

# Our Goal Is God

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer emphasizes that the ultimate goal of life is to worship God and live in His presence daily.*

**Duration:** 53:31

**Scripture:** Psalm 148:1, Psalm 149:2, Psalm 150:1, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:2, Galatians 2:20, 2 Timothy 3:16

**Topics:** "Biblical Discipleship", "Worshiping God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of basing our faith on the Word of God. He mentions that some people have created their own pictures of heaven and hell, but it is crucial to rely on the teachings of the Bible. The speaker also discusses the purpose of a training program in evangelism, highlighting the need for discipline and discipleship. The ultimate goal is to know and worship God, and the speaker encourages the audience to prioritize this above all else.

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## Transcript

I especially am encouraged seeing some of you who have been around for a few years and have come back for at least this weekend, and a joy to see some of the parents of one or two people that are out with us. We normally don't have anniversary celebrations or things like that, but we felt that after twenty years of God's faithfulness toward us, it would be good to especially emphasize that this weekend. And some of you have come in the light of that, and we really want to welcome you again.

I'm sure you have been welcomed. Let's just pray for a moment. Lord, we just thank you for bringing us together here from different parts of the country and even the world.

You know our needs. You know our burdens. We thank you that we can cast every care upon you.

We're not here to hear one man or two men, but we are here to hear your voice. We know you do use people, and we don't have a hang-up about that. And we want to be channels only.

We thank you that we can say, because of your reality in us, be followers of me. This is not just words, not just some kind of talk, evangelical jargon, but it's reality. We want reality, and we want your Son, Jesus, to truly be Lord in our lives.

Guide us together now. In Jesus' name, amen. It is a joy for the first time in the United States to introduce you to a new book, Operation World, a book that perhaps some will classify as one of the most unique missionary books that has ever been printed.

We printed 50,000 copies and sold 32,000 before publication. It's a book that presents missionary facts about every single nation in the world. The prayer cards that you know about were taken from the old edition of this book, which never was well known.

It was published in one or two places and never became well known. The cover was terrible, and no one ever pushed it. Now the new edition of Operation World, with some of the statistics, 1977, is off the press.

And due to the new airline regulations, four of us who flew across the Atlantic each came with a full suitcase of Operation World. So there are copies available. It sells for \$3.

All long-term O.N. people staying for the year eventually will be given one free, but not here, on these airmail copies. These will have to be sold. But it's a book you're going to want to make use of, and be sure to at least take a look at it.

You can borrow a copy from the table, just try to put it back without damaging it. Let's especially pray that Christian leaders in this country, and mission leaders, will get a vision to push this book. We believe that God really wants to make it known among his people.

Billy Graham almost pushed the prayer cards on a nationwide TV set-up. Last minute they changed their mind. I don't know why.

He has been sent a copy of this book with a hope that he, and of course other Christian leaders, are receiving advanced copies, will push it. And let's pray that something may happen along that line. There's so much to share with you during this week.

I believe we're going into one of the most unusual summer crusades in the history of the work. It's difficult to know where to begin in this first session. I think we want to begin especially by giving praise to God.

We often thank various people who have made conferences like this possible, and I'm sure some of that has been done and will be done. Though I think here in the States we tend to go a little overboard on that, just my own personal opinion. But we want to just give thanks to God, and I'd like to do this by reading a psalm, or two, or three.

And if you turn to the last three psalms, you'll find three very good psalms of praise. Now we've got so many different translations of the Bible, it's difficult to read in unison any longer anything in the church. In India we don't worry about it all sounding nice.

We just all read sometimes six languages at once. We figure the Lord understands it without any difficulty at all. But I'd like to read responsibly, starting at Psalm 148, reading right through Psalm 150.

I will read one verse, and then you read verse two back to me. I'm reading from the authorized version. If you have anything near that, please read vocally.

If you have a living Bible or a paraphrase, read silently, because it leads us astray. Okay, Psalm 148. I read first, you read the even verses right through.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens. Praise Him in the heights.

Praise ye Him, sun and moon. Praise Him, all ye stars of light. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for He commanded and they were created.

Praise the Lord from the earth, ye serpents and all deeps. Mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and cedars. Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all judges of the earth.

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for His name alone is excellent. His glory is above the earth and heaven. Praise ye the Lord, singing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints.

Let them praise His name in the dance. Let them sing praises unto Him, with timbrel and harp. Let the saints be joyful in glory.

Let them sing aloud upon their beds, to execute vengeance upon the nations and punishment upon the peoples. To execute upon them the judgment written, this honor have all His saints. Praise ye the Lord.

