the cross for Muslims or Hindus or Buddhists or Communists or atheists, then, you know, I surely am one more mixed-up man. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me.

And that same Jesus who gave those words spoke more about hell than any other person in the New Testament. And it's amazing how, especially our neo-Orthodox friends or enemies or wherever else you classify them, they like to give us this whole new terminology, and they want us to have Jesus without the teachings of Jesus. And there are many that want the blessings of the Christian faith, but not the responsibility of the Christian faith.

They want to know they're going to heaven. They don't want to be involved in the sweat and the tears and the hardship and the suffering and the sacrifice to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. Men and women may be snatched from the grave.

Now, if we're going to launch into this great task in a world of four and a half billion people, four and a half thousand million people, then I believe we're going to have to learn at a very early stage how not to grow weary. Because I know in my own life, I found it so easy after a few years in the work, especially after the

first ten years, to really start to grow weary. And you're looking at a very potentially weary person.

I go perhaps through struggles with weariness, coupled with discouragement, almost on a daily basis. Very few days, perhaps because of the way my mind works, perhaps because of all the people I'm involved with, when I don't just think, you know, Lord, I don't think I can make it. Every day there's something.

Early this morning I received an urgent phone call from a friend in the United States. I'm told that one of my very close friends, one of the first persons to ever pray for this work, has a ten percent chance to live. His son begged me to phone through to the hospital in Chicago.

I got through to him. A man who's just normally just, you know, bounding with energy and strength of voice could barely hear him. He discovered his body was eaten from one end to the other with cancer.

He's been on the operating table this morning. I don't know the results. But I can tell you I spoke to a man in horrific pain and suffering.

After that I could only weep. In fact, I don't know how I would go on in my Christian life if God hadn't taught me how to weep again. As a little boy I was told that weeping was for sissies.

I tried every method to learn not to cry. I felt, you know, I'm going to be a man. You know, when you've got a little tiny body like this, you've got a few problems.

Some of you know the story. Before I was converted, I felt a little bit ashamed of this little skinny body. I saw this advertisement in the newspapers for building up your body.

It was Charles Atlas Muscle Building. They had these little cartoons. I think they're still using them.

It's the same silly cartoon 25 years later, 30 years later. There's a picture of a really good-looking girl on the beach. There's a real skinny fellow about my size.

He's sitting on the beach with his girlfriend. Along comes a big, strong fellow, good-looking and all that. He knocks the skinny fellow away and he walks off with a girl.

I thought, you know, this is what's going to happen to me all my life. They had a little coupon, very handy, you know, right in today. We can change you.

You can be a he-man. You can be a real man. I fell for it.

Dear sir, I sent in my money. For months, months I was lifting weights. I was eating extra food.

I gained a half a pound. Something was mainly on my nose. It was a wonderful day after I became a Christian.

It didn't happen all at once, but slowly. When I just realized, you know, when God made me, He didn't make a mistake. I learned to really accept myself and to function in God's strength, in God's energy.

I remember, even as a young Christian at times, being tempted to do something really foolish and being saved from going into that sin by that ninth verse in the book of Galatians. I shared briefly last night about how I was converted. Let me just say that one of the main things that helped me as a young Christian to go on in the Lord, and I know some of you are young Christians, it was to memorize God's word.

Peter, you've been in a lot of the meetings. Has that been emphasized yet, memorizing God's word? Has it been emphasized? How many have heard a challenge in these days about memorizing God's word? Let me just know. Somebody's mentioned it.

Good. I'll just say amen to whatever that person said. And you may want to start with Galatians chapter 6. What a chapter.

It's good to memorize whole chapters. You know, it's often when we meet a Christian who's committed and going on for God, like our brother Dale wrote on, we want to know, what's your secret? What special triple over crisis experience did you have that put you on the upper trail for Jesus? Somebody was traveling with Dale. I heard this story, and I think it's true.

They wanted to know what his secret was. Was it you? Am I using one of your illustrations? I told you you should be preaching. Anyway, it was Peter Conlon traveling with Dale, and basically, if I remember right, Dale simply said he read the Bible.

He read the Bible. Well, I knew Dale. I knew that he not only read it, but he memorized it.

