

# Prayer Seffield Old Univ Cu 4.3.78

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the vital role of prayer and worship in a believer's life, supported by personal testimony and the importance of Christian literature.*

**Duration:** 1:13:57

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:7

**Topics:** "Prayer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of getting into God's Word and challenges the audience to memorize it. He mentions a young man named Bill Gothard who is making a significant impact in North America through his seminars. The speaker also highlights the need for a global vision of spreading the gospel, as half of the world has never heard it. He concludes by discussing the importance of prayer and asks for God's help in delivering his message effectively.

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## Transcript

Well, I appreciate this opportunity to worship together with you. I believe the highest calling we have as believers is to worship Him and to praise Him. That's what we were created for.

We weren't created so that someone later on could evangelize us. We were created to worship Him, but because we made a mess, we had to be redeemed. Sometimes on the ship where I lived for a few years, we spent many hours just worshipping Him, praising Him.

I'd love to be able to teach you some of the new songs of worship that some of our people have written. And our hearts are just more and more convinced about this. In fact, one of the main books I chose to bring along this evening to mention to you is a book on this whole subject of worship.

The most radical book on worship and intercession that perhaps has been produced in many years. You may not agree with everything, but I think you will see something of the significance of intercession and worship as you read this book, *Destined for the Throne*. You see, the Word of God teaches that we someday, who are believers, will rule with Him.

We will rule with Jesus Christ. Those who suffer for Him will rule with Him. And there are many other verses.

So it's been wonderful that you have taken this time to worship and to praise the Lord. It's a very important night for me because it was 23 years ago tonight that I came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior. So it's my birthday.

And... Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you. Oh, thank you, that's enough. But it fits in because I've been asked to speak on the subject of prayer.

And I came to the Lord because of an elderly lady who prayed for me for three years and who interceded for the grammar school that I was attending for 15 years. And the whole of OM was born out of that lady's prayers. By the way, I'm not the leader of OM in Europe, that's actually Jonathan McCrosty.

The leader of OM in Britain is Peter Maiden, who many of you know. And I'm somewhere in between there or around there. My job being the task of fellowshiping with all the leaders around the world and trying to figure out what they're doing.

But perhaps I could just begin with my testimony in order to lay a foundation for this talk tonight. And as a testimony of just how God does answer prayer. My grandfather was from Glasgow and he was a drunk.

I hope that doesn't offend any of our friends from north of the border. My other grandfather was from the Netherlands, he was an atheist. And I was not reared in a Christian home, I was reared in a very materialistic home.

Though my parents were good people in some ways, they didn't know Christ. I became religious because I was interested in various things, including the girls that were in the church. Became a president of the young people's organization in the church, but I didn't know Christ.

And this lady began to pray for me. She had prayed for this school for 15 years, and she not only prayed that people would be converted in that school, but she prayed that they would go all over the world spreading the gospel. She had an enormous vision, a totally unknown lady, an enormous vision of the world.

And that was her prayer. All of her own children, about four or five, became outstanding and wonderful Christians. One of them already with the Lord after serving in the Congo.

Another one, one of the outstanding Christian violinists in the world today. So she didn't sacrifice her own family on the altar of the world mission vision, but she had both. And she walked with God and she knew the reality of prayer.

I went into that grammar school, a rather wild, materialistic, lustful character, and she targeted it, zeroed in on me in her praying. And three years later, at a Billy Graham meeting in New York City, I surrendered to Jesus Christ. People always say, well, that's just emotion.

And there may be someone here tonight that doesn't know the Lord Jesus and you have doubts about all this. Well, you're looking at a doubting Thomas, first class. I'm still a doubter.

One thing I know, Jesus Christ radically invaded my life on that night, changed it, still changing it. Twenty-three years later, I hardly think of that as an emotional experience. It's a rather long time for one emotion.

To last, especially in someone as unstable as I am. God is real and God answers prayer. The most normal thing for us to do as Christians and as God's creatures is to learn how to talk with him.

Just as a son learns how to talk with his father. I have three children, one of them 17. And one of the great joys that I've had in my experience with my 17 year old, is we've learned to communicate, to share, to discuss things, all kinds of things from masturbation to homosexuality to horses.

He just had one fall on him, by the way, and broke his leg in two places. And this is very meaningful. It's also very normal.

And so it is with our Heavenly Father. We can come to him, we can talk to him, we can share with him. And prayer is a very practical thing.

It's a very real thing. It was when I was 18, approximately shortly after my conversion, just before I went up to university, as you say here, that I dedicated my life to prayer. I never wanted to start an organization.

I was just a nobody. I didn't have a high IQ. I had a lot of problems, especially lust, impatience, pride.

Ten other areas of difficulty. But God convicted me as a young person that the first thing in life was to learn to pray. So I made this the main priority my whole life, to learn to pray.

I started nights of prayer with a few other students. We started to pray for that high school. Within the next one year and a half, 200 students in one of the most ungodly, drunken high schools in the New York City area surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ.

And some of those students are serving Christ in many parts of the world today. Also, among other things, OM was born out of that situation and soon began to spread until today. There's about 1,000 plus of us in OM full time around the world.

Two and two and a half thousand in the summer. One lady knew how to pray. Just think of the possibility tonight.

Some of you will learn how to pray. Some of you are already learning. George Mueller, by the end of his life, had 30,000 answers to prayer.

One man, he was a German, came to Britain as a missionary to this pagan country. And still going strong at 80, picked up some of the British stubbornness and lived a long life. Still praying and winning great victories at 80 years of age.

30,000 answers to prayer. How are you doing? Specific answers. He wrote many of them down.

Keep any records? Answers to prayer. Some people in their prayers specialize in being vague, lest they have to be pinned down on expecting something to actually happen. And that could be perhaps embarrassing.

Like one lady who prayed after reading the prayer on faith moving mountains. She prayed for this mountain near her home that it would be moved. She went out to look and she saw the mountain was still there.