Praise Him for His mighty acts. Praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with a timbrel and dance.

Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

Praise God for His word. I hope that you will dwell in the Psalms. In my habit, almost since conversion, to try to spend some time every day in the Psalms and also in Proverbs, because we believe God's highest calling to us is worship.

I'd like to read a little quotation from the introduction of J.B. Phillips to the letters to the young churches. He said, the great difference between present-day Christianity and that of which we read in these letters, the epistles, is that to us it is primarily a performance to them. It was a real experience.

We are apt to reduce the Christian religion to a code, or at the best, the rule of heart and life. To these men it is quite plainly the invasion of their lives by a new quality of life altogether. They do not hesitate to describe this as Christ living in them.

Mere moral reformation will hardly explain the transformation and the exuberant vitality of these men's lives, even if we could prove a motive for such reformation. And certainly the world around offered little encouragement to early Christians. We are practically driven to accept their own explanation, which is that their little human lives had, through Christ, been linked up with the very life of God.

I think it's important on this first day to understand our goals. Our goal is God Himself. Watchman Nee says that God will arrange the circumstances, and He will do it this summer, I can assure you, to break you on your strongest point.

To get you to that place where you will recognize that your goal is God Himself, and your greatest joy is worship. It is easy to mouth the evangelical clichés and to pronounce the various sentences that are acceptable to the present-day evangelical scene, even the OM scene. It's another thing to truly have these things as your goal.

Worship, praise, adoration, thanksgiving. You don't answer this question by saying yes or no, you answer it by what you do with your time. How much time did you give yesterday for worship, praise, adoration, and glorifying the Lord? Or last week, or last month? When did you last take a day to be just alone with God Himself? No one else, just God Himself and His Word.

Or half a day, or half an hour. I'm convinced that we have become professionals in the present evangelical world at the game of words. And if you don't think that OM will be affected by the present evangelical scene, it's probably because you haven't been on OM yet.

Those of you long-termers who have been out there staring at me for the last 10 years know how desperately OM needs revival at this time, and renewal. And this isn't something that happens once a decade, but something that needs to happen every year. Yea, I believe it needs to happen every day.

Some of you think I'm a man of God. In fact, you're looking at a natural backslider. If Verwer's fast, he's fast at backsliding, and too fast at lusting if he happens to find a free chunk of pornography laying in the men's room in the British rail train when he's trying to get to a meeting.

You may have a few surprises these days when you discover how weak some of us are who are out in the so-called missionary battlefronts of world evangelism. But our goal is God, and we're learning how to worship Him. And if we're natural backsliders, then we naturally have only one solution, and that's repent daily, instantaneously, whenever that temptation comes upon us.

And Christians need to know the difference between temptation and lust, or temptation and sin, which I hope we'll get into during this week, because I find a lot of people very, very guilty and very, very worried because they have these horrific thoughts and terrible temptations, and sometimes they get confused between temptation and sin. Our goal is God. We want this conference to be a time of worshiping God.

We haven't just come here to prepare you for something else. With the Christian, every day is preparation, and yet every day is a final goal. One of the reasons we have been excited about this book, *Destined for the Throne*, though it has already become a controversy among OM leaders, since we have such a wide range of theological people in the OM ranks, you can never get them to agree on any one book.

In fact, they're even arguing over the Bible. But one of the reasons that most of us are so excited about this book, *Destined for the Throne*, is because of its emphasis on intercession, its emphasis on this aspect of our life, worship, praise, intercession. And we feel this is so important.

I think here in America, we become overly conscious of our gifts. We become overly conscious of our educational background, our degrees, our abilities. Now, God can use these things, but often, in fact, I would say in most cases, before they can be used the way God wants to use them, there has to be the breaking, the purging, there has to be the cross, coming upon the most sophisticated ability, the greatest amount of education, or the greatest gifts.

Isn't it interesting that some of the most gifted American evangelicals became the worst reprobates? Giftedness can be the slow fuse to your own destruction. Some of you say, wow, no problem for me, I haven't found any of my gifts yet. You'll find them.

You'll find them. It's easy to say that you don't feel you have any great gift, but it's another thing to be that same way many years from now. I might say that I always find it very difficult to speak to a group of people like we have gathered here this morning, because I know that there are people from so many different backgrounds.

And I know that some of you are very gifted people. And I know there are others who are in a stage in which you're not sure whether you're a one-talent man, a five-talent man, or ten-talent man, you're not even sure what talents are anyway. And we're coming together, and we're facing each other in a unique

situation.

So our goal is God. At this conference, we want to worship God. Our worship times are not a means to the end, the worship times are the end.

