

Redcliffe College 8th Sept 99

by George Verwer

George Verwer shares his testimony and emphasizes the importance of Bible colleges, Christian colleges, and business people in world missions, highlighting the challenges of becoming a career missionary.

Duration: 42:10

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 13:1-3, Acts 13:5, Romans 10:15, Galatians 5:22-23

Topics: "College"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the challenges of recruiting long-term career missionaries, particularly due to financial factors. He emphasizes the importance of studying the Book of Acts and highlights the significance of the local church in global missions. The speaker encourages the audience to support and appreciate their pastors, who face immense pressure and attacks from Satan. He also shares a testimony about his own life and emphasizes the importance of living a life that aligns with the message of the Gospel.

Transcript

George, as I'm sure all of you know, is the founder and international director of Operation Mobilization, which is a ministry of evangelism, discipleship, training and church planting. George may tell some of his own story, but I've been blessed by his life story here. He was converted at the age of 16 at a meeting at Madison Square Garden in New York City, at a meeting at which Billy Graham spoke.

And the thing that struck me, George, was that within a year of your conversion, 200 of your schoolmates back in New Jersey had given their lives to Jesus Christ. And shortly after his conversion, George said to God, only one thing I want in life, I want to learn to pray, to love you, I want to know you and commune with you. George quickly developed a conviction to share the word of God around the world.

He began by distributing Gospels of John in Mexico with two friends, and that started in 1957. The work of OM was founded by George and his wife Drina in 1961 while in Spain. And today, OM reaches across the world through the Ministry of the Ships, over 2,800 workers working in 80 nations.

We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of George, and we're pleased that the Lord has brought him here today. Let me just pray for our time together. Gracious God, we thank you so much for the work that you've done through OM over the years, and we thank you for George and his family, and ask now that by your Holy Spirit you would encourage him, that you would speak powerfully through him.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you.

Well, it's a privilege to be here and to share at your new location. It is many years ago. I guess I've spoke two or three times before, but that's all sort of ancient history now, and we're more interested in the present.

And it's a privilege to share. My wife and I, though, we lived in Mexico and Spain and France and Italy and Thailand and Nepal and India, and on ships we actually ended up in London. So we have been in and out of Great Britain for about 38 years, and this is now our home country.

All of our children are very British, and I'm embarrassed that I still, as a missionary, have not been able to learn the local language. But I trust that this will not be too much of a barrier this morning. I want you to turn now to the book of Acts chapter 13.

I've just come back from the Netherlands. We have our annual conferences, 260 new recruits, and about a thousand other people went through these conferences in Europe's biggest Christian conference center, and it was a wild time. But we are so encouraged that even though we've been 40 years in ministry, there's somehow all these young people still joining us.

We have 1,500 younger teenagers under 16, oh and mainly works with people over 17. But we're changing for many reasons, and we had a special event in Germany just for younger teens. 1,500 people came to that event.

Over 100 of them made a commitment at that young age to at least seriously, we don't get them to sign on the dotted line to be a career missionary at that age, but to at least give one or two years and get some exposure and be willing to consider missions as a career. And many have ended up doing that. It's exciting what God is doing around the world.

It's not necessarily easy, and there's some people that are even saying that Great Britain really can't think of itself as a great mission sending nation any longer. I totally disagree with that, but that's what people are saying. It is harder to get a long-term career recruits, especially because of the financial factor.

Tent making sometimes overcomes that, sometimes it doesn't. But let's just read this passage of scripture. One of my favorite missionary passages, if you've read it already 20 times this year, you know please forgive me.

The Book of Acts is a book that everyone needs to study. I've been getting blessed through John Stott's very big book. One of my heroes, one of the authors that I'd urge you to read, I'm sorry I don't have his books here this morning, but I try to get together with this man every year for lunch.

We're so completely different, our background and in so many ways, but God has brought us very close because of his passion for reaching the world with the gospel, which he still has. And his willingness, even among church, strong churchmen, church people, not all who believe that Jesus is the only way, let's be honest about that issue, he still has that strong message of the exclusiveness of Christ. He is the only way.

We may not understand that, there's a lot of things I don't understand. If I only run on what I understand, then I'm an agnostic, I'm finished. But I believe there are great intellectual answers and that's one of the reasons I went to Bible college, graduated from Moody Bible Institute, but there are many things to me that

will remain a mystery.

And even this earthquake in Turkey, Turkey's our number one field in the world, we have 70 workers there, and this earthquake has just hit us like an atomic bomb. It's like an atomic bomb. And I think if you just try to figure that all out and write books about it, you'll probably just end up confused or depressed.