I remember when I went out to where he was studying at college. He studied at Wheaton College. He had a job because he had to make a little money in his spare time.

He had two or three practical Christian work efforts. He was working among black people in Chicago. He was doing this and doing that.

He was doing a regular degree course, and yet he had time to memorize a high percentage of the New Testament, chapter by chapter. He used to put them on cards, put a little verse on cards. I remember going into his room and seeing all these cards, pile after pile after pile, cards filled with text from the Word of God.

I think one of the most important decisions you can make in these days together, whether you're here for the operation world from out of town or whether you're a local person, is the decision to memorize God's Word. Memorize God's Word. One of the first persons who came to share with me last night for a little counseling, which I always do at the end of the meeting, his burden was concerning how to get in the Word of God.

He was finding the Word of God dry, difficult. That's normal for many people. We're all different.

Some people, because of the way their mind is, because of other factors, and of course the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives, they just, after conversion, get into the Bible and they just stay in it. Others find Bible study very hard. They may not understand it.

We don't all have the same education. We find people who don't have as much education as maybe someone else. Some of the great believers I met in India, they were illiterate.

The only way they could get the Word of God was sitting in meetings. Boy, they got a lot. Some of the meetings were three hours long.

I remember arriving one night in a meeting. We had difficulty on the road. We arrived several hours late.

It was about 11 o'clock at night. You thought they'd all go home. No, they were just praising the Lord and they were worshipping.

I found the believers in India generally a lot more relaxed about things. Imagine in the West arriving three hours late to the meeting. Just find everybody praising the Lord.

No. They were having a wonderful time and I arrived. The main thing they were concerned about when I arrived was that I would not cut the ministry short.

They knew me. The reputation had gone ahead. They said, Brother, we want full portion tonight.

Dear brother, full portion. We must have gone for about two hours. Then the ON team was having a night of prayer that night.

I said, Look, I'm going off to prayer meeting now. You all need to go to bed. They didn't even go to bed.

They started praising the Lord again. Until some strange hour in the morning. I think when our so-called night of prayer was ending, some of them were still going to bed.

Lo and behold, I was just about to go to bed and a man knocked on my door. He said, Brother, we'd like another portion in the morning. I thought, They're going to bed late.

They're going to bed late, so morning, these people, they're humans, they're probably 10, 11 o'clock. We'll have a Bible reading. No, no.

Six o'clock, brother. They had to go back to the fields that next day or have something else. Oh my, what I learned in India.

I just want to challenge you, young people from Great Britain. I believe that India and the subcontinent in general provides you the greatest opportunity for Christian service in the world today. I really believe that.

I meet so many people in the United States and other parts of Europe. They'd like to go, some of them even for long term, into India. Many of our leaders who are in the ship ministry now, their first preference would have been long term in India.

But because they weren't British and because non-commonwealth people cannot get proper visas generally, I can't get in at all anymore. They don't go. And you have a passport that can go into India without a visa.

And I would ask you to consider the possibility of at least giving two years of your life to the subcontinent. You don't need a missionary call to do that. You need a little common sense and a little guidance.

And I'm convinced that if you'll seek the Lord, at least some of you, not all, will get the guidance to go out because the need is so great, the hour is so short, the opportunity is beyond description. And because it's a country, more than any country, where British people have a wide open door, and though it was once your colony in an amazing way, because of the unique way you handled your former colonies, they still welcome you. Not everybody welcomes you.

That's not true. You know, that won't be true anywhere in the world. And it would be wonderful to see an army, an army of workers going out to India.

You know, I think of our brother here with the China Inland Mission, oversees missionary fellowships. I've often asked the question, why do these people, when they come out of China, not go into India? I don't know who made that decision. Probably seem in heaven.

But we don't have so many great faith missions like the China Inland Mission, OMF, working in India. We have some. Usually have a very small staff.

WECC was there, very tiny staff. And now they work through various complications. They decide anybody who goes out with WECC, they join Operation Mobilization.

So WECC and OMF join together to work in India. And OMS is there. You may not have heard of OMS.

It's a very great mission society. The Oriental Mission Society. They may have changed their name.

Everybody's changing their name trying to keep up with all these missions. But they have a great work, but mainly in the South. Then we hear the work of Bakhsh Singh.