I hope I don't cross anybody's evangelistic circuit. But with us, worship is a higher calling than evangelism. We don't put actually the two against each other.

There's no sense in doing that. And if someone presses me, which is more important, worship or evangelism? I'm not interested in debating that subject. I want to get on in worship and evangelize, not argue which is more important, worship or evangelism.

Actually, I think there is a sense in which everything we do can be worship. The Word of God says, whatsoever you do, do it heartily as unto the Lord. Those who have to work in the kitchen, they can worship even if they have to miss the official worship meeting.

Most of you have read about Brother Lawrence, this unusual man who worked in the kitchen for 14 years, and who knew such a sweet communion with God in that kitchen. Oftentimes, even the rattling of the pots and pans, he never noticed because he was worshiping the Lord, a man of God. We don't want any dichotomies.

We don't want this kind of situation where we put the secular over here and the sacred over here. Where if we're in here worshiping and praising the Lord with a chorus or a psalm or a hymn, we're very spiritual. But if we're carrying books or changing attire or repairing a carburetor or cooking a meal, we're doing something very secular, very, very mundane.

The greatest need in OM is for people in the practical work who know the reality and the fullness of the Holy Spirit, who know how to take spirituality into the nitty-gritty, into the hard work that's necessary to operate two ocean-going ships, 250 to 300 vehicles moving across the world, and 25 major headquarters and all that goes with it. Our goal is God. We're not just here to prepare to do something in the future.

Some of us may be in heaven in a week. Who has a guarantee that they're going to live even more than the seconds that represent the very breath he's breathing at this very moment? We have other goals in OM. It's funny, sometimes people, they listen to the first part of this message, our goal is God, worship, praise, and they say, oh, that's nice.

Now, what are your real goals? Our real goal is God, worship, praise, and we know we're not going to get that into you in this conference totally the way we want, nor in one summer, nor in one year. One of the leaders came to me after eight years in OM, he said, you know, it's beginning to sink in, what you're trying to say. Eight years.

It's beginning to sink in, what you're trying to say. You see, we know that a large percentage of people who are attracted to OM initially are activists. They're activists.

That's why they come on OM, and they've heard that George Furver is an activist, which he is, and they've heard that OM is an aggressive movement that's reaching 12, 13, 15, 20 million people a year, which we are, and that we've got 200, 300 vehicles moving across the world, and now two ships, and we believe in evangelism, and we believe in church planting, and so they're attracted, and they want to go, they want to move, that's why they're here. Some of the very people we wish were here are not here

because our image frightened them away. The activist image, the on-the-attack image, the militant evangelistic image, the literature distributor image, that's the worst image you can get in the present evangelical scene, because literature is now looked down on by the, you know, the real, the real inset group, because today we're talking about church growth.

This is the thing today. You've got to talk about church growth. You can get a PhD on church growth, even if you've never planted a church, even if you've never led a single soul to Christ, you can get a PhD on church growth.

You can even get one without being saved. Now, believe it or not, OM is very interested in church growth, and we will be giving sessions somewhere along the line on church growth. It's a tremendous thing if it's kept in balance with all these other things, but today, if a movement gets out the image that they give out tracts, they're finished.

They're dead before they've started, and a lot of people that we would love to see here right today, men that could be used so mightily, are not here because they got this particular image, or that particular image, because there are many images, but our goal is God, and we want to see this on a practical level, and we want to see you learning this, and this is why for us, for example, the quiet time is so important, and getting into God's Word is so important, and when you get out on your team, we hope if your team leader has been trained properly, many of them are not, he will give you time for your quiet time, and you will take it. Alan Redpath, that great British preacher who shook Moody Church year after year in Chicago, said the greatest problem, at least in Britain, is blanket victory. You know what that is? Blanket victory.

Probably 30% of the people on the OM year program, by the end of the first year, are no longer having an effective quiet time. 30%. Just in case you think you're joining the great group of super-spiritual saints, no.

You're joining a fellowship of people just like yourself. Weak, struggling, inadequate, not always having all the answers, and especially undisciplined. Without a question, certainly among the top three or four greatest needs that young people have today, and it was true in my day, is discipline, and we hope that this could be perhaps our second major goal, that people would learn to be a disciple, a disciplined one, that people would learn something about the great disciplines of the New Testament, prayer, witness, love, the Word, and on we go, day after day, we'll be giving them to you, here at this conference, and over in Europe, and throughout the summer.

Let me ask a question based on a survey I've been taking in British universities. I've spoken at a different university almost every other week in Britain. By the way, 50% of the British young people you'll be working with this summer, they represent the largest number of recruits, usually three or four hundred.

