

Principles of Leadership Pastors Conf 17.12.84

by George Verwer

George Verwer shares the vision and burden of Operation Mobilization for the West Indies, the Muslim world, and the Indian subcontinent, emphasizing the need for prayer and support.

Duration: 1:02:04

Scripture: Matthew 4:17, Luke 15:4

Topics: "Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his excitement about finally being in a different country to preach the word of God. He talks about his involvement with OM, a missionary organization, and their work in different parts of the world. The speaker also shares his personal testimony of coming from a non-Christian background and living a double life before finding salvation. He emphasizes the importance of repentance in the gospel message and encourages listeners to invite their Calvinistic friends to the ship for further discussions.

Transcript

I'm going to come to this part of the world, finally here, but of course I'm not in his country. I'm in your country. And I really do count this a privilege.

One would think when you're speaking four or five hundred times a year, as I am, that one more message, you just throw it out, like you throw something. But really I feel a little nervous because I believe this hour we have together is very important. I don't believe we're here by accident.

I actually speak Spanish, but I've never been south of Mexico, where the work of O.M. was born twenty-eight years ago through young people. And you know, one of my great convictions, and I hope some of your young people will be coming to our youth leadership training conference later in the week, it's on the program, but I'm just so convinced that God uses young people and that one of your greatest responsibilities as pastors and Christian leaders is to be discipling and training up young men and women who will be the great pioneers and the great church leaders in the coming years. It's interesting that even the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism that organized the Great World Congress in Switzerland some years ago, they have decided to have a youth congress on evangelism for young leaders, and that is being planned for the coming years.

They just sense there's such a need to give leadership training while young men and women are still young and teachable. This is my great burden as I'm here just these seven days, and also briefly to Martinique, that somehow young lives would be touched for God. You know, often youth can catch red-hot Christianity from other young people, and I've lived among the young people who are on this ship.

I was with some of them in Belgium. Before they can ever come to this ship, they have to go through Bible training on tape. They have to read books.

They have to go through a summer sort of boot camp intensive training, living on the road, sleeping in tents. Then they come together for a whole month. They're interviewed again, and only then it's decided whether they can come to the ship or whether they can go out to India.

There are 1,600 men and women plus all their children, and some of them have grown up like me and have their own children. There's about 400 children, I guess, but altogether there's a fellowship of about 2,000 of us. 400 in the Indian subcontinent alone, and I can honestly say the main reason I guess I haven't been involved here in the West Indies or in South America, even though I speak Spanish, is because we're overwhelmed with a task in other parts of the world.

For us, coming now to the West Indies, to the English-speaking West Indies, is a big step of faith for us in OM and the ship ministry because we feel already overextended, and we thought, well, how can we get involved in one more place? You may say, well, what are we overextended doing? Let me just share some of our other goals. Not that we are not burdened for this part of the world, because we are, though we would feel very strongly you, you, the church here in St. Lucia, are the key to world evangelism here. Even as we come with this ship, we know our part is very, very small.

We are not some great band of apostles who have arrived here on God's battleship to blow sinners out of their houses and into your churches. We have come in much weakness and inadequacy, with 75% of the people on the ship basically trainees and learners, some of them very new. And praise God for some, like the ship director, Frank Fortunato, and others who have been in the battle for Christ many years.

I was with Frank Fortunato when we thought he would die. He was in a terrible motor accident coming back from India, where he had been serving. And it was the worst automobile crash in the history of our work.

Four were killed in that one crash in Yugoslavia. I rushed into the hospital. I found out later I wasn't supposed to go into Frank's room, because he was too close to death.

We prayed together. Actually, he jumped out of bed to greet me. I had just come in from Nepal.

He wasn't supposed to get out of bed. And we prayed, and it was my joy to see Frank, who is now the director of this ship, raised up. His fiancé was killed right next to him in that crash, and go on many, many years.

He's actually a musician by profession, just as Dr. Alan Adams, who was director of this ship for many years, has now gone on to be director of Dulos. He is a medical doctor by profession. So what a joy to be here with Frank this week.

Let me just mention these other parts of the world where I'm involved to explain why it's taken me so many years to get to the West Indies. First of all, our burden is the communist world. Just recently, again, I've

been in the Soviet Union.

I don't think we can begin to understand the suffering and the pressure that God's people are in, in the Soviet Union. Many, many, many thousands are in prison right now. They're being tortured.

And though we hear of the church growing, we know it's through much pain. One brother who came to my meeting, my meetings had to be secret. I couldn't even take my Bible.

