

Polish (9)

by George Verwer

To follow God and Jesus Christ in obedience, we need a strategy of survival, which involves knowing we are accepted and forgiven, casting every care upon Him, making God our goal, learning to be hurt, and getting into God's Word.

Duration: 1:11:10

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Philippians 4:8, Hebrews 12:1-2

Topics: "Polish"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of making God our goal and getting into God's Word. He discusses the need to learn how to handle emotional hurt and the unrealistic expectations we often have of other Christians. The speaker also highlights the significance of maintaining a positive attitude and being constant in prayer and the Word. Additionally, he encourages believers to stay active in serving God, to prioritize their families, and to find balance in all areas of life. The sermon concludes with a call for unity and prayer, acknowledging the collective effort required for spiritual growth and transformation.

Transcript

...gives us another beautiful picture of following God in real commitment. Again, we have the use of the analogy of sports. Speaks about running the race again.

I'm trying to remember whether in fact we ever did read 1 Corinthians 9. Did we read the passage? I think it would be good to read that. 1 Corinthians 9. Read 24 through 27. And then we'll read Hebrews 12.

And then Hebrews chapter 12. Verse 1 and 2. Let us pray. Father, we realize that we are called to run in this spiritual marathon.

All during these days together we have been learning what this really involves. And we thank you for this. And we're asking you to teach us even more from your Word right now.

We know we're not called to run a short race, but to run a marathon right to the end. Father, we want to, as Paul, buffet our bodies and bring them into subjection. Give us wisdom, we pray.

Wisdom from above. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

I want to share with you... I want to share with you some of the principles that I have learned these 30 or so years running in the spiritual race. We have been emphasizing a lot the word discipleship. When I was living on the ship traveling around Africa and India, we had to learn principles of survival at sea, how to get in a lifeboat in case the ship was sinking.

So I created a new word in English. And I've been preaching on that all over the world. It's called survivalship.

I don't know what you're going to call that. Survivalship. Basically it means principles to survive heavy attacks from Satan.

We sometimes use that expression. I asked someone once, how is their local church doing? He didn't say everything is wonderful. He said we're just surviving.

Somehow we're just making it. Sometimes we have the idea that to be a dedicated Christian, we have to believe that everything is always wonderful. Every day we're filled with the Spirit.

People are being saved. And wonderful things are happening. Singing our praises to God.

Ministering to people. And there are days like that. There's a verse in the Old Testament about God lifting us up and soaring on the wings of eagles.

But I believe there are other days in our lives. When we're not living way up here. Things are going wrong.

Problems are taking place. Maybe misunderstanding. Maybe we're not feeling physically well.

Maybe doubts are coming into our minds. Maybe we've been strongly criticized. Maybe we tried to have our quiet time in the morning and fell asleep.

Difficult days. Maybe in prison. Maybe in a hospital.

Maybe all alone. Loneliness is one of the greatest problems in society today. So if we're going to follow God and Jesus Christ in obedience, we need a strategy of survival.

We need a strategy for the hard days. We need a strategy for when things are going wrong. We need a strategy for when we're praying for sunshine and all we get is rain.

We may need a strategy tomorrow when we try to get our bus out of here in the mud. I've got these principles from the Word of God. These great books.

I've got them from sitting at the feet of many great speakers. And I've got them from making a lot of mistakes. And so I'm going to give them to you free of charge.

And I hope you'll write them down. Because I'm convinced if you will put these practical principles into practice, Satan will have a very difficult time trying to stop you. We can call these principles of marathon running for God.

And know more about this than I do. Some of you dear elderly saints have been sitting here patiently listening to me each day. I'm amazed.

I'm sure you know more. Now, I have 18 principles. But I don't know if we'll have time for all of them.

But let us just share. The first principle is to know that you are really accepted and forgiven. We talked about that a few days ago.

Just as a reminder. It is absolutely basic when we are under pressure. When we have failed the Lord.

That we know we are His child. Our forgiveness is not based on our present behavior. Whether it's a good day or a bad day.

Whether it's sunshine or rain. We are His forgiven people. You can study Ephesians 1.6 where it says we are accepted by the Beloved.

Psychologists tell us that rejection is one of the most difficult experiences to go through. To feel that we are rejected. To feel that we are not wanted.

Have you ever had that feeling? Maybe in your own home? I counsel quite a few children who don't even know who their parents are. I don't know if any of you are from that background. You will have some struggles because of that.