About 50% of them will be British university students. The Bible college movement is not that strong in Britain. The Christian college movement is almost non-existent.

That's why at Cambridge University, on Saturday night, there are 900 students worshipping Jesus, at Cambridge alone. At Oxford, 900. At Durham, and Newcastle, and the universities throughout Britain, there's a great move of God.

Though they're not all theologically in the same boat, and that's one of the other exposures you're going to get fast and heavy as you come into OM, God is moving in those universities. And if there's any un-stereotyped group of university students in the world, it's the British. But as I went through British

universities, I asked these students, how many of you, you know, these are intellectuals, how many of you have read the Bible through at least once? You know, you're a Christian.

Christians believe in Bibles. They believe in reading the Bible. How many of you have read the Bible through at least once? You know, Genesis chapter 1, verse 1, we're all arguing about, through Revelation.

Less than 10% of the Christians in those meetings had read the Bible through once. Now let me take my survey here, see how you do. I'm sure you do better than the British university students.

A lot of you have been around for a while. Not all young people here today. But how many of you have read the Bible through completely, at least, even the Living Bible, any Bible? We are in favor of the Living Bible.

We believe they're all alive. How many of you have read the Bible through at least once? Raise your hand. Praise the Lord.

Look at that. 75%. Now I could have made the ones who haven't read it through raise their hand, but I didn't want to embarrass anybody on the first day.

So there's something to put in your notes. Right now, all those who didn't raise their hand, you write that in your notes. By God's grace, I'm going to read my Bible through in the next year.

See, I'm very generous. Give you a whole year. I could have said this summer.

That would be a good goal. You may not make it. But I think that is just a good way to start this conference.

By esteeming God's Word so highly that 25% of you, at least or more, who didn't raise your hand, you're going to say, by God's grace, I'm going to read the Bible through at least once. Ralph Shallis, one of our Bible teachers in Europe, is dying of cancer. He's writing books.

He's turning out books very quickly in these days, making use of his borrowed time because he should have died of cancer months ago. He may or may not be at one of the conferences. But if you get the opportunity to meet Ralph, you'll meet a man of God.

God used him in revival in North Africa. God used him to start a number of things in France and to light a fire in the hearts of some of the men who are being mightily used in France today. He was one of the first friends of O.M. Back in the early days when O.M. hardly had a friend among anybody who was anything, Ralph Shallis felt that this was a movement of the Spirit of God and linked with us as a Bible teacher in 1962 in Europe and has been preaching at our conferences almost every year ever since.

I just finished rereading his English in background. He's so French that he writes his books in French. Somebody else has to translate him back into his national tongue, English.

They usually come out years later in English. So his book on spiritual growth in French has just been put back in English, and I read it to write a little thing on the back cover. And the thing he emphasizes in that book as a secret for spiritual growth, and there is no secret, but as a major thing for spiritual growth, is reading the Bible right through.

Get that overall panorama of the whole Bible. There will be things you don't understand. There will be questions.

And don't be ashamed of doubts that you get reading the Bible. You don't expect to read God's book with your little mind and get it all straightened out in five minutes. Wouldn't be much of a book if you could do that.

And God has allowed this book, in a sense, to come to us in flesh and blood. It came through people, and we can see the personalities of these people. And though God's Word is without error, and though God's Word is fully inspired and authoritative, it also comes to us in human framework.

I don't have the best terminology. And it's exciting. You may engage in memorizing.

I feel that's very important. You may be engaged in some kind of book study, in some kind of topical study, but also read it right through. Would you do that? I think some of these new translations actually are a great help, because the King James Old Testament, I think, is difficult for sure for the average reader.

And so that's a great advantage. There's a lot more I'd like to say along that line, but I'm going to leave it to other speakers. But I just hope from the very beginning of this conference, God will increase our appetite for the Word.

We don't want you to accept men's philosophy. We don't put our guarantee or our seal on every person who steps up here and speaks. We are very free in some ways about who speaks at the OM conferences.

We want you to search the Scriptures and see if these things be so. Whatever I say, search the Scriptures and see if these things be so. And the amazing thing, of course, when you search the Scriptures, you aren't all going to come up with the same answer.

But we hope that you're going to come up with the same knowledge of God Himself. Yes, our goal is God. It's praise.

It's worship. It's to know Him. To know Him.

We know, and I know, from this very moment, there are going to be disappointed people. Now, in myself, my own human way, my own natural way, I get very uptight if I think about anybody being disappointed with the work in which I'm involved. I'm the kind of semi-neurotic who would run around 24 hours a day to try to make people happy.