But one brother came to me in this meeting and he said, do you have any literature at all? We're involved with others in getting literature into all of the Soviet countries. But I, on this trip, was not there for that purpose. So I didn't have any literature.

He had one tract. It was a photograph of a tract. In the Soviet Union, you are not allowed to reproduce anything.

There are no duplicating machines, no photocopies, nothing that you can make a copy of anything. Carbon paper is controlled carefully. A piece of carbon paper is like gold outside of government-controlled agencies.

And he had a photograph of one gospel tract. And he had been risking imprisonment. One of the things I had been carrying with me was a few items for prisoners, little bits of soup, bullion soup in cubes, things that if they did find them, you know, what could they say? It wasn't known that they were going into the prisons.

And this person had been converted to Jesus Christ through the ministry of radio. And he was risking imprisonment to talk to people in the streets about Jesus Christ. Now, this part of the Soviet Union that I was in, in Latvia, the north, is more open than other areas.

You know, there's different degrees of persecution and difficulty. And they were having some very large meetings on the Saturday evening, which the government was very, very worried about. When I first went to Europe, I studied the Russian language.

And in a sense, this ship ministry was born out of my own failures in the Soviet Union. I had no plan for a ship at that time. My burden was the communist world.

I was living in Spain, learning Spanish and Russian, teaching English. In Operation Mobilization at that time, there were only five of us, six, seven of us full-time. A number of them were Mexicans, my closest friends.

And the first full-time worker in this work was a Mexican brother. And I went into the Soviet Union before even the name Operation Mobilization was born, due to my own failure. Some of you know my good friend, Brother Andrew, God's smuggler.

This afternoon, you have Brother George, God's bungler. Do you have that word here? That means the one who blew it, the one who made the big mistake, God's bungler. Because I also went into the Soviet Union and I was arrested by the Soviet secret police and accused of being a spy and properly given a submachine gun escort out of the country.

I was really humbled by that experience. I don't know if you've had any nice, really juicy failures in your life. A very exciting book is called Failure, the Back Door to Success.

Be sure to read that. But I went for a day of prayer after that experience in the Soviet Union. And it was during that day of prayer, actually, I was in the top of a tree.

I was young. I used to do a lot of crazy things. Not anymore, of course.

I was in the top of this tree, praising God and worshiping. And it was there that I realized my own wife's father had been killed in the war between Germany and the other countries. And I realized that five million Jews and five million Gentiles had been destroyed and liquidated in that war, including my wife's father.

And I thought, could not love bring a great revolution to Europe just as hatred had brought so much war and destruction. And there, two names came into my mind as I was praying and fasting. Operation Mobilization.

And a burden, a vision. Not one I could see in the trees, one God brought to my mind. And I shouted from the top of the tree.

I was there with a brother. We had been together in Russia. Operation Mobilization.

And the burden was to see the European Church come alive and mobilize to reach everybody in Western Europe with the message of Jesus Christ. Now, you please understand, we are not coming here with European Christianity. Europe is not Christian.

Europe is humanist, atheist, secular. Many of your friends have been in London, they can tell you. Only 5% of the people of London even go to church.

And we need dynamic, spirit-filled West Indian missionaries to help us in London. Some of them are already there. We have worked together with them.

In fact, our major Easter campaign in Europe last Easter was with a West Indian church. And some of the really live churches in London, England, are West Indian churches. And so our burden, for just a few of us, was to see the church mobilize to reach every person with the word of God.

Now, I was living in Spain, and Spain was closed to the gospel. We couldn't even freely give out literature. It was all being done secretly.

And we were working through the church and with the church. We were sending out literature through the posts. Those were the days of Franco, absolute dictatorship.

And we started meeting in nights of prayer that God would open Spain. Within three years, God opened that country completely. And our teams went into every town in the entire nation in every province in Spain.

And it was Spanish young people who helped lead the mobilization forces. Teams, just as in the Book of Acts. In the Book of Acts, you'll see two major units.

You'll see the local church. And we believe the local church is the key to world evangelism. Not ships, not operation mobilization, but that small, little, local church is the key to world evangelism.

And the real secret behind the phenomenal growth of operation mobilization has been our very deep relationship with pastors and the local church. Over 1,000 churches are linked with us in an ongoing way.

Over 1,000 churches.

Many of them have given us the open door to come and minister in their midst. Dale Roton, the coordinator of the ship ministry, was in a large, very dynamic Anglican church in Bristol yesterday. The pastor of that church, I preached there about seven times, he said, anybody around among the OM leaders, just send them down.

My pulpit is yours now. In some of our Anglican churches, you're only generally allowed to speak 30 minutes. But when you preach in his church, you preach an hour, you preach an hour and a half.