I've referred to that already. That's also mainly in the South. Rajasthan, Ujjain Pradesh.

These places will be presented in other meetings, so I won't go into it. Get that great booklet available on the literature table about India. These places only have a tiny fraction, a tiny fraction of many other countries in the world.

You know, sometimes I'm in London. I live in London and I'm talking to people about world missions. And they say, some of them get upset.

They say, how can you talk about London or about other countries when the need is so great in London? Then I have to control my metabolism and pray for more grace. And I say, look, I know London is needy. We also have a team in London.

We have a team among Arabs in London. We often have a team among Jews in London. We had an Easter crusade in London.

But I want to tell you something. And I want to tell you something because some of you are from London. That most of the cities that I've lived in have less than one-tenth, less than one-tenth of the witness that London has.

So I'm not saying London isn't needy. But what are you going to say about Bombay, Calcutta, Milan, Torino, Madrid, Barcelona, Paris, Kathmandu, Bangkok, and a host of other cities? In the University of Paris, they have one, this is even a ridiculous comparison, maybe one-tenth, maybe one-hundredth of the witness that you would have in the average British university. There's no comparison.

And it seems to me that those of us who do remain in Britain, I'm in that group part of the year. We don't need to run around defending why we're working in Britain. We don't need to come out with false statistics so that we can make our work appear to be as important as the work in India.

We should simply acknowledge we are together. And one of our purposes in London is to recruit for India. The only thing I will then ask is where are the recruits? Because the average church in London sends no recruits whatsoever to India, not even one.

You can even go into very large churches in London and they will not have a single recruit in India. I want to tell you if the secular businesses in London went about their business the way the Church of Jesus Christ is going about world evangelism, they would be bankrupt in a month. And businessmen who five days a week in their business are sharp and committed and they're out to make a profit and they're out recruiting and all kinds of things when they come to church they just sit.

You know, there's big competition to Operation World going on down in Wimbledon. Do you realize that? Sue Barker, I don't think, did so well. Maybe she ought to come up here.

But we'll give her a greater challenge than even playing tennis. I'm sure she's already at it, especially hanging around Cliff Richards. But I was watching Stan Smith just for a few minutes and I don't know whether he won or not.

Another committed Christian in the tennis world. But it's interesting tennis, isn't it? Oh my goodness, all these people sitting around, thousands of them. I've never been there.

I can't afford it. But two people out in the court or several courts, of course, just working with all their heart firing the little ball back and forth across the net. You know, if somebody came from another planet that didn't know anything about sports, they could really get some confusing ideas about planet Earth.

You know, it may be all right for Wimbledon, but it's not all right for the church. And yet, that same type of spectatorism, that same type of spectator mentality has invaded the church. And in most churches, it seems to be a small number of people that are working like mad.

I wonder how it worked out for Operation World here in Chester. How many really got involved, really worked hard? Maybe a couple of hundred. Well, they haven't come out tonight, actually.

But probably the work was carried on by a few committee members. And probably in the average church, even here, it's a few who carry the load. And the majority are spectators.

I believe that's one of the greatest blights on our thinking and on our lifestyle. We're spectators. And we don't want Operation World to be just one more series of meetings, one more sort of evangelical Wimbledon, where we all come and sit and we watch slides and speakers and messages and films and panels and interviews.

We want this to be a starting mark for moving out, out of the stands and into the field of action. We want you to win a soul to Jesus Christ within the next couple of weeks because God's touched your heart here. We want you to write in to several of these mission societies.

The missionary situation is complex. If you want to eventually end up a missionary, it's good to start writing a number of societies as soon as possible. They got a lot of regulations.

They got a lot of different countries they're working in. It's not a simple thing to become a missionary. It's not a matter of just going back after the meeting, sitting on one of those tables, and somebody will come along and pick you up, put you in his car and take you to the airport and fly you to Mozambique.

It doesn't exist anymore. I think it's the Malagasy Republic. It's going to take some door pushing.

This is why so few are going. We have so little initiative. I can't believe, I can't believe the lack of initiative, even in my own little fellowship of OM, much less the rest of the world.

You know, one of the things we try to teach people in OM is to send out a prayer letter. You say, what's a prayer letter? See, we believe that the work of world evangelism is linked with the people who pray. So those of us who are out on the field, we send back a little letter.

