

Our Situation - Warfare

by George Verwer

We need to understand our situation and count the cost of following Jesus Christ in order to respond effectively to the desperate spiritual and physical needs of the world.

Duration: 47:19

Scripture: Matthew 9:36, Luke 14:25-32, Acts 9:6, Romans 10:14, Philippians 4:6

Topics: "Global Hunger", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the current state of the world, emphasizing the shocking and incomprehensible physical situation that we face. He draws parallels to the experiences of Paul and the Philippian jailer, who were both deeply impacted by encountering God and asked what they should do. The speaker highlights the dire issue of global hunger, with half the world's population going to bed hungry and 10,000 people dying of starvation every day. He urges listeners to understand the gravity of the situation and to count the cost of their actions, referencing Luke 14:28 where Jesus emphasizes the importance of knowing what one is getting into.

Transcript

This is orientation session number one in preparation for Semmelweit 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're 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, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Or 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 he 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.

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 defeat 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-up 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 person, 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 a 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 in this crusade. Oh, my 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 and trembling before God and say, what can 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? 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 bone. 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. 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 the 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 on 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 these other fantastically large cities where people live in sin, immorality 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 as 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 build a religion of professionals in which a small group of paid clergymen and paid missionaries were expected to take the gospel to 3 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 are still millions and yea, half the world that walks in a similar situation in Turkey, in Iraq, in Iran, in Russia, in China, in 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 man 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 ten thousand 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 fence 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 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've 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 war. 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 III 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 of the rest to spread forth their poisoned doctrines.

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 syr. 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. 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 mobilize 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? Well, of course you would. Any unsaved and regenerate 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 there's a great sign. And 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 in ourselves, we fail to read the sign. And it's blurry and dim. And we're so interested in our own ways, in 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. 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 shrieking 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 sham. 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, was 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. Then they moved in, the infantry moved in, the foot soldiers, the men with talus 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.

Young men, college graduates, doctors, strong young men whose parents had spent thousands of dollars to give them a well-balanced education. And they moved in and they flew away. Young men, college

graduates, doctors, strong young men whose parents had spent thousands of dollars to give them a well-balanced education.

And they moved in and they flew away. For a little island. And there were 20,000 casualties on Iwo Jima.

20,000 casualties and 5,000 men never returned to tell the story. The story might not be very real to some of you who are listening to my voice. War isn't real to most of us.

This younger generation. But our mental hospitals and our veterans' hospitals are filled with young men who will testify to the reality of that war. You see, that's one of the things about war that we must understand.

It's only real to those who get in it. Some of you who are listening to my voice are yearning for greater reality in the Christian faith. You have doubts even about the Bible.

You have doubts about basic truths of the Christian faith. And at times you're wondering what it's all about. And I want to tell you this with all sincerity and I'm the authority of the Word of God.

You'll never find reality in a textbook. You'll never find reality sitting in a chair somewhere reading, even if you're reading the Bible. You'll find reality only when you, by faith, enter into this gigantic battle, this gigantic struggle for truth and righteousness and love and godliness.

Reality is found on the front line with the weapons of warfare in our hands. And the Bible says the weapons of warfare that we have are not carnal. They're not missiles.

They're not intercontinental ballistic missiles or any other kind of weapon that human beings can ever discover. The weapons we have are more powerful. They're greater.

They've got more potential than anything men ever dreamed of. Our weapons are spiritual weapons, as it says in Philippians. And they can tear down strongholds.

And they can cast down imaginations. And they can bring, think of this young person, every thought into captivity. Every evil thing you think about, every wrong thought, every lust.

It can be brought into captivity by the power of God, by the weapons of the warfare that God has given to us. And I tell you, that's greater than a cobalt bomb or anything any human being has ever seen. Yes.

It took 5,000 men and 20,000 casualties to take a little island in the Pacific. Do you really think it's going to take any less to take spiritual islands in Mexico, in England, in America, in Canada, in Italy, in France, in Turkey, in Iran, in Iraq, in Moscow, in China? Do you think it's going to take any less? Who would be so foolish? For God says, you wrestle not against flesh and blood. You wrestle not against flesh and blood, but you wrestle against the very powers of hell.