You give invitation to repent and give your life to Jesus. And it's just an amazing Anglican church that caught its vision through Oswald J. Smith and the great vision that God gave Oswald Smith, who was one of the most influential men in my life. In fact, one of the books I wanted to mention to you was Oswald J. Smith's book, *The Passion for Souls*, with an introduction by Billy Graham.

By the next summer, after God gave us that vision, 200 people, mainly young people, united in Paris and fanned out across Europe to give out 25 million pieces of Christian literature. By the next summer, there were 2,000 young people moving into almost every town in Europe, which led ultimately to thousands coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ, to new churches being born. In France, our teams had planted over 17 new living Bible-believing churches.

In Spain, new churches were born. In Italy, new churches were born. Soon, these teams launched out to North Africa, Egypt, Sudan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and to Turkey.

And even in Turkey, among the Muslims, little tiny churches were born. The first church of Ankara, the capital of Turkey, a land of 40 million souls, the first church of converted Muslims was born. To this day, there are only 10 or 12 who fellowship because in the whole nation, there are only 100 believers.

Brothers and sisters, that's after 25 years of work. You see, we've been a little bit busy over there in areas of the world that do not have nearly as many churches as you have. If we ever had something in Turkey, as you have here in your beautiful island, why, we would just, we would be standing on our heads in praise.

So our first burden has been the communist countries. Our second burden has been, we just got into it, the Muslim world. One out of every seven people in the world is a Muslim.

We believe one of the reasons God has raised up Operation Mobilization is to penetrate the Muslim world. I've just come back earlier this year from another visit to Bangladesh, to Pakistan, to our work among the Afghan refugees who have fled this terrible civil war in Afghanistan where genocide is going on, where whole villages have been just slaughtered and murdered. And the people have come, 2 million refugees.

What a joy it was to visit these refugee camps and to then in an evening meeting share the gospel with these Afghan Muslims. They are the most fierce people. No one will ever and has ever conquered Afghanistan.

And so the Soviet Union that has invaded that country, they are losing thousands and thousands of people. It's a terrible thing because we love Russians as well as we love Afghans. We are not called in our movement to political finagling.

We are called to preach Jesus Christ and Christ crucified. But oh my, the terrible things that are happening there. We now have about 250 workers committed to the Muslim world.

It would be our sincere prayer that there could be even one or two from this island who eventually could work among Muslims in some of these other lands. We know your biggest task is still your own work right here. We haven't come here to transplant a load of people off to wherever.

We've come here because the Holy Spirit directed us here, because we hope this ship visit will be an encouragement, because we hope these books can be used for his glory, because our own people here need to see what you're doing for Jesus here, and because we want to co-labor together. We want to work together wherever people will, what will welcome us for evangelism and for presenting the message of Jesus Christ. So our second major vision is the Muslim world, and we have declared this especially as a decade of Muslim emphasis.

You know, starting tonight, you can have the greatest ministry for the Muslim world that anybody can have. What do you think that is? Intercessory prayer. Because there needs to be much more prayer before we're going to see the church established.

In Iraq, there are almost no believers, the land of Iraq, much upon my heart. In Libya, there may be six believers. In Libya, maybe six believers.

Six. Not six churches, six believers. We've just sent some more people into Tunisia.

There, there are a few dozen believers in Tunisia. What can we say of some of those other lands? Mauritania, Africa. One known believer.

One believer in the whole nation. How are we doing on our prayer cards? Do we have any of those left on the ship? They have a little set of prayer cards. We also have a book, Operation World, in this particular packet that has the prayer cards.

But as you read through that book, and that book is worth putting in your church library. It's a research book. And get to know these other countries and pray for them, because it's just, the need is so staggering.

And then the third vision is the vision for the Indian subcontinent. This is another reason I find it difficult to get to this part of the world, because I am the director of the work in the subcontinent. OM is divided into six areas.

The Far East subcontinent, Middle East, Europe, and North America, Mexico. And we're just in the process of making the decision to somehow, in a more official way, get the West Indians in Central America and South America into OM's thinking. It's in the ship's thinking, but the rest of OM, this large movement, don't know so much about this part of the world.

And as I go back to have pastors' conferences throughout Europe and the Middle East, in a few weeks I leave for Singapore, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Gulf States, Dubai, Kuwait. I will now be able to, in a more fresh way, share something of the challenge of the West Indies and the challenge of this part of the world. But our third burden is for the subcontinent, India, where I used to live and where we have now three to four hundred workers, has seven hundred million people.

I hope you'll perhaps write a few of these things down. Staggering, isn't it? There are more people in India than all of South America. The West Indies and Africa combined.