I have seen people playing victory over that situation. And be mightily used of God. No problem is too big for God.

And when we feel rejected by man we must know even more what it is to be accepted by God Himself. That has been a great strength in my life. I think of a very close friend of mine when he was a young boy he never knew his parents and he was just passed from one family to the next.

Sort of adopted but then they sent him on to somebody else. When he finally came to me for counseling I guess he was about 20 years of age he was living a double life as a result of this. He was going to Bible college he was speaking messages from the Bible I thought he was a dedicated Christian but he was living in sin especially in sexual difficulties.

And he was just being torn apart inside he was just being torn apart. And he talked to me he didn't tell me first of all what his real problem was he said I think maybe God is leading me to go to India. So we talked for a while and I said look is this the real is this the real issue with you? Do you have something you want to say? You know he had never talked to anybody about these struggles.

And so he talked to me for about two hours. He told me things sins that he had committed things that he was being tormented by he had never told anybody. I did not reject him.

And if you have a ministry of counselling and people share their sins and their problems with you be careful not to overreact to what they say. Oh I can't believe it! But to listen and to show that person love I often when someone has shared some sin with me I share some of my own struggles at that point. Instead of pointing at them I am the righteous I am the righteous man you are the sinner I will show you how to repent.

Instead of doing that I usually share some of my own struggles and my own sins. Then the person will talk even more because often when you are talking with people what they say in the beginning is not what they are really wanting to say. And with this young man his big problem wasn't really sex.

That was the symptom. The real problem was insecurity and lack of love. The real problem was insecurity and lack of love.

And so I accepted him and we became friends and I would not even share this testimony except that he shares this personally now. It took him three years in God's therapy program. Every week sharing with me his problems.

He had further failures even after he recommitted his life. This fellow had recommitted his life at summer camp every year for six years and every winter time for six years he back slid and got away from God into sin. This is why we are emphasizing here God's process.

You are not going to get all of your problems sorted out in this tent. It's going to take many years to lay a solid spiritual foundation in your life. And many times during the three years I worked with this young man he was ready to quit.

He failed the Lord and he'd come to me he'd say I'm finished. The Lord can't use me I've just been in trouble with this woman I'm no good and I said this is a lie of Satan. And we looked into God's word and we read his promises and we claimed his cleansing and I pushed him back out the door.

And then after those two or three years I saw him become stronger and stronger. That was seventeen years ago. He is now an outstanding Christian leader preacher being used mightily of God in many nations of the world.

I can give you hundreds of stories and stories just like that. God is in the people business and if you have problems then you are God's specialty. But you have to learn God has accepted you one hundred percent in your life.

Whether you are running in the marathon winning men to Christ or whether you have fallen flat on your nose in sin or failure God loves you God accepted you. The second principle is the principle of casting every care upon him. 1 Peter 5.7 Memorize that great verse.

Casting every care upon him he cares for you. That's what the verse says. I got a book many years ago called How to Win Over Worry.

I was a worrier. Someone said that men have a problem with lust and women have more of a problem with worry. I've got both problems.

And I picked up this little book on the subject of worry by John Hagai How to Win Over Worry and Care. Basically it was a book on how to survive. Worry can bring at least fifty different illnesses upon the body.

And if you just perpetually engage in worry you lay in your bed at night tossing around worrying about this worrying about that you know what you are saying without verbalizing it you are saying God I want to be ill I want to be ill I want to get nice and ill because worry creates illness in the mind and in the body. Every Christian must have a strategy to deal with anxiety and worry and tension in his life. Do you know that many of our major preachers and pastors in Europe have had nervous breakdowns?

One of our leading pastors in England whose tapes are all over the world a great Bible teacher three nervous breakdowns he has left the pastorate which I think was wise he has learned how to accept his own weaknesses developed a strategy for perseverance or survival means the same thing and he is back preaching all over the world you know many people don't learn these truths until they are thirty forty years old if you can learn some of these things as young people now it can make all the difference in your future how to deal with worry and care in fact many of these other principles I share with you are helpful in

dealing with worry and when someone is really gripped with worry it's no good just to say to them oh don't worry that is a very serious situation they're in people who are caught in worry cannot easily stop worry the bible says be not anxious concerning tomorrow Jesus was very strong in the sermon on the mount instead commanding us not to worry and I have learned to deal with worry the same way that I deal with whiskey I don't take whiskey I just I don't take even a little bit if someone pushes something in my mouth I spit it out and worry in my situation I treat the same way if I find myself worrying I repent of it I know it's linked with unbelief it's probably linked with my own pride linked with lack of confidence in the living God to take care of me and then I purposely use my mind for other things praise prayer witnessing writing a letter making a phone call many things we can do with our mind rather than sit worrying the third principle making God your goal that's why we have pushed the books by A.W.