She said to her friend, well, I knew it wasn't going to move. Real faith. Now, before I go any further, I would like to say a word about the books in realization that as I speak about books, I will turn someone off.

There's always someone here in England who doesn't like salesmanship. There's always someone in every audience who doesn't like Americans. And what to do? I just so believe in books.

I brought two little cases with me and so little I couldn't even lift them. So I'm glad your men met me on the platform. But I believe in Christian literature because I would probably have deserted the Christian faith and become an agnostic if it wasn't for Christian books.

I went to a college where every professor was against the evangelical cause, including the Bible professor who was totally immersed in this German higher criticism that our friend Robert referred to. But somehow through books, I managed to see there were some other viewpoints. By the way, probably one of the greatest problems in Sweden where I've been a few dozen times, we, by the way, get a higher number of recruits from Sweden per capita than we do from the British Isles.

They may not all be university students, but God is working in Sweden. Certainly not in the universities as much as here, but in other ways. But one of the great weaknesses is a lack of in-depth literature in the Swedish language.

And this is something we have in the English language that we just should be so grateful to God for. An unbelievable heritage of Christian literature that can answer almost any question that you can conceive of that may come against you in your faith. In fact, since I specialize in books, if you wrote to me on any question, I probably could recommend at least 10 books on that subject.

So my life, my Christian life, has greatly helped through books, and I, therefore, always recommend books wherever I go. I want to recommend this book, fitting into our subject of prayer, *Knowing God* by J.I. Packer. Now, we would tend to think, because this book is very popular, widely read, that everyone would have it.

But you see, you have new students in every year. New people being converted. This is one of the most popular books among students.

So just for my own interest, I'd like to know how many of you have already read it, or read half of it. Raise your hand. Good.

Still less than 50%. So there's still room for some of you to load out your copy of *Knowing God* to the poorer student, and to the student who may happen to be on a grant, most of you. You can get a copy at either one of the book tables.

*Knowing God*. And then, if you want to approach this whole exact same subject from the other side of the theological fence, you may want to look at Tozer's book called *Knowledge of the Holy*, a book, again, on the attributes of God. There's nothing more important than our knowledge of God, our theology of God himself.

Especially when it comes to prayer. In fact, our whole Christian life will be built on the foundation of our knowledge of God and his attributes. That's why I strongly recommend both of those books.

Some people face intellectual problems. The more traditional Calvinistic approach is that we should not worry too much about apologetics, especially for anyone who's unconverted. But perhaps many of you are not from that approach.

Even if you are, I'm sure you'll have an open mind. But I believe there is a legitimate need for apologetics, even this kind. A bit American, some people would say.

But Josh McDowell's book, *Evidence Demands a Verdict*, is one of the fastest selling books in the university scene in Britain today. Whenever it's available. And it is almost impossible to keep it in stock.

This man has led literally thousands and thousands of university students to Christ, including a fair number of PhDs and all the rest. And he's a man you'll want to read. When you get done with this, he has more evidence than *Demands a Verdict*, an equally large volume.

And he's done a lot of research. And I think you'll find it a helpful book. May not be your approach, but I know a lot of people who have been helped through it.

I'm very grateful that soon InterVarsity will be publishing a book called *Eros Defiled*. You can write that down and I hope you will take notes. I know as students, you must by Saturday be tired of taking notes.

But it may be helpful. But if you write down that book, I believe it's going to be one of the most unique books published by InterVarsity here in Britain. *Eros Defiled*, I'm reading it right now.

The best book on the subject of morality I've ever read. And I've read about 15 on that subject. *Eros Defiled* by John White.

Whole chapter on homosexuality, one of the best. Whole chapter on masturbation, almost unheard of in Christian books. A very good chapter on whether to go to bed or not just before you're married.

What is marriage? Do you have to marry the girl that you have sex with before marriage? Every conceivable subject is discussed in *Eros Defiled*. So I challenge you. Meanwhile, to prepare for that book, you can read Roy Hessian's book on the problem of morals and immorality among Christians.

Subject not too many people want to talk about. An aid to deeper repentance of the forgotten factors of sexual misbehavior. I'm convinced the number one problem among students in the Christian unions is their morality.

And I've been 15 years lecturing in the British universities, in fact, every week for the last two months. And a lot of that involves correspondence, some of which has gone on 15 years. The only thing I can think of that gives more difficulty than lust is pride.

I can't think of anything. Materialism runs a close third. And for some people, of course, bypasses lust.

With women, I might just adjust my statistic to say that worry does generally bypass lust, though they have a gift in the area of lust as well. And it usually, together with worry, gets many of them in difficulty. I would say many of the reasons, one of the main reasons students, after three years in a Christian union, two years later, have deserted the Christian faith and become agnostics, and that has happened to hundreds, hundreds of Christian union students, is because they got this very high standard that is preached to us in the evangelical cause.

They tried to keep it, especially tried to stay moral. It worked all right when they were, you know, in the midst of many other Christians who could encourage them, not always even there. But when they got out of the little evangelical hotbed that they were being reared in and met some of the real women who are crawling around planet Earth, and men, it didn't work.

And down they went morally, which wasn't the greatest problem. The greatest problem was they didn't know what to do when they fell. They were so shattered, their ego was so broken, their image was so destroyed, it led them further into depression, discouragement, and then in some cases to the conviction that Christianity doesn't work.

Because God didn't keep them from this. They prayed to be kept from this 488 times, and then they fell and they blamed it on God. So I'm very interested in this subject of morality, and I praise God for this book by Roy Hesschen, who has dealt with so many people, including missionaries, the greatest problem on the mission field.

Perhaps again, next to pride and one or two other things, would be morality. Unbelievable. Unbelievable.

We're all in it. Billy Graham says we're a generation of sex gluttons. The church may not talk about it much, but the Bible has over 300 verses on the subject of sex.