Just India in a country smaller than Brazil. So this is a primary target. The only reason there are not many Indians on this ship, I remember this ship when it was twenty percent of all the workers were all Indians.

But we could not afford to take many of those workers from India because the work has grown so big and there's so much to do among these seven hundred million souls. And the ship changes its personality as it goes different parts of the world. Right now I can sense the ship is still a bit European.

Just spent two or three years in Europe. Now there's already nine or ten Venezuelans. Maybe in a few months there'll be a few more West Indians.

And the ship will change its character. And we hope you'll pray that God would give us the right people from this part of the world to go through this very unique training program. This is not a training program for everybody.

In terms of living on the ship, it must be those the Holy Spirit sends, as we see in Acts 12. I was mentioning those two units in the New Testament. The first one is the local church.

The second one, you study carefully, teams. Teams of men and women. And it's those teams that in many places in the Book of Acts and all over the world today, it's those teams, some may think of them as apostolic teams, that have planted the church.

That's why we need both. That's why an international outreach agency, Operation Mobilization, is an international outreach agency to work with the church and help establish the churches in the unreached areas of the world, especially the communist world, the Muslim world, and the Hindu world, the subcontinent. Though on both sides of India we have Muslim countries, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

I'd love to talk to you for a long time about Pakistan, where I spent over a month last year. We had tremendous pastors' conferences there and evangelistic efforts. We teach young people when they first come 10 or 20 phrases, sentences in other languages so they can sell books.

That's where they start. Some of the young people who started 20 years ago, 10 years ago, speak those languages fluently. Phil Bushell, one of the leaders of our work in Bangladesh, a land born in 1971.

This ship was coming into Bombay when the government of India sealed our radio room, gave us a submachine gun escort as we came in. And it was during that time that Bangladesh was born as a nation. Incredible story.

Incredible story. Over 300,000 women were raped, women who now are not accepted in any way into any society in the world. One hundred, three hundred thousand.

They are just as lepers to their society because that's what their society teaches. This country is much upon our hearts. Later on this ship went to Bangladesh and reached hundreds of thousands in Bangladesh with the word of God.

Phil Bushell, remaining behind, speaks fluent Bengali. And they have planted five or ten new living fellowships, all Muslim converts. All Muslim converts.

Our experience is we can win 1,000 people of other backgrounds easier than we could win almost one Muslim. It's a mystery, isn't it, why it is that way. But that's the truth in Turkey.

In some of these other countries. Bangladesh is a little bit easier. Saudi Arabia, where I was recently, they have no believers.

No church, no known believers in Saudi Arabia. And in some of those countries when you become a believer you will be killed. Two women in one Muslim land poisoned their husbands with broken glass when they became followers of Jesus Christ.

So these are the burdens. And then the fourth burden is to see the work in Europe continue. We don't like to start something and then leave it.

We like to start something and do it right. And as you read your New Testament, I'm sure you know much of what Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, gives us in the New Testament, much of it is in the way of correction, correcting God's children. Do any of your believers here at times tend to wander away into their own little doctrinal errors or their own little emotional errors or their own little problems? If they don't, then I will declare your island as the most unusual Christian place in the entire world.

Now, I've only been in 60 countries, so I can't say about the other ones. But the same was true in the New Testament church. Don't be discouraged as a pastor when the sheep start to wander off into other fields or they start to wander down the road and eat the wrong kind of food or whatever else because that's what was happening in the New Testament.

And so we believe that when we start a work, as we started in Europe 25 years ago, as soon as my wife and I were married, we went to Mexico. We had a six-month honeymoon in Mexico, working with God's people and opening six more Christian bookshops. And then we went to Spain, and that's when the work was born in Europe, just about 24 years ago.

But the work has very much expanded, and it takes a lot of time and a lot of effort and a lot of prayer to keep it going. And so we have been slow to go into new parts of the world. And that's why it's taken me 29 years of praying for the West Indies and your countries here and around to ever get here.

So now I'm here, and I'm grateful to the Lord. And I've been able to give you a little bit of history, and I hope a challenge to your heart about the communist world and the Muslim world through telling you that. You can take a cassette of this message, and you can share it with anybody you want to share it with.

But let me go back a little further, because I'd like to just share my own personal testimony, because this to me is far more exciting than what I've told you. I was not from a Christian home. I was playing church.

Do any people here in your beautiful island play church? I went there Sunday morning and sat. Sunday school, they passed around the plate, and so I took some out and put it in my pocket. I played church.