There are things that we have some answers, absolutely, but ultimately it's a mystery. And I just long for people to worship God in the midst of the mystery. Acts 13, in the church at Antioch, there were prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon, Cole, Niger, Lucius, and Cyrene, Manan, who was brought up with Herod, the Tetrarch, and Saul.

While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. So after they fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and they sent them off. The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.

See, they were into ships too back in those days. When they arrived at Selimus, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.

Now I'm going to try to give you seven motivating words from that little passage, and students are good at writing things down. That's why I like to speak to students. By the way, I've never met anybody or know of anybody alive who spoke at more Bible colleges and Christian colleges than I have.

This has been my passion for 41 years. I used to take 900 meetings a year. I cut way back with a lot of people urging me to slow down.

And so I tried to make some of those people happy, especially my wife. And so now I just only take about 400 meetings a year. And of course, not all those, only a certain number of those are in Bible colleges.

I'd appreciate prayer. However, I go to Canada to speak at their biggest Bible college, Briarcrest, much bigger than Prairie now. Prairie used to be number one.

I was just with them a year ago. They went through quite a crisis, but Prairie is doing well. Maybe that's not a familiar name to you, but Prairie Bible Institute send more missionaries than any Bible college in the world, even beat Moody Bible Institute.

And then a little later I speak at Providence Bible College, another great Canadian Bible college. And I believe the Bible college Christian college movement is alive and well. I did a cassette tape on this recently.

I'll send it to you as a gift if you want it. Why never refuse a cassette tape, by the way, you can always erase over it. Why go? Why go to Bible college? And that's one of the reasons I actually came here today.

But I want to give you seven words out of that passage. It's not going to be easy because I'm not even going to start that part of the message for a while. And if after one year, if after one year you send me those seven words, I will send you seven tremendous books for your library.

Every student, of course, has a library. Books are getting more expensive, so don't sneeze at seven books free of charge, unless of course you're illiterate. If you are illiterate, you're going to have a little, you know, difficulty here in the next few months, but no doubt they could put things on tape for you.

Before I do that, I'd like to just share a little bit of my own testimony. I wouldn't pretend at my age, as I'm no longer that well known among young people in Britain, that people know my testimony. In one way it's not important, but I believe that from the Word of God, we understand that life speaks.

We're all told this, even at Bible college. And so I believe my life is louder than my message. But of course, I'm not going to stay here for a week to live among you.

I'd love to do that, but that's not going to be possible. So I'd like to just share a little of my life and what God did. I was not from a Christian home.

My grandfather was from the Netherlands. I've just come over from there. In fact, I just visited some of my unconverted Berwer relatives.

I forced myself to have time with non-Christians. I believe it is a great mistake when those of us in so-called Christian ministry get so caught up in what we're doing, we find we're not actually talking to non-Christians anymore. That's a whole separate message I won't get into.

But I'd urge you, because that habit begins at Bible college and Christian college, when you get so much studies and you're sort of all living near one another. Maybe some of you live out in digs, that's always helpful. But you'll find later on, even on the field, I just took a survey of people out on the field.

Many of them, the time they get all their different things done, they're not talking to anybody much about Jesus Christ. These are full-time missionaries supposed to be planting It's a huge challenge. There are many beautiful exceptions.

But my grandfather and my father are from the Netherlands. My grandfather was an atheist. My father was more or less just a materialist, though I think he was seeking.

My mother was a bit of a religious woman. That influenced him. She was a Methodist, but didn't know personal faith and reality in Christ, though she was a wonderful mother.

My father is still alive at 93. My mother is in glory. I at 16 was a very hyperactive, semi-wild kind of a character.

I owned three companies already. I was a president of my school, 1,200 students, student government kind of thing. And I was on, as Chris Ria says in his song, he's not saved yet by the way, highway to hell.

And then a woman came into my life and put my name on her Holy Ghost hit list. She was a woman of prayer. She is the true founder of Operation Mobilization, not me.

I couldn't start anything except maybe forest fires. I lit a whole woods of fire in my hometown, and then went into the firefighting business, selling fire extinguishers all over the United States. But this lady heard about me and put my name on her hit list.

She not only prayed that I'd become a missionary, she prayed that I would become, I mean, she not only prayed I'd become a Christian, forgive me, but she prayed I would become a missionary. She didn't even discuss this with me. And I was planning to go into business and make money and a few other things.

You know, even a phone call would have been polite. You know, I'm about to completely change your life, just thought I'd let you know. And then before I ever went to that Billy Graham meeting, which was only a

one night stand, not a crusade, she sent me a gospel John through the post.

And it was God's word that prepared my heart for the conversion that took place under the ministry of Dr. Billy Graham, who, by the way, at 80 plus years of age, is still going strong. What a tremendous testimony. I had heard very negative things about Billy Graham.