And if we're going to even begin to speak on the whole counsel of God, we better get God's sex book open and read it and find out where we're going and where we are. And if we're not living in victory in this area, Roy Hesschen has the answer. The cross, Jesus, the lordship of Christ, and I recommend that book.

I don't generally choose my subject when I go to the Christian Union, otherwise I would choose to preach on sex. Instead, I get chosen to preach on dull subjects like missions and not really dull, but it certainly does frighten a lot of people away. A great book on Christian leadership is by Oswald Sanders, the former leader of the OMF.

The present leader is Michael Griffiths. On Tuesday night, I had my heart challenged as I listened to Michael Griffiths at the Thanksgiving service for the 12 missionaries who were just killed in Thailand. What a meeting that was.

Before Michael Griffiths had this job, Oswald Sanders had it, and this is the greatest book on leadership I've ever read. I recommend it to you. We also have our prayer cards.

Some of you have already seen these. 52 of the most needy nations in the world put on cards that you can carry in your pocket, use them to redeem the time, build up a knowledge of these mission fields. Some of these countries have no church.

Some of them have no missionaries. Some of them have no believers, like Mauritania, no believers. Libya's a little better, three believers.

Tunisia's climbing high, 14 believers. Afghanistan's ahead of Tunisia with 18 believers. That's in the entire population, nationals.

The average Christian doesn't know these things, and we want Christians to know a little more about the mission field. And these cards are being wonderfully used. Here's Mongolia.

I wonder what the situation is there. There's four prayer requests on the back of the card. There's a map on the front, and then the basic figures.

There are no known believers in the whole country of Mongolia among the nationals. What a challenge. And we try to distribute these cards together with these maps of the world to get people into intelligent prayer.

We're challenging all of our British friends and Americans, Scandinavians, anybody to take this little map and to hang it over the front of their television. And to spend a little more time interceding and a little less time breeding poison in their own minds. So we hope you'll take one of our world maps and make use of it.

For everyone who takes a book at either book table, I won't even tell you which one's mine. You might guess. Not really mine.

But for anyone who buys a book, we give you a book free. Either this book or when we run out, unfortunately, one of my own books. Not a very good book called Come Live, Die.

But it's got a lot of good quotations from other people's books. I'm not going to be speaking about OM tonight. Maybe Peter Maiden has told you something about that.

But we do have some literature about India, which is especially on my heart since British people can go there without a visa and stay there. And about Turkey, one of the priority fields of our work where there are 38 million people and less than 50 known converted Turks. And I hope that you will take advantage of some of this material.

And I have one prayer request, and that's that you would pray for this second ship tonight. She is on her maiden voyage. If I was honest with you, I could tell you the bouts I have with fear, anxiety, and everything else you can think of.

I'm not a man of great faith. And when I think of this old ship coming up now into Northern Europe, it's probably along the coast of Spain, I just tremble. Because I know that God does allow disasters.

He allowed those 12 missionaries to be killed. And yet, it seems to me, the last thing that God would want at present is for 160 people to be in a disaster on that ship. Yet, as we come in these difficult waters through the Straits of Dover and up to Brennan, we really would like your prayers.

On the maiden voyage of the MV Dulles, most people do not even know this ship has left Genoa. We bought this ship cash as we don't believe in borrowing money. The Lord brought in an answer to prayer on the 28th of December.

It's a ship that has room for 400 people in cabins, 600 people in her preaching lounges, and an exhibition on her huge after deck after we overcover the swimming pool for three times as many books as we have on Lagos. Lagos, by the way, the first ship is in Calcutta. They've already sold 200,000 rupees of books in a massive citywide campaign in that great nation.

We spoke with them on the telephone this afternoon just before coming here and they would appreciate prayer for Calcutta. We're seeing people come to Christ almost every day in the open air ministry. And flocks of people, thousands and thousands are flocking to the ship.

People are asking in some cases how they can come to know Christ in this needy land of India, which is much upon our hearts. And then lastly, my own book just published last month, A Revolution of Love and Balance. I mention this because I'll probably say some extreme things that will upset some of you.

Not so much on a message about prayer, but it is difficult to speak just one night and this book will help balance out some of the things I say. A very interesting little book that has been on my heart. Let's just pray before we look into the word of God.

Not that what I've said isn't part of the message, all part of it. Let's pray. Lord, we need your help.

I need your help. I feel so inadequate and weak. I know enough about miscommunication to never preach again.

And I know enough about all the different temperaments and types of people that we can find in an audience like this to just fall on my face and say, Lord, what can I do? Lord, speak to us about prayer. Speak to us about our own lives. Don't let our prejudices, don't let my own personality kinks hinder what you want to say tonight.

We ask in Jesus' name, Amen. Now, it's an unusual night. I even have some notes.

I wrote these down about 20 minutes ago during one of the announcements because I didn't want to go astray. My message is called Foundations for a Prayer Ministry. I believe God is calling every believer into a prayer ministry.

There are many scriptures I would like to read, but perhaps we could begin in the book of Matthew. Some verses that I think are very familiar to you, starting at Matthew 6, 36. By the way, that's my favorite worship hymn, Seek ye first the kingdom of God.

And if we weren't already running a little over time, I'd have you all sing it. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Be therefore not anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for the things of itself.

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Then going down to verse 7 in chapter 7. Ask, and it shall be given you. Seek, and ye shall find.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth unto him that knocketh, it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he asketh fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them.

For this is the law and the prophets. Over to chapter 9. Last four verses. Chapter 9, verse 35.

And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they were faint and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest. How extremely clear. The ministry of prayer, the ministry of asking for that which we need, that which the church needs, that which is the will of God, the ministry of praying forth laborers out into the harvest field.

It's very, very clear. When I was a young Christian, I made a study on prayer, went through the whole Bible, marking every verse on the subject of prayer. It's a book of prayer.