And I need to explain that, that what I put in the pocket was what my mother had put in. I hadn't got quite into taking what other people had put in. And many, many people, though my father is born in the Netherlands, Holland, he immigrated to near New York City where I was born.

And into my life came a praying, godly, elderly woman. Humanly speaking, she is the founder of Operation Mobilization. I don't like really that word to be used to describe me, because I don't think I could start

anything but trouble.

And this woman prayed for me. She had heard about my bad reputation. I'd been in some difficulty with the police.

Nothing big. I was not in the mafia or anything like that. She had heard about my big mouth and the trouble I'd got into with the school headmaster.

And she knew a few other bad things. And in God's mercy, she started to pray for me when I was very young. Fifteen.

Just gone to high school. And she sent me a Gospel of John through the Post. You know, that's why I have written this book on literature evangelism.

Because literature has been such an influence in my own life. And she sent this Gospel of John to me through the Post. And I read it.

And it began to work. The Holy Spirit, from His Word, verses like John 1.12, as many as receive Him, to them He gives power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. God began to break down the barriers in my heart.

Now, I was very much into the nightlife, the New York City life, the women, the dancing. But the other big thing was the money. And by 16, I had three little businesses.

Because to keep my nightlife going, I needed money. And I was getting into more and more of a very selfish, egocentric way of living. And yet something in my heart said, it's not right.

It's not right. And as I read this Gospel, God spoke to me. Then Billy Graham came to New York City.

Now, I didn't even know what an evangelist was. You know, sometimes as Christians, we don't realize how ignorant people are about certain things that are very precious to us. And we don't realize how prejudiced people are because they have seen some of the foolish things that churches do.

Now, I don't know if your churches here ever do any foolish things or make any foolish mistakes. But in the rest of the world, believe me, especially where I come from, we do a lot of foolish things. And we have pastors who one minute are shouting and standing on the table telling everybody to repent.

And the next minute we find out the guy is sleeping with a girl in the choir. Now, I hope that kind of thing has never come to Europe. Part of the world certainly has in other parts of the world.

And so people are switched off the church. They don't want to know. They don't want to hear.

And they just think the people in the church, evangelists, they're just a bunch of emotional nutcases. And they want to stay away. And that was the group of people that I moved with.

Though we went, some of us, not all of them, we went to a very nice dead church just to have a little bit of religious sophistication. Just like putting this tie on. One or two of the brothers said, well, you should wear a tie.

We have the same thing in India. I hate neckties, but I thought, well, maybe I should just put this tie on just to... What does it say, this tie? I don't know. You can, in an emergency, use it to blow your nose if you're

out in the woods.

But there we go. So I was playing religious games, going to church. I became the president of the young people's group.

I became the assistant to the pastor. And I was living a completely double life. I'd go from the nightclubs of New York City at three in the morning, a few hours sleep, and I'd be sitting there in church Sunday morning singing God Bless America.

Billy Graham came to New York City preaching repentance. And the gospel that we read in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John is the gospel of grace, but it is the gospel of repentance. It's a mystery because we know we're not saved by works, so we're not saved by repentance.

But if the Holy Spirit is doing a great saving work in our hearts, repentance will be there. You can explain it Calvinistic way or Arminian way. People sometimes say to me, Are you a Calvinist? And I say, Look, I am an Arminianized Calvinist.

So just relax. If you have any strong Calvinistic friends here, please do invite them to the ship because the great leader of the whole Reformed movement of Europe, Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, he, much criticized by some of his followers, came to the ship. And guess what Dr. Lloyd-Jones preached when he came here? He preached the need for sound doctrine and revival, spiritual balance.

And this ship stands for sound doctrine. We believe the Bible is the Word of God. I've listened to many of Dr. Lloyd-Jones' tapes.

I've preached in his church. We now have R.T. Kendall shaking London, the pastor of that church. I just listened to a tape of a message he gave at a leaders conference in England.

It's one of the most powerful messages that Great Britain has ever heard. And he has been going out in the streets and he's been taking all these lovely Reformed theologians out in the streets in soul winning and God is saving people. And Westminster Chapel where Dr. Lloyd-Jones was the pastor and was down to 100 members after his death, because after his death it just went down, down, down, down.

It's now got hundreds of people in fellowship and is once again one of London's great churches. It's so important to understand God is working in different people in different ways. The Holy Spirit will not be put in a box.

The Holy Spirit will not be limited to one group or one church or one stream. He will go where He will because He is sovereign and He is God. And so into my life came this praying elderly lady and she prayed me into this Billy Graham meeting.

And I heard repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Billy Graham always explains it the same way. He says you're going in one direction, you stop and you go the other direction.