If I heard someone in South Africa was unhappy with OM right now, I'd probably phone them. I'm a natural neurotic. One of the greatest works God has had to do in me, in my life, is to get me into the rest of faith, to keep me in that, to enable me to delegate and to forget about it, to some degree, and get on worshipping Jesus, and get on walking with Jesus.

On the other hand, there is a legitimate amount of responsibility that those of us in leadership must take. And we are far more concerned about your welfare and even the little practical things than perhaps you ever know. And spend more time thinking and planning and praying that your experience may be a happy experience.

We don't want to try to organize an unhappy experience. We don't want to try to arrange for various things to take place so that you will learn brokenness. I don't send men out to your automobiles while you're

sitting in here and, you know, fiddle around with various things.

So this afternoon when you try to drive across the city, the bonnet, what do you call it, the hood will explode and the wheels will fall off so that you can learn brokenness. You don't get enough of that without us organizing it. Now there will be times this summer when you will think that someone in OM is trying to organize it.

How could so many things go wrong on any one day without them organizing? But believe me, when you get two and a half thousand people coming on a summer campaign, and at the same time your long-term work continues, and at the same time a worldwide literature ministry continues, which is involved in a thousand publication projects right now in 30 languages, and at the same time a few other aspects of OM are all continuing, some interesting things can happen. Especially when you throw one or two ships in the middle of it. I heard that when the ship sailed from Germany down to France just recently, they had a stop off in the Straits of Dover.

One of the women decided to have a baby. Now, I mean, you know, we knew this baby was coming. You know, we're not that stupid.

But it supposedly was coming premature. The doctor said, look, we don't want to risk having this baby tonight premature. We don't have incubators.

It's better that we let her go ashore. They weren't far from Dover, so they brought a launch out, and she goes into Dover. Of course, as soon as she gets inshore, the labor pains stop.

Now, we don't know whether she has some new type of seasickness, or whether this is legitimate. But anyway, that was a little event on the way down to Lahore. By the way, we've had tremendous news from the ship in Lahore, and Frank Dietz and Marilyn Sears have just come from there.

Probably we'll share something about that. But we've had far more exciting news from the smaller ship. See, some people are worried.

They're afraid the big ship is going to eclipse the small ship. You see, the Holy Spirit won't allow that, because the big breakthroughs that take place in the ship ministry are not hinged on the size of the ship. They're hinged on what the Holy Spirit does.

They're hinged on answer to prayer. And the little ship has gone into Japan. That has made one of the greatest initial impacts on a nation that we've had in a long time of either ship.

In fact, the brother of the Emperor came to open the book exhibition, one of the first times in history that the royal family has been involved in a Christian happening. He opened the book exhibition, the official opening. Four major Japanese television networks got in on it, and of course, a little publicity went out.

People are pouring onto the ship. They sold \$15,000 worth of books in three days. And many, many, many Japanese are getting their first or another taste.

Many Japanese have had at least some taste of the gospel. Many have not. Right there with Lagos, out in Japan.

And one of the things that we want to do in these days, one of the main ministries we have together in these days, is a ministry of prayer. Not just for the ships, or for O.M., but for the whole church. This book is

not about O.M. It's not written by an O.M.er. It has nothing to do with O.M. It's a book about the whole church, and the whole task, in the whole world.

And we just happen to find it, and want to make it known. And as you pray through the prayer requests in this book, 95% of them had nothing to do with Operation Mobilization. We're giving this book, and selling this book, to expose people to the whole work of God.

And this is our burden. It's one thing to talk about being non-sectarian. It's one thing to talk about esteeming others better than yourself.

It's another thing to do it. To practice it. And we hope that in our prayer sessions, some of our main praying will be for other people, and other works of God.

And for other brothers and sisters, who are going out in different short-term works this summer. Whether it's with Youth With A Mission, or having this big invasion of Argentina right now, at the World Cup. Or whether it's the Euro Corps of the Greater Europe Mission, or the Youth Corps of some other group.

I remember when we first started in short-term work, 20 years ago. In fact, one of the reasons I asked Dean Broman, I can't think of him in any other name than Dean Broman, to come here, is because he was involved in some of those first prayer meetings that took place at Moody. Actually, O.M. was born a little before Moody.

You can go back to that high school, and we're going to tell about that, maybe this evening or tomorrow. And then at Maryville College, where I met Brother Dale, and he began to disciple me. Later ended up baptizing me.