It's a book about prayer. It's a book with many prayers. And yet so often today, this is the weakest area in our local churches and in our own lives.

One of the leading Christian magazines some months ago asked me to write an article. I'm not a writer. I can dictate a thousand letters to individuals easier than write one chapter in a book.

But anyway, I was so concerned about this subject of prayer that I wrote this article, What Happened to the Prayer Meeting? To my amazement, it's being published in magazines all over the world because Christian leaders are aware that this is certainly one of the greatest problems in the church today. And some churches no longer have a prayer meeting. And if they have one, hardly anyone comes.

In my surveys of the Christian unions here in Britain also, and many executive senior presidents have expressed this to me that they can't get the prayer life really the way it should be. I hope Sheffield is an exception to that. Even in some of our big Christian unions, unbelievably few show up to the prayer meetings.

And this is not right. A pastor in one of the largest churches in southern England just went out to minister in our work in India. We have about 200 men and women in India now.

So we find gifted men, pastors, teachers who can go out and teach the Word of God. As our main work is not evangelism, but it's grounding people in the Word of God, building them up as disciples. And we believe that as men grow and become mature in Christ, that evangelism will flow spontaneously out from them.

And he came back. And his greatest burden now in his church is to make the main meeting in the church next to his breaking of bread, the prayer meeting. And God is moving in that church.

They've sent thousands of pounds out to missions, even in the past few weeks. And they're seeing tremendous things happen in their prayer meeting, where sometimes up to 200 or 300 in Britain are gathering in the prayer meeting just to intercede. I believe that we have not begun to see what God could do in this nation if we will learn to pray, if we will learn to persevere in prayer.

There are many great books on this subject. There are a few actually on the table. There's one I'll be happy to send to you as a free gift called Power Through Prayer by E.M. Bounds.

If I had my literature van with me tonight, I'd have a lot more books and I'm ashamed of this little display I have. But all of our people are in the midst of a retreat where I was supposed to be as well. 140 OEMers full time here in Britain are all down in the Wycliffe Center this weekend.

And so I only have these few books. But I would like to see that book go out. And if you want one, I'll be happy to send it to you as a free gift.

Power Through Prayer by E.M. Bounds. Now, there's a lot that I would like to say in a sense try to motivate you to pray. Telling you illustrations about great men of prayer, Brainerd and Hudson Taylor and so many others.

Giving some quotations from some of these men, like Samuel Chadwick, who said the one main strategy of Satan will be to keep you from prayer. And how Satan doesn't fear prayerless study and prayerless work. A lot of other prayerless things, but he trembles.

When we pray. But to some degree, I'm just not going to be able to cover everything tonight. And so I'm going to assume that many of you want to pray and you want to learn how to pray and you're hungry for God.

And that's why you're here tonight. So I want to share with you what I call the foundations for a ministry of prayer, assuming that you want to get started. And you have to begin somewhere.

By the way, the greatest book on prayer, perhaps ever written. Is by a Norwegian, Hallowsby's book on prayer. And I hope your CU book table will have many of those, if not tonight, in the future.

It's another great inner varsity book. You know, I believe that you're the publishing group. Inner varsity connected with the Christian unions is one of the greatest publishing groups in the world today.

And it's just a thrill to be able to distribute their books by the tens of thousands all over the world. These books by Michael Green. You must be joking.

And that great book. I'm thinking of the one where the man is on the chair and then he's free. The cover was designed by a friend of mine about Jesus.

Jesus spells freedom. Runaway world. It's just so tremendous to have these books.

I hope you're using these books in evangelism. You can have my method of witnessing is very low profile. I'm not sort of a hard driving person.

I am on the saints, but not on the sinners. My profile of the sinners is very low. I just sort of talk and feel them out, see where they are, try to show some love, maybe carry their bag or do something and then come in as they ask questions.

It's a terrific method to witness. Just get people to ask questions. One method I do is carry a Christian sex book and stick it on the top of my pile.

I have one in my case, this book, Eros Defiled. I got an advanced copy. You just put that, just carry one of those around the university.

Eros Defiled on the top of your books. You know, you'll find that people will be asking questions. Of course, some of your girls may get in trouble, but the question method is one of my favorite methods to get people asking questions and to share with them the message of Jesus Christ.

But I want to talk and avoid sidetracks and talk about some of these foundations for a prayer ministry. The first foundation I have is that you need to make sure that you know Jesus Christ personally. Now, that's pretty basic, isn't it? But there may be someone here tonight.

You're trying to pray. You're not getting very far. And one of the reasons, the main reason is that you've never prayed for your own life and for your own soul or whatever terminology you want to use to be saved, to know God personally, to be converted.

It's not just pagans from the jungles that need to be converted. Sophisticated, semi-civilized pagans in America and Britain need to be converted. Often in Britain, I have people, not everybody's as friendly as you all look tonight, who tell me to go back to where I came from.

I'm one of those immigrants, of course, the entire National Front chasing me. I understand I want to get 400 running or 500 running in the next election and somebody else is thinking of putting up the price. They feel they won't be able to afford it.

But as someone who immigrated here 15 years ago, still, of course, as you can see, haven't learned the language. I can tell you I have very seldom found an Englishman that loves this country as much as I do. And one of the curses on Britain today is a lack of appreciation for your own country.

You're most of you a bunch of spoiled people who have lived in one of the greatest countries too long, who know very little about living in other places and therefore don't appreciate what God in his mercy has allowed you to have in this country. And I say that with deep feeling because I believe that God wants to do much more in this country. And I believe it's a hindrance to what God wants to do when there are so many people running around moaning and complaining and griping about everything.

I'm always on the trains meeting the British rail complainers, these, who I can't even describe some of them. Most of them have never traveled in any other train system in any other part of the world. I've traveled in 20 train systems in most countries in the world, apart from South America and Africa.