Tozer because he is a God-centered man focusing on God that's why we have been emphasizing worship now, it's very easy to say these things but let's ask ourselves a question right now are we really God-centered is knowing God the greatest goal in our life Matthew 6, 33 seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added onto you and of course there are many other verses I found that in my life it was God plus my vision maybe for the ship maybe for India it was God plus many ideas and burdens that I had and I had to really get on my face before God and I had to ask Him to do a new work in my heart that my main joy in life would just be to be His child to be in communion with Him and all these other things will be like water above the top of the glass God by His grace is filling our glass filling our lives we are not against these other things answers to prayer people being saved new churches being born but it's all water above the glass it's extra blessing the glass is filled with God Himself when that kind of reality gets in the depth of your soul you will never be the same person and when things go wrong it will not shake because you're rooted and grounded in God Himself that's why I strongly recommend this book on the attributes of God by A.W.

Tozer even better read through the whole of the Bible and make a study on the attributes of God now let me take another survey get ready for another survey get your hand warmed up it takes about 60 hours to read the whole Bible 60 hours that's all we say I believe this is God's word we all have our Bibles I want to know I want you to be honest how many of you have never read the Bible through you have not read the whole raise your hand come on let's be honest about 90% and I want to challenge you I give that survey all over the world let me just say that that's one of the worst I want to challenge you that in the next 12 months you'll read the whole Bible through one time now if you don't know how to read you are completely forgiven and in India we have many many many people who love the

Lord Jesus Christ but they don't I do not think of those people in an inferior way 95% in Nepal cannot read Nepal Afghanistan 90% cannot read but this is Poland nation so we are hoping you can read the Bible through one Genesis and next month slowly slowly you read 6 chapters a day maybe start 2 chapters in Genesis start 2 chapters somewhere in the middle of the Old Testament and as you read focus on the attributes of God He is the inspirer the giver of this book the author of this book and when we listen to that man speak we sense that the presence of God in an extra way and the biggest emphasis in Ralph Shalas' life reading the word of God I've never met personally a man except Bhat Singh of India who spent so much time in the word of God and you know if we are not willing for some of

these practical steps then to some degree we have wasted our time here in this tent because you cannot carry out from this tent buckets of blessing you can get buckets of water but you can't carry out buckets of blessing so you store these buckets in your house and when you are feeling lonely or discouraged next week you go and you take a bucket of blessing every day and you must meet with God you know one of

the big hindrances to this you'll find it written in many many places in the book of Proverbs a great problem in my life laziness when I was a young man I was dreaming I was going to sit back and let other people work and so I had my little bitch and when I became a Christian I saw this strong word in God's word if a man not work let him not eat wow extremism and then I started to

read the Proverbs I sold my fire extinguisher business and I bought some Christian books and I went going door to door with my Christian books and I sold a lot of books she bought many books and then she said to me she said a proverb a day young man will keep the devil away ever since I met that funny old lady I have tried to read the Proverbs every single day how many of you read the Proverbs regularly raise your hands not too many this is a real problem in our churches in England there is a big emphasis on praise and we are always having praise meetings everybody is making songs based on the Psalms but they stop at the end of the Psalms so what is the result in the church we have lots of praise but no wisdom and so we end up with a gospel circus we need the Psalms I try to read the