And you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and your life will be changed. And if the life isn't changed, nothing's happened. Nothing's happened.

It's just in the head. Billy Graham gets accused of emphasizing decisions, but if you study his message more carefully, he preaches true Holy Ghost conversion and believes in the filling of the Holy Spirit and the need to go on for God. Well, I went to that meeting.

I heard the message. And when the invitation came, I had never seen an invitation. Actually, get out of your seat and do something for God.

You know, I had gone wild in football games. I had gone wild and danced. I danced three, four women all at once.

And, you know, I was considered very, very normal. But in church, the church I went to, nobody said anything or made any noise except when they fell asleep and snored. Billy Graham called people to get out of their seats and to repent and to come forward.

And I took that. I was shaking. And I went forward.

And I was saved and filled with the Holy Spirit at the same time. And that has been a reality every single day for 30 years. You know, when I used to give my testimony, people said, ah, just a kid.

What a lot of hot air. Bring in an older, mature speaker. Take this kid away.

When I first went to Europe, I was only 21 years old. And, you know, Europeans, they don't exactly love the Americans. Now, I'm not exactly sure where they do love the Americans.

And the Americans now don't even like the Americans. But anyway, seems to be the same all over the world. But you can imagine me going to Germany and preaching spiritual revolution, forsake all, follow Christ, repent, sell your homes, follow Jesus.

Went really big impression. People said, youthful zeal. Don't let him back.

Don't bring him back. Well, it's so good to be here 30 years since my conversion. You see, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, forevermore.

And what happened to me as a young man was not an emotional, later adolescent, escape from guilt, but it was conversion, biblical conversion. The Holy Spirit entering a human being and taking control. Now, since that day, I have failed Jesus many times.

I've sinned against my Lord, especially with my big eyes and with my big tongue. I don't know if you have this problem in this part of the world, but where I come from, a lot of people have this tongue control problem. Their tongue goes a little faster than their brain.

Do you have any people like that around here? Well, we do. And I've had that problem all my life, especially with my dear wife. And it's amazing how the one we love the most, I'm just about to have my 25th wedding anniversary, the one we love the most, we sometimes hurt the most with our tongue.

And I thank God that I'm here 30 years later, not because I've become some super saint, not because I have discovered the secret mysteries of advanced level discipleship. I'm here because of the grace of God to sinners. I'm here because when I've sinned with my eyes or my tongue or my mind, I've been able to repent as it says in 1 John 2, verse 1. What's the first part of that verse? Sinned.

What's the second part of the verse? If you sin, you have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. I'm here because that verse has two parts. My first goal every day is holiness of life.

It's 1 Corinthians 13. It's total commitment and obedience to Jesus. But if I fail and if I sin, I know where to go for daily cleansing and daily renewal.

And the amazing thing is, as you I know are experiencing, the more we drink from that fountain of God's grace and forgiveness, the stronger we become and the more we can stand against the temptations that come the next day or the next week. God, in His mercy, has kept me. And as I mentioned, after my conversion, I ended up in Mexico.

Before that, I went back to that high school. She had been praying. This elderly woman was praying for that high school.

Do you pray for your schools? There are mission fields. There are mission fields and we praise God for the opportunity we're having here to reach some of these young people in school. But she had been praying for this high school that not only people would be saved, but that they would be saved and sent.

That's a good prayer to pray. Do you pray that prayer for your people? When you see a sinner come into your church that doesn't yet know Jesus, Lord, save him and send him. Send him to his neighbors.

The greatest way the church is growing in some countries is when one member of the family gets converted and then they go for the other members of the family. That is absolutely key and strategic in world evangelism. So she prayed for people to be saved and sent.

She was really praying that a missionary movement would start in that ungodly high school. Can you imagine such a prayer? Do you know how many years she prayed that prayer? Fifteen years. I find a lot of people are discouraged in their prayer life.

From my book, the book's up here, Ten Cents. A lot of people have paid four dollars for this book. So for ten cents.

If you don't have ten cents, you see me, I'll give it to you. This is one of my first books. It's called Hunger for Reality.

I've had 14,000 personal letters from this book. I've read every letter. I don't answer them all now.

I answer half of them. And my friends help me answer the other half. My address is on the back of this book.

The Bromley Kent, England. I've been 25 years overseas. I never did get back to my home country.

So I'm sort of a transplant like a lot of the West Indians who live over in London. And you can write me at that address after you read that book. But many of the people have written me after reading that book I think this is the one they pay to, that's the other edition people pay ten times as much.

They say exactly the same thing. Praise God for these magazine books. I hope you'll take them by the thousands.