But out Asia, India, I've been on almost every main line in India. And I tell you, British rail is heaven. That would be, of course, slight American exaggeration.

So there may be someone here who's never been born again. You've never been converted and of course you can't pray. God will not hear you.

Now, I've heard exceptions to that. Some unconverted person felt that God heard his prayer. It could be in the process of bringing that man to himself.

I would not say God can never hear and answer the prayer of a sinner. But step one is to know that you're converted. We have that great verse in 1 John, I think it's chapter 5, where it says we should know.

These things are written that ye may know that ye have eternal life. Isn't that great? It's great to know where we're going. I wouldn't want to go to sleep tonight without knowing that I am going to be with God.

Now, I am not a person of great faith. I don't pretend to understand heaven. I'm not a person sort of yearning to die.

At this stage of my Christian maturity and I have a long way to go, I've learned yearning to live as long as I can, especially if I can stay in Britain and travel through the Welsh mountains and the Scottish mountains and go rock climbing in the devil's kitchen and all kinds of other experiences I've had. But I know that that's not God's way. I know that I have to grow in faith and be able to say, I can't say it yet, as Paul said, to live as Christ and to die as Cain.

Well, actually, I can say it. I especially said it a lot as a young Christian. Until I got a few close calls with death.

Then I started to play a different tune. And then I got married. And I don't want to leave her.

It's just getting exciting. 18 years marriage. We were, you know, I'm a very slow learner in that area.

And it's just getting so wonderful. And to me, life is tremendous. And that can be a problem.

It's people who suffer and people who have been constantly hazarding their lives for the sake of the gospel and people who have been through all the agony that this life can be that often begin to just pine to be with God. And I met people like that. And that's my goal.

But it is good, even though my faith in heaven and understanding of it is small. I have that great assurance. That's where I'm going.

Someone once helped me by saying that heaven is just being with God. And if you have a lot of trouble with that, don't read six books on the subject of heaven. Just by faith.

Take it. You're going to be with God. He will know how to handle you.

Do you think God will know how to handle you when you get there? I think so. And it's wonderful to know that when we die, we're going to be with God. Some of my closest friends have been killed already.

And I had to speak at their funeral. I tell you, if there's anything that ever shook me in my life was speaking at the funeral of two or three of my closest friends. And yet we know heaven is real.

You don't talk about death in our society. It's one of the no-nos. The no-no years ago used to be sex.

Now the no-no is death. People don't want to talk about it. And yet people go and sit through every kind of wild film watching people killed by the dozens in the films now.

Something about that, isn't there? Number two is if we're going to lay a foundation for our prayer ministry, we have to become strong in the Word of God. I've discovered in most Christian unions, less than 10% are memorizing the Word of God. To me, that's just basic.

Within months after becoming a believer, I was just a toddler falling all over the place. I learned that I must memorize Scripture, get it into my heart, get it into my mind. This is not just for the navigators.

It's for everybody. The psalmist said, I have hid my word in my heart that I might not sin against you. And I found that so many of my problems began to get rectified through the memorization, the meditation of the Word of God.

Terrific lust problem that I had. I was peddling pornography at 16. My mind was as crooked as a snake falling off a canyon.

And I wondered, was there any hope for me? You know, we always have these wonderful testimonies of wicked things we did before we were saved. But sometimes it's not so interesting for the saints to hear some of the crazy things we do after we're saved. Like leading a girl to Christ and ending up almost in bed with her on the same night and discovering that she actually fell more in love with me than Jesus and the whole thing became one utter miserable mess.

And I thought the whole thing was a wonderful answer to prayer, at least in the beginning stage. Endless messed up situations I got into as a young Christian. And I wondered, is there any hope for me? I wonder if any of you, you know, I know I can't relate to all of you, but hopefully someone may be here that can relate.

Have God in any messes in your Christian life along this line and wondered whether there was any hope for you? Well, there is. There's hope for the hopeless. And I believe one of the keys to coming into greater victory, to dealing with lust or whatever other problem you have is intensive meditation and memorizing the Word of God.

And that will lay the foundation you need for prayer. By the way, prayer plays a major part in this because we have to learn to resist the devil. I'm reading Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones's book on the Christian Warfare's exposition on Ephesians 6, one of the best books ever put in print.

The best book put in print, in my view, by the way, in the past 50 years in the British Isles is Spiritual Depression by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. And if you don't have a copy, I'll be happy to send you one as a gift. We're just publishing, co-publishing a new edition with Pickering and Inglis of that book.

Incredible book, should be read by everybody. And some people say, well, he's too Calvinistic for me. By the way, if you think he's too Calvinistic for you, you might realize that he introduced A. W. Tozer into the British Isles and A. W. Tozer's Armenian.

It's interesting how we sometimes get caught up in our little denominational viewpoints. I like people who are a little open-minded. I was preaching to a group of 100 pastors in London, and one of these types of pastors stood up and said, now, I want to know, young man, are you a Calvinist? I was talking about having evangelism in London.

And I said, look, I just want to assure you that I am a Calvinist. And a big smile. I am an Arminianized Calvinist.

Hallelujah. Would you be seated? And I went on to give my message. But it's a challenge to be able to read books from different sides of the theological fence.

But no matter what side you come from, you've got to get into God's Word. And I would challenge you, what a joy it would be if a few people tonight would say, from now on, I'm going to memorize God's Word. It's basic.

It's biblical. A young man is making the greatest impact in North America right now of any man apart from Billy Graham. His name is Bill Gothard.

He'll have 54 seminars this year. Every seminar will have over 15,000 people, some of them 20, 30,000 people sitting for a week. He's developed the most elaborate Bible study method to deal with people's real problems that any man I've ever heard of.

I went through one of those seminars. Bill Gothard's whole testimony, the radical change that took place in his life, goes back to basically learning how to memorize and meditate for your prayer ministry. Third, we've got to get to know reality in disciplined living.