Psalms every day why do we need the Proverbs there is 31 one for every day of the month speaks against the sins of the tongue that's why I need it every day it speaks about laziness the man he wants to sleep a little more supposed to get up in the morning and you know no matter how you have those pop-up toasters it doesn't mean that you are because you have been in this great week of blessing that you are going to wake up next week feeling spiritual when I wake up often in the morning I have a tremendous passion to go back to sleep and I have developed many methods to get up in the morning lazy minds don't want to read easier just to sit let's see what's on the television and God is wanting us to have disciplined minds so if you are going to make God your goal you are going to have to get

into God's Word and I am excited about what's going to happen as a result of steps of faith taken here during these days the fourth principle of survival is learn how to be hurt I wonder if you have ever heard anybody tell you that before I never heard anybody as a young Christian tell me and yet I discovered in God's work that I would be hurt emotionally by things people say and we can be very unrealistic as Christians and we are especially unrealistic about other Christians if you have a friendship with someone sooner or later that person is going to hurt you when you get married your wife is going to probably say something that hurts you and we must as God's children learn how to turn those hurts into blessings we must accept the reality of our humanity and discover that those hurts

can actually be stepping stones in our road to becoming more like Jesus Christ who was hurt more than anyone what about 38 and 39 where it speaks about blessing those who persecute us Matthew 5 38 and 39 and what about that teaching of Jesus Christ someone hits you on one cheek hey try that one offer it to you the other cheek a principle not emphasized very much in this rugged day of individualism and I cannot get immediate cleansing from it from the Lord I may say to him brother I'd like to talk to you alone go out for a walk in the woods and I say look I have to be honest what you said to me yesterday really hurts and we talk it out we pray it out many of our problems today emotionally are a result of repressing hurt repressing anger and never talking about it to anybody not even to God

many people or some people have been giving me little papers with their prayer requests been reading them and one person has asked please pray for unity among the different churches in Poland and I've met young people who get discouraged because they see different churches and sometimes they hear criticism and so they think you know how can God bless us if we're not all united as one big happy family we need a lot of wisdom the church consists of weak people it is not a special club for super saints it is a clinic for sinners and I'm amazed at the unity I often find among God's people I'm never surprised anymore

by the disunity I find and one of the beautiful things about this gathering this week we have here people here from different churches and I'm amazed and we're all learning and we

need to be more patient with one another it's going to take time there are legitimate differences in our thinking and in theology they don't disappear just overnight and this is where we need to learn communication and compassionate disagreement on certain issues and if someone says something about your church don't take it so personally and you know sometimes God is doing more we know everything we just look at the church and we look at the pastor we now know everything this kind of pride is very very sometimes in some of our churches we judge people's spirituality by the amount of noise that's why in some churches they think George Brewer is very spiritual this is an outwardly people I know are people in England we are having a great argument over whether the hand should be in the air

or the hand should be down in the pockets and when you go to a church meeting in England half the people have their hands in the air the other half of the people they sit in the back and watching they have their hands in their pockets who are the more spiritual that's the question I ask you hands in the air or hands in the pockets and you know what Billy Graham said he said we've taken the sword of the spirit and we're using it to carve one another up instead of engaging in a great offensive offense of world events let's be more relaxed about one another don't be afraid of Pentecostal Christians don't be afraid of Lutherans you wouldn't be here if you were afraid of Lutherans don't be afraid of Roman Catholics don't be afraid of loud mouth Baptists from America now you think ah I finally

found out he must be a Baptist I'm not a Baptist but my wife is a Baptist she's a quiet mouth Baptist we're going to introduce her to you this evening God is working together as God's people if we are going to build learn how to be heard and so when we're hurt we can forgive we can love we may not always agree but we will not develop a sour bitter attitude which will destroy our spiritual reality now number five we must move a little faster learning the reality of praise and thanksgiving praising the Lord even when you don't feel like it giving thanks when you don't see many things to be thankful for we talked about that the other day number six learning the rest of faith Hebrews chapter four to me that's a beautiful concept resting in the Lord rather than struggling with all my own

energy and strength number seven and I got this from A.W.

Tozer it's a very beautiful statement realizing God is easy to live with God this has helped many people because many have a wrong idea about God they think of God and His holiness with the ten commandments all the other rules and regulations they think of the God with a big stick ready to hit them on the head if they do anything wrong a lot of Christians are dealing with false guilt they're always feeling guilty even when they have not done anything wrong the number of people I have counseled with this problem especially when we come to the area of sex and in many other areas people living in a state of perpetual emotional failure failure to understand the grace of God the mercy of God God is easy to serve He's easy to live with why? because He's quick to notice the smallest thing we do in His name do you remember that scripture? a cup of cold water in the name of Jesus will be given a reward isn't that beautiful?