And the devil has a roaring lion, speaketh whom he may devour. Young person, it's war. And until you and I come to grips with this fact, until we realize it's a warfare, and we've got to enlist as soldiers, 2 Timothy chapter 2, endure fondness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, for no man that warrants entangles himself with the affairs of this life.

These are verses from the Word of God. This isn't my idea. I didn't say fight the good fight.

I didn't say endure hardship. I didn't say that we wrestled against the powers of darkness. I didn't say any of these things.

But these are verses from the New Testament. And when we look into the lives, when we look into the lives of the men, of the New Testament and of the old, what can we say? This is the final confirmation. We look out at the world situation, we realize it's desperate, we realize it's a crisis, we realize it's war.

We look into the Word of God, and we see the verses that clearly tell us that our situation is war. That our situation is desperate. That our situation is an emergency situation.

Worse than anything that happened in Sofia or Iran or during any earthquake, tidal wave or hurricane. And then when we look into the lives of the saints, when we look into the lives of men in the Old Testament, let's stop. Let's stop and turn in our Bibles to Hebrews the 11th chapter.

Let's look at some of these men. Hebrews chapter 11. Let's see how these men lived.

Let's see the kind of life they led. Let's see if they were militant or not. If they really lived like soldiers.

If they really lived as if it were a crisis situation. Let's read about a few of these men. Look at Moses.

In Hebrews 11 verse 23. By faith Moses when he was born was hid three months of his parents because they saw he was a proper child and they were not afraid of the commandments of the king. By faith Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt for he had respect under the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Oh my when we look at men like this Moses with all the pleasures of Egypt with the best possible education with all the women of Pharaoh's court with all the riches with everything else he forsook it and he entered into that warfare of suffering and of reproach and of enduring hardship as they went across the wilderness and were beat and were and went through every possible trial.

Moses was a soldier.

And we read on we read about Joshua and then we come to verse 32 like a great crescendo we read these words and what shall I more say for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barak and of Samson and of Jephthah and of David also and Samuel and of the prophets who through faith subdued kingdoms wrought righteousness obtained promises stopped the mouths of lions quenched the violence of fire escaped the edge of the sword out of weakness were made strong waxed valiant in fight turned to fight the armies of the aliens women received their dead raised to life again and others were tortured not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings yea moreover of bonds and imprisonment they were stoned they were sawn

asunder they were tented were slain with a sword they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins being destitute afflicted and tormented although the world was not worthy they wandered about in deserts in mountains in dens and caves of the earth and these all having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise God having provided some better thing for us that they without us should not be made perfect do you see the power of that passage? they just have what we have they didn't have the promises that we have they didn't have all the blessings that we have and yet this is the kind of life they

lived and as we look into the New Testament and into the lives of men who lived in the New Testament we see the same thing we see the description of the apostle Paul in Corinthians

11 and it's shocking what this man went through because he lived the life of a soldier beatings, mocking, scourging, wandering, suffering the care of the churches and all the rest read the passage and then we read in 2 Corinthians 6 when Paul is speaking to all of us who desire to be faithful unto Jesus Christ who desire to be faithful ministers unto Christ and he says in 2 Corinthians 6 these revolutionary words why if we dare to even obey this one chapter the world would be turned upside down and God doesn't need a great number we're not looking for great numbers in this crusade we're looking for faithful few who dare to begin to live the life of faith we're not looking for perfect people either we've given up on that we're looking for people who are willing to say Lord teach me people

who are willing to break before Calvary as Isaiah broke and say Lord here am I bend me, take me, mold me, make me anew like the potter's vessel to be broken so that we can be made anew with a hand the chastening hand, the loving hand the kind hand, the meek hand it'll take us through trials and suffering it'll take us through difficulties it'll bring us into life live with people who are of different personality it'll take us into various circumstances it reminds me of a story of a young boy who wanted to learn patience and he went to the pastor and he said Pastor I want you to pray for me that I might learn patience and the pastor said okay let's pray and he got down on the floor and he began to pray and he said oh God the pastor prayed oh God send this young man tribulation send him