1 Corinthians chapter 9, we have a word from Paul, the theologian. Now, you can imagine what this probably one of the greatest theologians of all time had to say. You know what he said? I buffet my body and bring it into subjection, lest after preaching to others, I become a reprobate.

How do you like that for theology? No wonder a very high percentage of our theologians get wiped out either by immorality or by liberalism or by something else. The great problem among theologians is not really objective theological problems. That is true in some cases.

The greater problem is how to live it. And if you don't live it, if it isn't reality, the natural thing is to seek a theology that is going to be more in line with your sin and more in line with your life. And I've counseled and written and been in contact with endless people in that category.

And I think the missing link in our theology and in much of our living is discipline. Billy Graham speaking to 9,000 students at the Inner Varsity Convention many years ago, I've heard the tape 15 times. He said, if you're not willing to discipline your life, forget it, you'll never live for Christ.

You just never will. You may get a lot of other things. There's a great emphasis on worship right now in Britain, at least certain kinds of worship.

I'm not against that. But I want to tell you, if you build a life of worship without a foundation of discipline, you will become another immoral worshiper. And some of the men who have gone to the highest levels of worship have gone to the lowest levels, even living with three or four women all at the same time.

You've got to have all the truths. And whatever truth you have, it's got to be built on a disciplined life. Learning how to say no to the impulses of instinct.

People are surprised what happened to the children of God cult. It never surprised me. I knew that was going to happen five years before it happened.

I confronted them about it. I remember going to a man and the children of God and saying, look, what's all this hugging and kissing going on? Of course, they were praising Jesus the whole time. Jesus, Jesus, you know, kissing and hugging sometimes three, four or five minutes.

And you know what the leader of the cog said to me? He said, we are learning that in Jesus Christ, there's neither male nor female. And now we see them actually sending their women into the streets as so-called Christian prostitutes to bring men to God. That is hit television in this country and newspaper, though it actually started over a year ago.

Unbelievable. I saw a picture in their literature of girls nailed on the cross next to Christ, completely naked with the nails through their most intimate part. As an indication, this is their own literature that this is the highest calling of a girl to God is to give her body.

To any man in order to bring him to God. And some of these girls doing this are absolutely sincere. Some of you don't think there's a real devil.

Who do you think gets all this kind of madness going in the world today? And history has shown that the sex emotion and the religious emotion run very, very close. And the only thing that will separate it for many people is a disciplined mind. And there's no purpose in talking about prayer unless firstly, we're willing to talk about discipline.

This is why most people don't come to prayer meetings because it's hard. Hallowsby in his book on prayer says prayer is work. And I'm convinced we're being deceived in a massive way, away from disciplined living.

Paul said, I buffet my body. I bring it into subjection. Lest after preaching to others, I become a reprobate.

Jesus said again and again, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up a cross daily and follow me. Sure it's hard and there will be failure and there is provision for failure. That in itself is the greatest discipline.

It's the discipline of repentance. It's to immediately repent when failure comes in, to immediately repent when sin comes in and not allow the devil to drag you into depression or discouragement or self-pity. Which is one of the more subtle forms of self-love.

Now I find a lot of Christians that I get involved in counseling, especially through the post, engage in a lot of self-pity without realizing it, it's a subtle form of self-love. And we have our little evangelical purgatory. We sin, we do something really wrong and we're unable to bounce back immediately.

We feel several weeks have to go by until, you know, it's a past memory. And we need to learn to deal with sin instantly. I'll never forget Roy Hession speaking at one of our conferences years ago.

He said, if you've committed a particular sin even 10 times, if you have repented of it, it's under the blood, it's gone. Don't go out into the cemetery and dig up all the dirty old bones. Operation introspection.

And he said this, if you commit that same sin again tomorrow, as far as God is concerned, it's the first time in history you've ever committed it. So that's all you have to deal with. That's not so hard, is it? But what happens? Because people tend to allow the past to destroy their spiritual life.

When they sin, they think of all the past. And of course, that becomes very, very depressing. And then the fourth foundation for this ministry of intercession is we need a vision.

Without a vision, the people perish, it says. We need a vision. And that vision needs to be coupled with initiative.

We don't need to, for example, just go to organized prayer meetings. We can have spontaneous prayer meetings in our own room. Sometimes I go out for a walk with a brother.

And as we're walking through the woods, I just start to talk with God. Sometimes people get a bit frightened that they usually come back. But why not? Why can't we just talk to God as we're walking, as we're driving? I'm often driving with someone.

And I just start to talk to the Lord as I'm sitting there. Of course, if I'm driving myself, I usually keep my eyes open. This is advisable.

But this idea that we always have to kneel or we have to get some kind of a holy aroma around us before we can pray, I believe is false. We need initiative in prayer. But none of this is going to work until we have a vision.

A vision of what God can do through you, through us as a body. A vision of some of these countries we've been talking about today. A vision of the fact that one half of the world has never once heard the gospel.

I tell you, when that began to sink into my soul at 18 years of age, I was never the same again. A lot of the things of the world very much attracted me. But when God gave me a vision of His world, and the way I could fit into it, most of those things, in fact, to a large degree, all of them, they dropped off.

For example, I was a fanatic rock and roll dancer. Dancing was in me as deep as anything. If I couldn't find a woman, I'd dance with a broom.

I would dance all night before I was converted. And after I was converted, I didn't drop this. I even argued with people.

I'm talking about ballroom dancing and rock and roll. I was just coming out of the jitterbug era, which really dates me. And I thought, I never can give this up.

And I found this vibe, this verse in the Psalms about dancing. And I pushed that down some of my Bible-believing friends' throats as a young convert. One time I was dancing at a wedding reception, my sister's wedding reception.

They wanted me to put on an exhibition. And I did. And yet I felt wrong about it that night.

And I went out into the woods to pray near this bar where this reception was. And I said, Lord, you know how I love this dancing. And my whole body is injected with music.