God loves you and when you do the smallest thing in His kingdom God appreciates that God loves you and appreciates you He is not wanting to condemn you you're not dedicating enough you're not reading the Bible enough you're not witnessing enough you're a bad boy I don't know if your mother ever treated you that way some of our problems go back to our relationship with our parents some parents are too strict

they're not positive enough so little junior no matter what he does never good enough never good enough and if you and if you've been in that kind of family you probably have some emotional problems as a result don't hold it against your parents there is no purpose in holding anything against your parents I want to write a book about parents I'm going to call it Parents Are Human I

know that I failed as a father I thank God that as far as I know my children have forgiven me of my failures God is easy to live with probably a lot easier even than your own earthly father who also probably loves you then I have number eight accepting our growth pattern it speaks in Peter about growing in great actually we've been talking a lot about spiritual growth weeds grow very quickly trees grow slowly every morning I go out to the woods beautiful trees just right over here I love those trees you go over there and you see somebody standing by a tree just looking at the tree and you say excuse me what are you doing and he says I'm watching this tree grow you may you may wonder if he needs some counseling but that tree is growing some of you are too worried about your spiritual

growth if you are walking with the Lord each day in his word confessing and repenting of any sin that you've committed then you will be growing stop worrying about it focus on the Lord Jesus not on your own self and don't measure yourself by the other man next to you we sometimes think oh that brother is so spiritual God is using him but I he seems like a gospel horse galloping along in his Christian life and I just seem to be a gospel monkey in the Old Testament God and God is changing us and you know if you haven't yet come to the Lord Jesus crawl crawl can you imagine being a caterpillar in this weather in this weather and you know we look at that caterpillar and yet what happens some weeks he spins that little cocoon and soon there's a beautiful butterfly that's God's grace some

people have come into this tent crawling on their bellies and they have gone out of here flying because they have been born again right here and that's not as preached because people have been working for many months it's because people have been praying it's because people gave money to buy this tent to buy the chair and people have put posters up all around God has used our brother Matt to bring in the harvest but it's because everybody has worked together let's learn to be patient we're all different we're growing different speed spiritually some are very very very slow I have seen those people go on for years some are like me I grew very quickly 17, 18 years of age grew very fast but then I had to slow down and consolidate and become strong and then number nine the freedom of a

discipline and ordered life real discipline doesn't bring bondage it brings freedom kind of discipline we read about in 1 Corinthians 9 having a file where we keep letters that people may send keeping phone numbers and addresses in a neat way so we'd like to give you a list of 30 areas where we need to be more ordered and more disciplined and it helps us spiritually and number 10 learning to refuel and relax I thought it was 10 minutes to 12 but I say it's 10 minutes to 1 so it is time to refuel but not only physically we need to refuel spiritually we must refuel maybe a walk in the woods maybe through sports there are many ways to refuel and I know some of these things you won't realize till a few years number 11 real fellowship taking off the mask being real number 12 keeping a positive

attitude too easy to be negative memorize Philippians 4.8 positive attitude toward people toward God toward yourself actually produces spiritual and physical energy and then number 13 constant in the word and prayer we've been emphasizing every day number 14 keeping active in the service of God when you're busy for the king of kings Satan can't catch you with some of his special tactics nothing wrong with being tired at night you sleep better when you're tired there's much work to be done and then number 15 don't neglect your family a little recreation keep your sense of humor because with God's people often

you're either laughing or crying there's no middle ground and number 16 keeping a balance in all these areas we have touched on that almost every day and number 17 go back to the

basics you may be 30 years in Jesus Christ go back to the basics every once in a while you have to relearn some of these lessons again reread some of those old books like Calvary Road and True Discipleship none of this is a substitute for Jesus Christ reigning and ruling in your heart as we talked about in our first session none of it is a substitute for the crucified life and the spirit-filled life and none of it is a substitute for the crucified life and the spirit-filled life just practical ways to keep that going every day struggle is normal and I am a person of great struggles I've got struggles today we are soldiers we must get used to the bullets and the bombs the ditches in the ground the airplanes overhead the spiritual bombs now I want to do something I do all over the world

like that first time I've ever done it in Poland I want everybody to stand up and I want you to find one other person you won't have to look too far just form a little couplet two people two people shake hands with that person if you can't find someone don't want anybody left out I want you to take one minute and share a prayer burden for your own perseverance then that other person the minute he shares his prayer burden and you pray for him just pray loud enough for your own little couplet two minute share one minute pray third minute the next person share fourth minute pray and then you get your share

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