I bet he didn't tell you that in his message. And then Dale left for Wheaton College, and I went to Moody Bible Institute. And I think it was Dean Broman who gave us permission to have our little special prayer meetings.

How happy we were. Because our reputation wasn't so great, and some people were a little worried about us. But Dean Broman was willing to take the risk.

He was one of the men, I feel, one of the few that I met, because not everyone I met in that rebellious state that I was in, impressed me too much, I can assure you. But he was one of the few I met who seemed to believe in prayer, and put it into practice. And God answers prayer.

We'll perhaps talk more about that later on. But we want to pray together in these days. We want to pray for other groups.

We want to pray for other missions. Anyway, back then, short-term work. I tell you, people, what? How can this be? Young people going to Europe? What are they going to do there? It's pretty viciously attacked, especially from some of the standard missionary quarters.

We always tried to react in love. I'm sure sometimes we didn't. That early crusade in Mexico.

Actually, it was June of 1958. I almost forgot this until I re-read a letter recently. It was re-reading that old letter that caused us to call this a 20th anniversary celebration of praise.

But it was in June of 1958 that we technically were incorporated. Though as in any work, the work of the Spirit of God had begun before that, back in the high school. The first trip to Mexico in 1957.

In fact, it was a joy yesterday. I came here by train and I had a three-hour layover in Chicago. I didn't come exactly to Cedar Rapids by train.

That's impossible. They'd pick me up out in a boondock somewhere. And I was able to have lunch yesterday with the other brother who went with Dale and I to Mexico in 1957.

Brother Walter Borchard. He would love to be with us, but has to work. Today, short term work exists with almost every major mission group.

The wonderful thing is that despite the fact that everybody else seems to be having short term work, and most of them have far more recruiting apparatus than we do, especially in the States, where we are in a very low-profile program, the Lord still gives us such a beautiful group of people like yourself. You know, I'm really thankful to God for each one of you that he has brought. If you went out with some other group, praise the Lord.

Except we might not get the opportunity to meet you and to know you. And it's one of our greatest burdens to see people trained within OM for one or two years, or in some cases only a summer. And that's only, of course, a tiny part of God's total program for your life, training especially.

But to see people trained in OM and moving out with these other missions. So perhaps I could just bring in that this is another one of our major goals. First, worship.

Second, discipleship, teaching the disciplined life in all of the various aspects, especially the word, prayer, and witness. And then thirdly, to be a training movement. Very important to understand this.

Quite a few people are not here today because they applied to come with us as a mission society. They got one of our rather semi-negative letters saying we're not a mission society, it's a training program, and if they were older and had children, the letter probably was even more negative, and so they didn't come. Now if you meet any families around here with children who are going, you know they are persevering people.

Perhaps a few exceptions, especially any chief engineers, you might not have to persevere too much. Any captains? Do you have any sea captains here? We have two ships, we don't have a captain right now for either one. Isn't that interesting? That's because Captain Padgett has been hospitalized in Japan with a heart condition.

Our first mate has captain's papers so he can take the ship when necessary, but we want him to stay first mate, and we'd like an older, more experienced man to be captain. We don't have one. The second ship, we have Captain Krikov, who is willing to take the ship all summer from port to port.

He's a family man, he has a big job in Bremen, he doesn't feel yet he can launch his family out in a longer term service with the ship. Tremendous man, remember his name, Captain Krikov, a German. He took the ship to La Havre, then he goes back home and gets in his other job, then he'll come back to La Havre and take us to Bilbao, then go back home and do his other job, then he'll take us to Lisbon and go back home.

It's called commuting. But ideally we need two longer term, mature men. Also on Doulos, our first mate has captain's papers.

He has acted as captain on Lagos during Captain Padgett's heart failure last year. Jonathan Stewart, young man, but we'd like to see him stay as first mate. God has called us to train and prepare young men and women for service, not only overseas, but in their own country.

Most of the Indians that we train and are involved in training, and that's usually a longer term effort, most of them remain within India. We're not training Indians to evangelize America. And so I think it's important to understand this, because we don't think that the man who works overseas is some superior person to the person who feels led to work even in his own hometown.

Nor do we feel that the man who may be led to work overseas as a missionary, or the man led to be a pastor in America, is superior in any way to the man who feels that he should work for the Mercedes-Benz company, or for McDonald's, or for whoever. You won't fully understand us until you understand that little bit of somewhat radical thinking. There is a tendency to think that full-time service, so called, I think it's a bad communication myself, because I think every born-again child of God is full-time.

But there is a tendency to think that those who go overseas, or those who are full-time working among dropouts or inner city, that's a higher calling. You know, if we really believe the message about servants, it's a lower calling. I don't even like the term leader.