Now, some people have made use of those letters to mainly ask for finance. I'm not saying whether that should or should not be done. There's a place for it, I think, in certain cases.

The letter that we ask our young people to send out is to simply give information. And yet, as I've taken a survey, even among young people who have been around OM for several years, I find that they have very few people sometimes on their prayer letter list, and I find sometimes it does not increase one single person from one month to the next. I was recently with someone around OM, six or seven years, and they had about 60 people on the prayer letter list, and it had barely increased.

I have difficulty understanding that. On the other hand, I do understand it. Initiative doesn't seem to be easy to come by any longer.

Maybe it never was. Could there could that be partially because through television we've become even more a passive generation? The average person spends thousands and thousands of hours watching television before he's 21 years of age? And now, of course, they have television dinners, so you don't even have to hardly do anything. You just walk into the kitchen for a minute, push the dinner in the oven, and then ask your little brother to bring it out when it's cooked.

And now, of course, because it's such a hardship to get out of your chair and go to the television to change the channel. People were literally collapsing. People were having heart attacks moving from the chair to the television.

And so now, the big thing is you can sit back in the chair and you have a little... I was in a home the other day. It was in the United States, cable television, 45 channels. 45 channels.

This was a big diner. I didn't want to watch anything. I just wanted to play with it.

Sports, rock music, strip team. I didn't watch that. Everything you can imagine.

44 some channels. The passive, initiative-less, spectator generation. Doesn't that make you angry? Some of you need to get angry.

It's been a long time since you've been angry. Get angry! You say, isn't that wrong to be angry? No. The Bible says don't let the sun go down upon your anger.

But I heard a message the other day how important it is at times for Christians to get a little bit angry. When we see some of the degradation of womanhood through pornography, we should get angry. When we see some of the things that happen in government, we should get angry and sit down and write somebody a letter if you still love your own country, don't want to see the whole nation just go down the drain.

Get angry and sin not. And I, when I think of the spectatorism that has invaded the church, the lack of perseverance, the lack of drive, the unwillingness to go the extra mile, the heartaches. Well, it was about 26 years ago that I started to speak this way, started to try to live this way, and I can assure you that many times I have got very, very weary and I find wherever I go, now that I'm in the middle years, isn't it? Boy, I

think these are great years, I tell you.

You know, this has been one of the best years of my whole life, this year, since going back to, say, 1st of August. I can't remember too much what happened before that. I picked up a book some time ago, Mid-Year Crisis.

You know, everybody's talking about this, the mid-year crisis. When you come to the middle years, all kinds of problems, you know, take place, and then you come into what people are now calling male menopause, you know, male menopause. You've got to go to a psychiatrist, hello.

And I picked up this book, Mid-Year Crisis. I was feeling great until I read that book. You know, there's something in this, that as we start to think negatively, we, we, sometimes we start to get more problems.

And one of the reasons I'm so thrilled now to be in the middle years is because for years I lived under the cloud of youthful zeal. That's all I was. You cannot believe the criticism we had to go through.

God, we used to hit, never got bitter over it. Criticism, best thing we ever had. And, and, and how people just wiped us off, youthful zeal.

When those 900 young people from Great Britain launched across the English Channel in 1963 to reach 90,000 villages with the gospel of Jesus Christ, they were turned on fire. Most of them, a high percentage of them wanted to become missionaries. They wanted to go to the ends of the earth until they got back to Britain and had to go through more cold water than you and I could ever imagine even existed and just be written off as just a bunch of youthful zealots.

And many of them never recovered from it. You know, it's interesting what Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones says about being active. You see, if you're a young person and you start to get active, you start to get out a few tracks, you start to knock on a few doors, you say, I'm going to go on OM to Spain or I'm going to join OMF and go to China or I'm going to join this mission and work in the back ghettos of London, just as tough probably as China.

Someone is going to put the youthful zeal guilt trip on you, especially if you make any mistakes, as if anybody's going to do anything on this planet without making mistakes. And sometimes people are quite kind to you until you make your first mistake and then, boom. If you're not making any mistakes, it's indicative you probably aren't doing very much.

Failure is the back door to success. Every great general that ever lived made mistakes. I looked on TV at the news the other night and I saw one of the mistakes that was made in the Falklands.