I can never stop this unless you give me something better. And I went back toward the bar. My grandfather was an atheist, came out, and he was upset about something, came out of the reception.

He sat in the car. And for the first time, I shared with my Dutch atheist grandfather, Jesus Christ. And it clicked, there's something better.

Sharing Jesus Christ every possible minute. And then I got involved in literature evangelism. And then I got involved in training and mobilizing other people and going off to Mexico.

And I never did dance, at least in that style, again. You know, you'll never get rid of some of your worldly habits until you fall in love with Jesus and get involved in His work and in something that is better. Our life is not a consistent, it does not consist of 19 things we cannot do.

But it consists of dozens of things we can do. David Wilkerson said, the greatest sin of young people is wasting time. And I'm convinced it's true.

And oftentimes, as we live for Christ, the enemy of the best is often the good. So many good things we have in our life. Some of them are going to have to go out the window if we're going to get into the best.

And the best is prayer. You do have time for the prayer meeting if you want to pray. It will not hinder your studies.

Many of our men, when they got involved in a prayer ministry, their grades at university went higher. Not always, because in some cases, people shouldn't even be in university. They're only there.

Many of them don't even know why they're there. And sometimes, God has led people when they got involved in depth prayer ministry, even out of university, into something else. I'm convinced the foundation has got to be laid.

And then fifth, we've got to lay a foundation of patience and balance. We shall reap if we faint not, it says in Galatians. Whatever you do in prayer, you must not be discouraged.

One of my main prayer targets is the land of Turkey. Ninety percent of my prayers for Turkey are unanswered. And I've been praying 19 years, steady for Turkey, thrusting out every year new labors to Turkey, many of them a direct result of prayer.

That's part of the prayer that has been answered. But the prayer for Turkish churches, the prayer for more Turkish believers, perhaps the toughest nation in the world next to Albania and Afghanistan and Mongolia. Only a little has been answered.

But I believe in perseverance. What is 19 years with God? It seems a lot to me. Nothing with God.

He's testing me. And God's going to test you in some areas. And we've got to knock and keep on knocking and ask and keep on asking.

That's what it says in the word of God. We have the story of the importunate man. And this is key, persevering prayer.

And that means a foundation for prayer is patience and balance. One of my favorite books, and we're just publishing a new edition, is called No Easy Answers. I can't tell you how much that book has helped me.

Because I was trying to find total answers to everything. I probably read more books than you'd ever imagine, looking for all the answers. And this little lady comes along, Eugenia Price, one of my favorite authors.

And I tell you, it takes a woman to get through a stubborn Dutchman. And she just zeroed in on me and cut me to pieces and showed me up for the many things in my life, especially lack of love, lack of balance, lack of freedom. And that little book, No Easy Answers, originally called No Pat Answers.

There are some things when we get into these heavy realms of prayer that are mysteries. The whole area of suffering, the whole area of unanswered prayer. Why do we try to manufacture so many little answers when sometimes these things have to be left with God? I've had to leave some things in my Christian life with God and move on by faith.

The man of God once said, that great faith is not made in the absence of fear, but it's made as we battle through fear, often daily, to a position of faith. Some of you find unbelief the big giant in your Christian life. You're not alone.

It's only normal, especially when we're studying at university, especially if you're studying philosophy or theology, to have every kind of wild dart of unbelief thrown at your mind. I once talked to a brilliant PhD from Princeton who studied mainly under liberal theologians and men who just love to destroy your faith. And I said, how did you come out of there preaching the blood of Christ in a great Presbyterian church? Do you know what he told me? This Presbyterian on fire for God minister.

He said two hours every morning on my knees. You see, we're in a spiritual warfare and we cannot go into enemy territory with our own little tin armor in our own little evangelical pop guns. We've got to go in as soldiers wearing the armor of God.

And if you're going to study theology in a liberal cemetery or seminary, you're going to have to wear. You're going to have to wear the armor of God. And the reason many men have had their faith blown out of them is they never learned to pray.

They learned to think and they didn't learn to pray. And they, as Watchman Nee would explain, and I don't agree with everything he says, they're trying to use their soul instead of their spirit to accomplish God's purposes. And of course, the mind is natural and it will go toward unbelief.

A foundation of balance and patience is essential. And number six, a foundation of true obedience. One of my favorite choruses, trust and obey.

There's no other way. We've tried, haven't we? Many other ways. There's no other way.

Jesus said, if you love me, feel my feelings. Have you read that in your Bible? By the way, I've discovered less than 10% of the students in the Christian unions I've been to, and a lot of them lately, have ever read the Bible through once. Let's take a survey.

Can we have your permission to take a survey? Thank you. How many of you have read the whole Bible through at least once, Genesis through Revelation? Raise your hand. That's better than the average Christian.

It looks like about 15%, including your president. Boy, you are lucky. No, I don't hold that against you.

I know it takes time. You're trying to read 50 other books, get through university and survive. It's rough, and there's a lot of pressure.

But I would just commend you to that. Just take, you know, it is the Word of God. What if God sent you a letter? Would you read it? There it is.

God's love letter. Start in Genesis, go through Revelation. There'll be things you don't understand.

You don't expect to read a great letter from an omnipotent God poured through human vessels and understand it all at the first reading. But I'm convinced that's an important way to grow in Christ. And that will lead you to a deeper obedience and the Lordship of Christ and the cross of Christ.

We cannot separate basic spirituality from your ministry of prayer. They're together. And prayer is often the thermometer.

Prayer is often the thermometer of where you are spiritually. There'll be setbacks. There'll be failures.

I remember one day going out for a night of prayer alone. I had quite a few nights of prayer with groups, you know, while keeping each other awake. I was going to go out to Spain when I first lived there in 1916.

For a night of prayer alone, I took a little piece of bread that I was going to fast and eat that in the morning. I was praying away. I lasted about three hours, fell completely asleep.