That was not my scene. The word evangelical and that kind of thing, I don't think I'd ever heard of that, much less things like fundamentalists. But somehow a friend who actually wasn't a friend, but I maybe thought he was a friend.

I couldn't stand him. But he somehow invited me to this Billy Graham meeting. And I was very involved with a lot of different girls.

And I thought this one girl maybe could use some of this. I was so arrogant. I was about to receive the highest religious award in the Boy Scout movement, tried to get in the Girl Scouts.

That was a closed door. So I was so arrogant. I was going to a very liberal church that abandoned the Bible as being God's word.

And it was sort of a social club. I became the pastor's assistant, the head of the youth fellowship, teach them how to rock and roll in the church. And I didn't know about this other world, you know, people being born again, people needing conversion, you know, sin, blood of Christ.

That's out of date, isn't it? Old-fashioned revival preachers like Billy Graham. But somehow in the mercy of God, I went. I heard he was a hypnotist.

So I brought my binoculars. I sat as far away as I could. And I watched Billy Graham through my binoculars.

I tell you, there were 20,000 people in that meeting. It could have been just me. This lady had been praying.

Other people had started to pray because I was also getting a little bit of trouble with the police. And so, you know, when you do that, your name gets higher on the hit list of the local gospel gang. And so people were praying for me.

It was a business person who gave me a free seat on this coach. I may have never gone to that meeting. I'd love to speak to you an hour on the place of businessmen and women in world missions.

Often much, much more proactive than pastors. I don't know if any of you are pastors. You need to understand pastors traditionally have been the greatest hindrance to world evangelism.

I could write a big book on it. There are beautiful exceptions. But pastors are often locked into a survival mode.

All kinds of people divorcing, all kinds of problems. One man told me, look, half my congregation isn't saved yet. This is my mission field.

Buzz off. And there are again beautiful exceptions. And we are linked with over 1,000 pastors.

But so don't misunderstand me. But business people have often been the most proactive. And if it wasn't for business people, OM would not exist.

We have 2,800 workers. We have two ocean-going ships. We're involved in two and a half thousand literature projects and other projects across the world, reaching 10, 15, 20 million people every year.

We've given the word of God to 1,000 million people in the lifetime of our agency. 100,000 people have been on OM. Thousands and thousands of them, many of whom went off with our friends and prayer partners and churches, which is fine, are working with other mission agencies.

100 mission agencies traced their birth back to their founder being on OM. Who's going to finance all this? You think the church? It's business people and individual lay people and the church that make this happen. And you need to understand, any of you that are thinking about becoming missionaries, it's harder to become a career missionary today than a brain surgeon.

So it's good you've decided to come here and get a study, get a little preparation. And I want to tell you, I could write a book on bitter Bible college students. Even some gone to our top colleges and have completely thrown the Christian faith, because they thought if they get this training, they're just going to walk out and there's going to be a nice job there for them.

And of course, those who especially wanted to go overseas and discovered what it is to raise financial support, some few missions pay you a salary. They're even harder to get into, but most of them require you to raise your own support. And that is tougher than ever.

And if you propagate the idea that it's just a matter of trusting God, you know, here's a guy who's basically lazy, hasn't got any real skills. We don't actually want him on the mission field. One of the great gifts of OM over the years is to send thousands home and tell them to stay home.

But if you think that person should just drift to the mission field, you know, sort of trusting God to bring in 25,000 pounds a year, that is a deception. The Bible does not teach that. And we have to take not one or two verses out of context, but we have to look at the whole scripture.

We also need to look at the missionary history. We also need to read what our mission societies are saying and understand it is tough to become a career missionary. It's fulfilling, it's a privilege, it's wonderful, but it's not easy.

And today we need skilled people. We need people that can endure tough, hard situations in two-thirds world countries, many different controversies, and at the same time keep that tender heart with a good attitude. Charles Swindoll, one of my favorite authors, he's so strong that a major part of our whole Christian life, and it's true right here at this college, is your attitude.

Your attitude. And it's possible to go through missionary training, even go to the field, thinking the church owes you something. They challenge you to go in the first place, at least somebody who is in the church.

And so you go through all that, and at the end you feel the church owes you. You know, a retirement program until you're 106. Some churches may do that, but often we have our limitations.

We're a well-meaning crowd, we evangelical group, but we have our limitations, and we surely have a shortfall of funds often in the work of God that is staggering to the imagination, especially for visionaries

and dreamers who would actually not just want to go to the mission field, but see something happen. It's great to esteem Billy Graham as one of the greatest evangelistic forces in the history of the church. They also, including him, were some of the most gifted fundraisers and communications people and public relations people that have ever walked.