It's the greatest breakthrough in economy literature that I've ever heard of. But she prayed that people would be saved and sent from that school. And you know, after my conversion, I went back to the school.

Somehow in the process I had become sort of a radical student leader of the school. And I was converted in the middle of that. And so I had the chance to speak to the whole school.

And the Holy Spirit in one meeting brought 125 precious ones to the knowledge of Jesus. Not all of them we found out later were converted. And then another 75.

And this movement of operation mobilization can be traced back to one praying woman, one skinny, weak, unknown, loud-mouthed, big-nosed schoolboy, and the Holy Spirit working in a high school. And then it just multiplied and multiplied. You know, when you come and you see this ship that God has provided in answer to prayer, don't run down the gangway and start praying just for some big thing to happen.

Because God generally doesn't work that way. You need to be faithful in that small thing that God has given you right now. And God kept me faithful from 1955 when I was born again for 15 years before He gave me this first ship.

Five years before that in a converted pub in Bolton, Lancashire. I was living in Lancashire, England. God gave me this burden of an ocean-going ship.

When I shared it with a few people, they just sort of looked. What in the world? You know, some thought they had some ideas that Verwer was crazy, but now they knew it. There were a lot of smiles, but a few prayed and said, Lord, Your will be done.

For five years, it was only prayer, working, finding disciples. People first, projects second. People first, projects second.

Try to remember that when we sail away in a few weeks' time. And as I was faithful in small things, just pouring my life into individual disciples, the method I learned from Jesus Christ, discipling individuals, God and His timing brought into being the tools, the tools those individuals needed to do the job. First, vehicles, bicycles, banana carts.

I remember in India when God gave me the banana cart vision. In India, we have these little carts. They're like a table on wheels, and they sell bananas on those.

Push them down the street. And I just imagined one of those carts filled with Christian books. So I bought a banana cart, ate all the bananas, and I put the books on there.

I got some help with that. Pushed those carts down into the crowded marketplaces of Bombay and Calcutta. Soon we had 15 banana carts.

Then the project failed. I don't know what happened. I've never been able to figure out what happened to all those banana carts.

The brothers started to sleep on them, and they started to disappear. And others got tired, and others said that people don't buy the books when they're on the banana carts, and the project failed. Have you had any good failures in your ministry? If you haven't, you must be going very, very slow.

Because when you do anything for God, you're going to have a few failures along the way. Praise God for His mercy and His grace when we do fail. So one praying woman was used of God to touch a high school, to touch some young lives, and this afternoon you had a little picture of what God did after that.

Now I want you to turn with me in your Bibles. I'm known as the longest preacher in Europe. But I'm going to try not to go too long this afternoon, because I think people eat in this room.

It's one of the things I always disliked about this ship. I always had to cut my messages so they could come in and eat. But I remember I was preaching in Germany, and in Germany they like everything very punctual, right on time.

Like some churches, you know these churches they like to finish dead at twelve. Many of them are dead at twelve. But I was preaching in Germany, and I was going on a long time.

And the young people were listening. And I found all over the world the young people, when you give the message straight under the anointing of the Spirit of God, they listen. They listen.

One dear elderly man sitting way in the back, I think he wanted to go home and watch television. And so he held up a watch. He lifted his watch up.

And he started pointing to the watch to try to get me to stop. I was preaching about world missions, evangelism, forsaking all to follow Christ. I saw that watch.

I said, praise God everyone, here's a man donating his wrist watch for world missionary work. So I don't know what methods you used here in St. Lucia to stop your preachers, but I'd like you to turn with me briefly in your Bible to Acts, the book of Acts, chapter 23. I have this burden very much on my heart.

And I'll just try to quickly share it with you. Okay, verse 12. And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink.

Verse 12, chapter 23. They would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. In my Bible, this is called a conspiracy.

The burden, the spirit of God is put on my heart for Christian leaders. You are Christian leaders. This is a Christian leadership conference.

I hope that you will get the two most important books on this ship for Christian leaders next to the Bible. The Bible is in a category of its own, the inspired word of God. Anything you read in any book here, if you don't find it backed up in the Bible, pull the chapter out of the book or throw it in the sea.

But these are just sermons in print. If you preach and we get it on cassette tape and then write it, what is it? It's a sermon in print. These books are sermons in print.

My own books are sermons in print. Like this book that's just taken from my tapes, worked on by a man who has a gift in writing. Then I put a few corrections.

The best part of my books, what I take from other people's books, call them quotations. That's what really makes this a great book. But here are two really great books.

Oswald Sanders, he was the director of OMF, the China Inland Mission. What a great work of God that is in China. I'd love to talk to you about China.