Woke up because it was warm in the daytime in Spain and cold at night. And I woke up shivering. And I said, boy, it's time to eat.

I reached for that bread. It was gone. Obviously, some animal had come along and sniffed me and decided the bread was better.

And I tell you, I was scared. I left and went back home. And I felt like a terrific failure.

Failure is often the back door to success. And you are looking at it. Failure.

Some of you have heard of my good friend, Brother Andrew, God smuggler. You're looking face to face with God's bungler. I'm not kidding.

I went to the Soviet Union about the same time he did. I had these great plans. Within three days, the secret police had me.

Due to my own stupidity. And God showed me a lot of things through that. In fact, O.M. partly was born out of it.

The present state or way that O.M. is today was born out of that failure because coming back from there, I was so shaken. What happened? You know, all my prayers and they took my printing press and they almost took the car. I went into a day of prayer in the mountains of Germany and I climbed this tree.

I love to climb. And I climbed this tree and I was praising God on the top of this tree is one of the places I can sing and not bother anybody. And it was there on the top of this tree in southern Germany.

God brought me these words, operation, mobilization. And the burden was to see Europeans evangelizing Western Europe first and then let it matured and if I matured, let it spill over into those communist countries. And that's happened.

And God oftentimes brings success through failure. Don't be afraid of failure. Don't be afraid to fail exam.

Try your best, committed to God. I've seen people get so uptight in university over these past 15 years. They've actually hindered their mind.

One of the most brilliant mathematicians that I know graduated from one of your universities within one year. He was gone mentally. He was gone.

Never got back straight again. You're not meant to be a study machine. You've got to experience wholeness.

There's got to be relaxation. There's got to be the Lord in prayer. There's got to be fellowship.

There's got to be sharing. I find many people don't really share. They got everything bottled up.

They got a sex problem. Can't talk about that. And they got this jealousy or this problem.

They pretend they're living up here. In fact, they're down here. They wonder why their prayers are hindered.

And I believe that one of the ways we lay a foundation for prayer is fellowship, sharing. Fellowship isn't all marching into a church, sitting down there, singing the same hymns and marching out and have a big meal. It's getting to know each other personally.

That's why small groups, one of the fastest growing phenomenas in the whole Christian world today. And being honest and praying together that you may be healed. What a terrific value.

Have at least... What a wonderful fellowship you're in. And I've heard some very good things about your Christian union. That's the truth.

And I hope you will take advantage of this fellowship, every one of you, to have at least one person you can share with. That could revolutionize your prayer life. And then lastly, the last foundation, steadfast in faith.

Ephesians 6, put on the whole armor of God, the shield of faith, wherewith you can stop all the fiery darts of the devil. And there'll be many of them. The fiery dart of unbelief, shield of faith.

The fiery dart of pride, shield of faith. The fiery dart of failure, we've already talked about that. The shield of faith, faith that claims the sovereignty of God.

That's really my greatest doctrine, grace in the sovereignty of God. And without that, I would have been finished. Many people think of O.M. as a successful movement.

They think of me as a successful leader. It's not true. My life is one big series of disappointments, failures.

Sure, there have been successes and God in his sovereignty has done much. But with my, the way I view things and with the idealism that I had when I was about your age, it's been disappointment, failure, setbacks, but never, never did God fail. God is God.

God is our God. And God wants to commune with you. These books can follow up on what I've said, especially this book, *Destined for the Throne*.

There are many other books on prayer. And I feel led to close here and recommend them to you, especially this one. As you read from Genesis to Revelation, memorizing as you go, underline the books on prayer and my visit will have been well spent.

And I hope some of you, perhaps after some time, will write to me and say, as a result of this visit, I began to pray more. I learned more about prayer. If you have some trouble, you have some question, I'll be happy to correspond.

The only reason I can take these Christian Union meetings, this is not my main ministry, is because I get more letters done on the train than I do in my office. I did at least 30, 40 letters between London and Sheffield. And I just find situations like this very hard.

Now after the meeting, there's so many people I'd like to talk to. And many times people are not relaxed when they first meet me. And there's other emotions with so many people around.

But when you can sit down quietly alone and read a man's letter and then answer it, you can begin to build some of the most meaningful relationships you can ever have. And then later on, you often do me. And that's even more meaningful.

May God make you a man, a woman of prayer. It's not just for a few spiritual supermen. It's for the ordinary, weak, trembling, little of faith people.

It's for that elderly lady who began this movement through her prayers. And I tell you, Sheffield is not yet seen. This university is not yet seen.

This country is not yet seen. What a group of praying men and women on this foundation could do for the kingdom of God. Let's pray.

Lord, you know, each one of our hearts. You know that we can, if we want to, bring forth our excuses and defend ourselves. But we know that won't get us anywhere.

And we yearn to come to your cross in repentance and brokenness for the sin of prayerlessness, for falling into the traps of the devil in this area of unbelief or lust or pride or undisciplined living through living my feelings instead of my faith, through building on sand instead of on rock. And we would pray that, oh God, by your spirit, you would touch our hearts and draw us into your closet of prayer. And we may learn to persevere through prayer and through the failures that will come as we join your school of prayer.

We pray that you would send out laborers. God, you know the need in Europe. You know the University of Paris with more students than all the universities in the whole of England and less in the Christian Union than we'd find in the front section of this one room in that great university.

And what can we say of Milan and Rome and Madrid and Barcelona and Leon and Zurich and Geneva and Vienna and communist countries. Lord, send out laborers. Send many right out of this very room.

We have come here to consider mission and we know the foundation is holy living and prayer. And we believe that it shall be and it will be. And we know there will come results as a result of our time together here seeking your face.

Lord, you know each one individually. Minister to us now. Show us what book we should be reading.

Show us what plan we should have for your word. That we may have reality and not just ritual. That we may have revival and revolution and reformation in our lives, in our churches, and in this fellowship.

Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

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