We use the term leader because it does communicate, and because if we use some other term, someone else will load that term as well. We worked very close with an indigenous movement in India under the leadership of Bakht Singh. They don't call people leaders, they call them servants.

Well, I discovered working with them that the word servant, and then the Lord's servant, can become more powerful a term than anything we've ever manufactured in O.M. So, we're not going to get trapped into the terminology battle, at least on some of these areas. But the leader is a servant. We're looking among this group for men and women who we can train in leadership, in servant-ship.

I feel one of our most important ministries in O.M. is leadership training, servant-ship training. We are called to serve. Let he who is greatest among you serve.

Being a leader, being asked to be a leader, is not some kind of honor. It's not some kind of evangelical merit badge. It's not to be equated with becoming an Eagle Scout.

It's to be a servant. It's to lay your life down. And we will probably make mistakes in terms of the people that we channel into the leadership training aspect of our program.

It is very difficult to know who has this gift, and if this is God's plan for them. We need your help. You may know someone here that we don't know, and you could drop a note to Paul Troper or myself saying, look, so-and-so brother or sister is here.

I know and feel this person has a gift in the area of leadership. Maybe you'd like to know that. We would, I can assure you.

We've got 60 leadership manuals waiting. We want to get some people into them. We'll be having six sessions at the first conference in July for people that we have to train into leadership.

One of the greatest needs in the church worldwide is for leaders. And our burden is not only to train people one or two years and see them go into other groups, because oftentimes they're not ready for leadership after one or two years with us, in terms of major responsibility in other groups. But it is our prayer that each year, men that we have poured 10 or 15 years of our life into, may go on into leadership roles with other groups.

That is sometimes the most difficult aspect of OM, because when you get involved with a brother for 10 or 15 years, and then he shares with you that he feels it's time to leave, I tell you, you feel it, especially if you really do need him in the work. And yet it has been our prayer that the Lord would take some of the strongest men from our midst and thrust them in to other leadership roles. And that's happening.

Sometimes God forces it through circumstances. Brother doesn't want to leave OM, feels OM is his thing, but God has control of the circumstances, and God moves him out, even after 10 or 15 years. We saw this recently happen with one of the founders of the work in India, Ron Penny.

In many ways, a man we would like to have kept in our work in India. Circumstances began to take place, some of it connected with the government, some of it not so pleasant. I just spent five or six hours with Brother Ron in London, and he's now technically out of Operation Mobilization, and technically moving into a very interesting position with the Bible Society, a group that in Asia we would like to see a few more leaders getting into.

I don't know how much you know about the Bible Society, but not everyone in the Bible Society is a committed evangelical Christian, to say the least. But in Asia, some of the main leaders are evangelical men. Some of them have been linked with us for 15 years, men like Russell Self of Canada.

And these men, together with others, are launching the biggest effort the Bible Society has ever launched in the history of planet Earth. They are talking in terms of figures and scripture distribution that eclipsed anything OM has thought about. And we now have two or three of our men that are very much involved in this massive worldwide push in the Bible Society.

It was a difficult experience when Greg Livingston, he was more convinced about OM than I was. Our number one American recruiter for a couple of years. Also one of the founders of the work in India, shared with us that he felt he should leave.

We weren't leaping out of our shoes when he told us he was going to take a pastorate in America, but we learned to believe the best. Today he's the home director of the North African mission. He would love to be with us.

He usually is with us, but he's in Europe now, leading some summer teams. I wonder where he got that idea. The North African mission among immigrants in France.

And he's sending his senior, Mr. Francis Steele, to be with us for a couple of days. Our burden is to be a blessing. Our burden is to train.

And our prayer is that the whole church, to some small degree, may feel the impact of that which takes place here in these days. Some of you are already headed to service in another mission, or with a church. Praise the Lord.

We counted a privilege to have you for a year or two. We may get you for much less than that. But we hope this will be a training experience.

And we hope that it will enable you to relate to the whole work of God in the whole world, and be a whole Christian. Not half a Christian. A sectarian Christian, with one eye.

A Holy Spirit alone can break down some of the barriers that separate us. I'm so thrilled here in Cedar Rapids that various churches of different denominations have gotten together to sponsor this conference. This is almost the first time it has ever happened.

In the past we've had to get one usually big church, with plenty of muscle to, you know, take on this incredible conference. And it's usually been connected with one or two churches. Though other churches have been involved in the periphery.