It was a calculated risk. Instead of sending those men over the difficult, tough terrain to that one particular place, they decided to take them without air cover on that ship down along the coast and when the Argentinians hit, that one ship alone, 50 were dead. And many of you saw it on TV.

It was a major news feature. It was an all-victory in the Falklands, my friends. But the ultimate victory came to Britain, at least up to now.

And in the Christian life, it's not a matter of two weeks. It's not a matter of two months. It's the long, great, ultimate victory that we're aiming at, though in fact, we know it has already been won by the Lord Jesus Christ through what He has done on the cross.

And I think it's so important to understand it. It's so important to realize the need to bounce back when we do fail and to not allow some little cliché or some little expression that's handed to us at a moment of failure and when you leave here in the next month, you will have some failures. So allow yourself to get discouraged and depressed and then throw in the towel and quit.

Praise God for David Wilkerson's new book, *Have You Felt Like Quitting Late*. Have You Felt Like Let me read what Lord Jones said. Nothing is more obvious about the teaching of the New Testament than this, that the Christian life is a life of activity, a life of vigor, a life of exertion.

The strength is given to us by the Lord, but we must act. Here's that dear old saying, he's now with the Lord, respected by a high percentage of all the Christian leaders in Britain, even those who were not of the same theological persuasion, generally respected the old doctrine. And here's what he says.

No wonder he decided, though it brought some criticism, that before he died he would visit the old M.V. Dulas and share a message from the Word of God. And before you leave here, if that bus gets up here, there's a tape in the tape collection that you can get of a message that Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones gave on the Dulas in London sometime before he died, pleading with us for balance, sound doctrine. Yes, we need sound doctrine.

In some places that's not emphasized enough, but also a move of the Holy Spirit, revival, freedom, the power of God. Yes, I believe one of the things God wants to teach us during these days is how to persevere. Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

One of the things that's going to help us in that perseverance is to memorize the Word of God and to learn to use the weapons of the warfare. Tomorrow night I'm going to share with you some of the specific ways that God has helped me to persevere over these 27 years since I was converted. Sometimes people come to me and they say, well, when do you get the time? They know I'm involved a little bit in administration and that I often take a couple of meetings a day and have a few other things to do.

They say, well, when do you prepare your messages? And I sometimes have to say, I hope it wasn't misunderstood, my whole life is preparation for my next message. The next message is inspiration for the rest of my life. Of course, there are times when you specifically prepare and I have notes and I believe in that kind of preparation.

But for this message that I want to continue tomorrow evening on the subject of survivalship and perseverance, God has been burning it into my spiritual life since my conversion. Because it hit me as a young Christian, it hit me very hard that a high percentage of people fall away. Nothing shook me more than to see people come to Christ, go on for Christ and then fall away.

I was in evangelism as a teenager. I saw people come to Jesus and I loved these people and I wrote them and I went after them and I visited them. Then I moved away to college and then I went somewhere else and as I wrote back to some of these people, they no longer were interested at all.

They denied the very experience, the very girl that went forward with me at the Billy Graham meeting to accept Jesus. Within two years, she just threw the whole thing over. Fifteen years later, I went to visit her in Florida and she, it was all just a little childhood fantasy.

She was now in women's lib. She was studying to be a lawyer. No small shock because she was a very close friend.

Then a year after getting her law degree and everything she ever dreamed about, she died just like that of cancer. You know, in God's work, people are important. And one of the faults in our western culture, in our Anglo-Saxon culture is that often we are project-centered rather than people-centered.

And I want to give a call tonight as we bring this to a close that you will become people-centered in your ministry, in your thinking. So that when you meet people and you become friends, you take your name, you take their name, you pray for them. And that you do everything you can to encourage them on.

Michael Griffith wrote that amazing little booklet. I'd be happy to send you a copy. We could have operation feedback.

Take out a piece of paper, put my name on it, ask me any question you want, put any prayer request you want, limit it to one page because I'm still reading the feedback for the last two weeks. But I pray through every piece of paper that gets to me. Or at least look at it.

Can't say I pray for it. Everything, I'm not a human being, not possible. But in that feedback, because I don't think this booklet is available, may be out of print, we'll have to duplicate it to fulfill this promise, but I'd like you to send you that book encouraging one another.