What God is doing in China. It's just amazing. It's amazing.

They say now there may be 10, 15, 20 million believers in China through the persecution. When the devil tries to stamp out the church of Jesus Christ, he gets himself in mighty big trouble. And I hope you'll read these two great books on spiritual leadership and Paul the leader.

But my burden is simply this. I am convinced after observing and working with Christian leaders like yourself these 30 years that there is a conspiracy. There is a subtle, satanic plan to destroy you, your family, your marriage, and your church.

You know, I feel sometimes as we look into the Word of God we are not serious enough about what it really says. The Bible teaches that we are in a spiritual warfare. I'm sure most of you have preached on Ephesians chapter 6, the armor of God, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit.

I'm sure you know that verse in Corinthians where it says the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty unto God to the pulling down of strongholds. I'm sure you know those words of Paul to Timothy when Paul said to Timothy endure hardship, endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. You know the emphasis in the New Testament on the disciplined life.

So the apostle Paul said I buffet my body. Do you know that verse? You know, I was a very undisciplined person. My dream when I was 13 and I went into business was to lie on a beach with my women and have at least a hundred guys working for me, the great free enterprise as I slept.

I was lazy and the word work was not my favorite word. And after I became a follower of Jesus and I discovered the disciplined life, I almost ran away because it seemed impossible. And when I hit that verse, you know that verse? If a man not work, let him not eat.

I thought, woe is me, I'm going to starve to death. But I could relate to the apostle Paul who said I buffet my body. And I don't think you can be a Christian leader without buffeting your body.

The body wants to do something. You think today, 30 years later, I still have some temptations? I can tell you I do. And I discover sometimes my body is going one way, my eyes are going one way, my feelings.

And so many young people don't go on for Christ because we don't teach them how to deal with feelings. We don't teach them about Galatians 2.20 where Paul said I am crucified with Christ. And those feelings and those emotions, they have to be crucified.

If they're good, if they're toward God, if they're 1 Corinthians 13, fine, nothing wrong with some good feelings. Hallelujah! But if it's the lust of the flesh, if it's the pride of life, 1 John chapter 1, 2, and 3, so important, then they have to be crucified. And we need to be able to teach our young people today not only the message of salvation at the cross of Jesus Christ, but the message of deliverance over self and the self-life at the cross.

You know, a lot of times when we come, people expect us to give a missionary message, get everybody running all over the world to be missionaries. That's not our first message. Our message is Jesus Christ and Christ crucified.

Many of the great meetings I take all over the world, I hardly talk that much about world missions. I discovered that world missions will be a spontaneous outflow of a life that's in tune with God, controlled by the Spirit, and obedient to His Holy Word. We haven't come here for some glorified recruiting campaign.

We have come here with a desire to see men and women filled with God's Spirit, obedient to Jesus Christ, and knowing the reality of what Paul said. I am crucified with Christ. I want to ask you, my co-worker, ones who I highly esteem, can you say this afternoon you're crucified with Jesus Christ? The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life.

Even into our Christian work, spiritual pride comes in. Many of our churches in England have been destroyed by spiritual pride. Men one minute are used of God, the next minute they're puffed up, thinking they have some special spiritual power.

And then comes the fall. The Bible says pride cometh before the fall. And some of our great Christian leaders have now been through divorce and have been destroyed.

Some even sleep. They're dead. I believe there is a conspiracy for Christian leaders today as there was a conspiracy against Paul here in the book of Acts.

Forty men, look at verse 21, have bound themselves with an oath that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him. And now are they ready looking for a promise from thee. Imagine if you went back to your house tonight and there's a note on the door.

I don't know if you have any people who don't like you. A little difficult to be in this world and not have somebody that doesn't like you. Hope you're doing not too bad on that point.

But what if you go back to your home tonight and there's a letter from some people that don't like you. And they say, we just want you to know we're not eating until you're dead. Some of you feel you're a little under pressure these days.

I dare to say that might increase your pressure. It might not be the warmest letter you've ever read to your wife and children. It's happened in some countries.

It probably won't happen this way. You see, today, Satan has a more subtle conspiracy. He's using the fiery darts that are referred to in Ephesians 6. It says, hold high the shield of faith wherewith you can stop those fiery darts.

What are those fiery darts that Satan is using to destroy ministries, to destroy churches? First of all, there is the fiery dart of immorality. You know, I'm at a great advantage here today. I know almost nothing about you or your churches.

I know nothing. I've just flown here, but I know something of what the devil has done in Mexico, in India, in USA, in England. And Satan is no respecter of persons.

We as human beings are. Satan is no respecter of persons.

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