tribulation Lord and he went on to pray and the little boy began to shake and after the prayer he got up and he said but pastor I asked you to pray that the Lord would give me patience the wise pastor took the word of God and he opened it pointed to a verse and the verse said but tribulation worketh patience and if you want to live the life of Christ if you want to be conformed to the image of Christ if you want to become a true disciple and a true soldier of Jesus Christ get ready for the problems get ready for the storms get ready for the battles get ready for the difficulties get ready for the unloving people get ready for the criticisms and the lies and the backbiting for all of this will be used to conform you to the image of Jesus Christ now this isn't my idea look at the passage 2

Corinthians chapter 6 starting at the third verse giving no offense in anything that the ministry be not blamed but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God here it is approving ourselves as ministers of God going through the test what happens to us? in much patience in affliction in necessities in distresses in strife in imprisonment in tollments in labors in watchings in fastings by pureness by knowledge by long suffering by kindness by Holy Ghost by love unseen by the word of truth by the power of God by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left by honor and dishonor by evil report and good report as deceivers and yet true as unknown and yet well known as dying and behold we live as chastened and not killed as sorrowful yet always rejoicing as poor

yet making many rich as having nothing and yet possessing all things there it is clear specific this is the life of a soldier it's not easy it's not a game it's real it's a battle and this and this is our situation today as we face England as we face Mexico as we face Europe as we face the regions beyond our situation is warfare it's an emergency it's crisis it's desperate the only way to meet it the only way to enter into it is the same way that Jesus Christ said in Luke the 14th chapter said except you forsake all that you have you cannot follow me the man was specific the terms were definite there were no ifs ands buts or maybes he said unless you forsake all that you have you cannot be my disciple it seems as we look at the context of the passage that he was mainly referring to

material things you see Jesus knew how close we were we were knit to the material world in our day we've tried to separate the material from the spiritual but only a fool really does that our stomachs are close to our hearts our eyes are close to our minds and so it is we're materialistic we want things because we know things bring status we want our way and Jesus said we had to forsake it but also Jesus both in this passage and in his other teachings clearly teaches that we're to forsake all other things and I find that our day there's things harder to forsake than material things pride, self love status seeking the desire to be recognized irritability, impatience these are the things this passage talks about these are the real knots in our life that have to be broken by the power of God

before we're ever going to be used in a mighty way these are the things that must be taken out of us as we train to be soldiers for Jesus Christ yes, God has called us to be disciples as you read the book True Discipleship you're going to find some principles that are so revolutionary that it's going to be hard for you to fall into accord with them but God will grant you the grace for he has said my strength is made perfect in weakness oh might we remember that my grace is sufficient he said my strength is made perfect in weakness and so it's God in you who will live this life it's God who will enable you to be a true disciple and remember above everything else a disciple is a learner he's out to learn, he doesn't know it all he can't say I'm a true disciple but he can say I'm learning

from Jesus the life of True Discipleship and so if you want to come on one of these crusades if God is speaking to you about Mexico or about follow up in a village in England or about a crusade in the Muslim world or in Europe, remember we're not looking for people who are perfect we're not looking for the strong the mighty and the intelligent we're looking for those that'll say yes to Jesus we'll say yes Lord, I'll follow you through the problems, through the difficulties through the trials, through the mistakes I'll follow thee, I'll be thy disciple I'll learn of thee, I'll sit at thy feet in the school of prayer, in the school of patience in the school of love, in the school of meekness in the school of gentleness, in the school of kindness I'll follow thee for my desire is that the