But here a number of churches are cooperating to sponsor us to stand behind this effort here in Cedar Rapids. And I believe God is going to work through that in a definite way. Another one of our major goals, we're running out of time and I know you want to go and eat, but another one of our major goals of course is world evangelism.

You'll be hearing a lot about this, so I don't need to go into it now. This is the more easily visible aspect of OM. Obviously if we reach 15 to 20 million people a year, we must be involved in evangelism.

The few thousand people profess faith in Christ each year, we're probably involved in evangelism. We believe in evangelism. We believe that the world is lost.

We don't all agree on what that means. We don't need to agree on what that means. It's bad enough.

The world is lost. Jesus Christ is the answer. He said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No man cometh to the Father but by me. Now I know, for those of you perhaps of certain background and orientation, if not now, ultimately that will be one of the most difficult aspects of the Christian faith you will wrestle with. Let's not pretend.

At times the doubts come. All those Hindus, it may seem very very distant when you're here to say they're lost without Christ, but when you live in a culture where all you look at every day are Hindus, and some of them seem quite nice and friendly, they're real people, to say that they're lost without Christ is not easy. It's harder for me to say that than ever before, especially when some of the very people I have grown up with have denied the faith or the basic doctrines, including good straight-cut Bible school graduates.

Someone just gave me indirectly again that a certain ex-OMer who went to seminary and got more education finally has decided now that there is no hell. It's just annihilation. That is much easier to believe.

Why do you think the Jehovah Witnesses are growing? One of the key doctrines of the Jehovah Witnesses is annihilation. You do away with this terrific intellectual barrier to human beings that there is such a place as hell. And if you don't do away with the doctrine of hell, then you cut it down so that no one's going there.

What's the difference? The liberals and Jehovah Witnesses are playing the same game from opposite wickets. Of course you don't play cricket over here, so that illustration isn't any good. We believe that men are lost.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. That doesn't mean we find it intellectually a blessing to think on such things. I can only meditate and think about such things so far that I must leave it with God.

And if you're having trouble with the doctrine of hell, if you're having trouble with the doctrine of the ultimate destiny of men who are without Christ, if you're having trouble with the doctrine of the heathen lost, these are heavy issues. You can think about it, you can study it, there are answers. Brother Dale Roton wrote his thesis when he was at Wheaton College on the subject of the heathen being lost.

But ultimately after studying, after reading, after praying, these things have to be left with God. I can't even intellectually handle heaven, much less hell. Going into the details, and I tell you some of the pictures that people have produced in the past of heaven and of hell, that only makes it more difficult.

But if we base our faith on the Word of God, then we believe that the world must be evangelized. And this is why we're going on this campaign this summer. It is not just a training program.

See, we get some people who swing the pendulum, and when it comes to the real work, and we want to put them into a responsibility. I remember a brother got out to India. He didn't think he was much of a leader.

As soon as he got there, the Indians grabbed him and said, you're going to lead this team. This is a training program. George Burwer told me it was a training program.

I'm only here to learn. Forget it buddy, get going. It is a training program, but don't get carried away too much in it.

God will handle that. You pick up your gun and start shooting, because you see the devil doesn't allow any training. You think the devil is stupid? He's going to say, now look, you go for two years of training.

I'm not going to bother you for two years. Learn how to destroy kingdoms, learn how to tear my workers apart, learn how to undo me. Two years free for training, then we'll meet.

The devil zeroes in on you the moment you're born again. Someone's trying to tell me to be quiet. Three minutes to go, hold on.

The devil looms in on you the moment you're born again, and he's not going to let us have a dry run this summer. He's not going to let you sort of sit there all summer polishing the trigger or shining the barrel. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, they're mighty unto God for the pulling down of strongholds.

And though you may feel you're inadequate, though you may feel you're young, though you may feel you need more training, you need more knowledge of the Bible, you don't know your Greek yet, the devil says, I have declared war against you now. And I believe it's when you begin to use what you already have, God can give you more. Not just in the head, but in the heart, in the total life, in reality, in deed, and in truth.

So it is a training program, but it is also, we pray God, a dynamic evangelistic thrust to reach a lost and dying world with the gospel. Some people feel that this kind of thing is justified because you get an exposure and training experience. Therefore the expenditure involved, which isn't that much, and the preparation that goes into it, the organization, it's justified because you get an exposure experience.

That may be true. But listen, what we are doing is justified also on the basis of what is accomplished. It's both.

It's an evangelistic crusade. It's a church planting effort. Some of you in France, you will be involved in church planting, or that which will lead to church planting.

In Spain, we are believing that new churches are going to be born as a result of this work in Spain. A year of prayer and preparation has gone into this.

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