Encouraging one another. You know, I find that as exciting as preaching. One of the main ministries I've had the last two months as I'm seldom in the States was just to call people up and to just encourage them on in their faith.

I couldn't do much on the phone. You can't preach a message. Hello John, how you doing? Here's six points, hang on there, this phone call is going to cost about ten pounds.

But you can call someone up. Some people die New Years ago, today they're divorced. In their minds they think, oh, we're divorced, George Brewer.

Then I call them up. Call the wife up. She's living in one state.

How you doing? Think of one couple where the wife was really innocent in this situation. She's pressing her on, she loves Jesus. Call the husband up.

They couldn't believe it. George Brewer, haven't seen each other for seven years, still thinks of me, still knows my number. I found out though he's a divorced person, he's crawling his way back somehow to California.

Somehow he wants to get his life back again. One thing I learned, that with God, when you know Jesus Christ personally, there's no end to the road. Some of you, someday, you may think you're at the end of the road.

You've blown your life, maybe you've blown your marriage, maybe you've sinned in a terrible way. I will tell you, if you know Jesus, you're backslidden. He's just longing, he's just longing to reach out, pick you up.

And somehow in this conference, if the message of God's mercy and God's grace doesn't get through to our hearts, we'll just go out of here a semi-nervous wreck. We'll just go out of here with endless guilt trips.

We'll just go out of here feeling we've failed more than ever before, more guilty than ever before.

And remember, when God hits you, it's because he wants to prepare you for a blessing. When God hits you, it's because he's got a mercy drop, or maybe even a mercy gallon to pour down your heart. Don't fail to get it.

Because without the mercy of God, the grace of God, the forgiveness of Christ to sinners and failures, there's not going to be any world of angels. That's why I'm still here. It hasn't been all the discipline or the principles of discipline.

It hasn't been, you know, all that I've learned of New Testament teaching. It hasn't been the training I received in Mexico, or even the verses I've memorized. All of that is a factor.

But it has been the mercy of God poured out again and again when I felt I couldn't go one more mile, when I felt so hurt, so confused, and lay there in my puddle of tears that God just met me in supernatural grace. Do you know how to meet God that way? When you're down, you're discouraged, you're scared. You ever get scared? I get scared every week.

This planet scares me. The whole place scares me. Lebanon scares me.

Egypt scares me. Certain people scare me. When that man in the United States tried to pull a bullet through the President of the United States when I was there two weeks ago, suddenly declared innocent.

Innocent, because he was somehow mentally not all there. I get scared. And I have friends who assure me who are in the world of psychiatry that there are more murderers running loose on the streets today than ever before.

One of my closest friends from India was just found dead with a bullet in an apartment house in Brooklyn. I'll never see him again. I hope I'll see him in heaven.

Yeah, I get scared. And I know one thing. When I'm at the end of my resources, shaking, scared, confused, sometimes even wondering about things that I read in the Bible that I don't understand, God is ready to meet me.

And there is power, wonder-working power, in the precious blood of Jesus Christ. There is grace, overwhelming grace, even for the weakest of us in the Christian life. I am no strong Christian, I can assure you.

But if I can find the way to find that grace and to draw on that mercy, not for just my youthful, zeal years, but now for these heavy, difficult, little years, then hallelujah, there's hope for everybody in this tent. Let's get with it. Let's repent of unbelief.

Let's repent of lack of initiative. Let's put our hands on the plow and realize, by the grace of God and the mercy of God, we shall not turn back until the ends of the earth have heard his name. That's God's way.

Let's get in the race and run together. Amen. Let's pray.

Father, we just thank you for your grace and mercy. Lord, I didn't even get to the message tonight. I only got the introduction.

But somehow I believe that you can use these feeble words and we can have the message tomorrow night. Lord, we need to be shaken. We need to be shaken out of the grand stands of evangelical game playing, into the field of battle, sweat, tears, toil, agony for souls, and yet grace and love, forgiveness and joy, unspeakable, full of glory.

Lord, baptize us afresh with your power in these days and we may move as a mighty army to do your will and to run the race right to the end. And we'll give you the glory and we'll give you the praise. In Jesus' name.

Amen.

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