life of Jesus Christ live through me Jesus was a soldier but the attributes of this kind of soldier were quite different from the attributes of a physical soldier fighting a physical warfare his attributes, his weapons were of Calvary love love that sent him from all of the glories of heaven to come to this earth to be born in a stable to be reared in a carpenter shop to take on the form of a servant the form of a man and then to go through all the brutality of Gethsemane of the court of Pilate, of Calvary's road and to go all the way to the cross thank God Jesus Christ didn't forsake half he didn't forsake 90% he forsook all he didn't stop in Gethsemane he didn't stop in the courts of Pilate he didn't stop on Calvary's hill he didn't even stop at the foot of the cross and say oh what a

wonderful thing this is I dedicate my life to this but he went all the way to the cross it was 100% dedication and Jesus Christ today demands of those that will be his disciples of those that will be his soldiers that they forsake all and that they go all the way to the cross he said except you forsake all you can't be my disciples he said except you take up your cross and follow me you cannot be my disciples he said whosoever finds his life will lose it whosoever loses his life for my sake he shall find it this is the tremendous thing about the Christian faith this is the thing that should thrill our hearts it's so completely different from any other religion it's so completely different from any philosophy of men he that loses his life he'll find it many of us want life even in

Christian work we want to be somebody we want to go somewhere we want a reputation it's amazing isn't it Philippians 2 says Jesus for us became of no reputation but so many of us want a reputation Jesus was

so revolutionary his ways were so revolutionary that if we just begin to obey them if we begin to submit ourselves to these teachings if we just begin to enter into this warfare we'll find ourselves being turned upside down we'll find that our thinking will change our walking will change our talking will change our attitudes toward others will change our attitudes toward our teachers will change the questions we ask change the statements we make will change our handshake will change our facial expressions will change we'll become a new person completely as the root of Christ dwells in

us richly and as we worship him in spiritual songs and melody in our hearts unto him as we daily worship him as we daily praise him as we don't seek experiences from time to time but as we seek a daily experience with God in worship and in praise yes our situation is a warfare our situation is critical our situation is an emergency the sirens are roaring and the only way to meet it is in the divine power of Jesus Christ in the divine life of Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit which has been given unto each one of us through Jesus Christ the comforter the power of God dwelling in each one of us that will enable us day by day to learn of Jesus Christ oh it's not going to all come at once there'll be experiences in which great mountains are taken there'll be experiences in

which there's leaps of faith and great strides and great advances are taken on enemy territory but it's going to come day after day as we submit to the Lord Jesus Christ and allow the root of God to dwell in us richly as we memorize the root as we meditate upon it as we dwell in it and as we submit to its every teaching are you ready? this is the end of orientation session number one where do you stay? are you ready to be a soldier? are you ready to enlist and be unentangled from all the affairs of this life that you may please Him who has chosen you to be a soldier that's right, He's chosen you you don't have to wait for a call for this He's chosen you already He's chosen you to be conformed to His image and all you need do is respond turn from your sin and from yourself turn from your

egocentric living from your striving and your vain glory and all of the little irritability turn from it and go to Calvary and break and say as I say O Lord, I'm a man of unclean here am I standing anything Lord anytime Lord anywhere Lord a soldier for Jesus Christ because He loved me and gave Himself for me it's a warfare, that's right but the victory is already won for we are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ who loved us and gave Himself for us do you believe it? do you really believe it? if you do nothing will stop you not even the very dots of hell let us pray Heavenly Father we realize that our situation is a warfare we realize God that we're up against forces that are more desperate than what was ever fought against in any world war or in any other place we realize that the

weapons of our warfare are not carnal we realize God that it isn't a one shot experience but it's becoming a disciple it's becoming a learner it's submitting daily to Jesus Christ and Father we tonight want to enlist we want to enlist in a training school for this tremendous conflict in the school of prayer, in the school of patience in the school of love, in the school of meekness in the school of kindness, in the school of the life of Jesus that our life might fade away that we might reckon our life as being nailed to the cross with Jesus Christ, that we might be identified with Him, that it might no longer be us, but He who lives within us and then we shall be more than conquerors through Him who loves us we ask it in Jesus name Amen

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