And I don't believe communication and public relations and partners and esteeming business people and getting to meet them, reading books like Friend Raising or People Raising, is in contradiction to faith and prayer, trusting God, believing in the impossible, because it's all there in the word of God. But to just wind down this testimony, I went out of that Billy Graham meeting like I'd been shot out of a cannon, back to my high school where students were willing to listen to me because of whatever reason. In one meeting alone, 125 stood and believed on Christ, including my own father.

I'm not saying they were all converted. Later on, Billy Graham came back for a crusade. We ran buses into that crusade two years later, and more people came to Christ, and OM was born.

So in that high school, it was called Christian Youth Committee. Then when I headed off to Mexico, not time to say much about it, it became Send the Light, the name we still use for our literature arm here in the UK. One or two other places.

But it was really, when I left, I went to university, a place that used to be evangelical. By the time I got there, it was famous for destroying people's faith. Forty percent, no, 80 percent of the pre-ministerial, pre-theological students at this university lost their faith, evangelical faith, in four months and became liberals.

Some became Buddhists and Hindus, syncretistic. I, of course, I didn't know what was going on. I believed the Bible.

Billy Graham converted. I was classified as a fundamentalist. I'd never even heard the word.

And somebody banged on my door at university, Jesus saves, Jesus saves, green stamps. Remember, we used to save green stamps. I know that's before your day.

Now they're saving all kinds of funny coupons. Everything, everywhere you go, you got to have a little plastic card, and you get air miles. But anyway, that's not part of the message.

I was warned about an extreme character at this university. It was actually a college, university level. And his name was Dale Roton.

Thank God for friendship. OM, by the way, is not an easy movement to understand. OM to me sometimes looks real lousy, you know, on paper, and so big, and shit.

OM, as you go in like an onion, you just start peeling us. And as you go in, you'll find the whole thing a lot more real. That's why thousands and thousands of British people have supported and stood with this movement for these 38 years.

And Britain is OM's largest sending field, and field, next to India. So if initially even I turn you off, I have this gift to be able to turn people off. People don't like this jacket.

What is this have a tie? Our principal has a tie. All proper people wear ties. I have a tie and a suit coat.

I left it in your office, if you want to see it. But this is my global jacket. It doesn't look good on me.

It actually looks better on people, you know, who are more global in their appearance. But if you're going to do a lot of flying, you might find this kind of thing quite helpful. I'm the agent for these in Britain, by the way.

And I was flying from Brazil to Argentina in a British Airways jumbo jet. I went up to the cockpit to try to talk to the captain about Jesus, which is not easy. And they were discussing where they were, and the co-pilot said that they were flying over Ecuador.

That's way up here. They used this jacket to see that they were flying over Uruguay. That's a true story.

So if you're going to do a lot of traveling, you might want to carry your own map. Sometimes without trying, people sort of laugh when we speak. And it is good to laugh, especially if you're thinking about being an missionary.

Again, to finish this story, I soon found myself in Mexico. I saw that God could use young people even on a summer program. And then I left university and went to Moody Bible College, and went back to Mexico, and met all kinds of amazing people like Lionel Gurney and the Red Sea Mission Team, and Francis Steele of the North African Mission.

And I think within a few months, my great vision was the Muslim world. And a lot of the vision came in the library, in the Moody Bible Institute. The first place I went in here was the library.

Not that I was interested in the library, but that's just where they shunned me into the library. And it looks like they have quite a good library, and I'd be happy to send you 200 more books if you want, because the library is a little ministry we have. But a lot of these colleges, they don't have any shelf space.

But praise God for libraries. And I hope you're a reader. Readers make leaders, leaders make readers.

And I know some of you are probably, after a few weeks, going to start squirming with all these professors, start loading you up with things to read. But praise God. I remember one women's Bible college.

But I think one of these Bible colleges, my message, you know, I'm mellowed out now, you know, now. But they had the more hyper version. But this lady, lady wrote to me that after my message, every single aspirin in the cupboard disappeared shortly after my visit to this women's Bible college.

And I think I may have gone on the blacklist for a couple of years. But if there's anybody around from those days, I do want to apologize. I was extreme.

I said extreme things. I had my favorite verses. I didn't have them always balanced out with other verses.

You know, my big verse was, except you forsake all that you have, you cannot be my disciple. I was so strong in that when I was in Bible college myself, students from all over the school brought the things to my room to sell. And so I started a little store in my room at Bible college selling things to other students.

But that was a bit complex because some of the stuff they were buying was junk. So when they bought these things, we'd share the message as they went out the door, except you forsake all that you have. Some of them actually brought the things back again to forsake them.

So the college was not too happy about this particular business. God uses all kinds of people. And I stand absolutely stunned that God could ever use a character like me.

I haven't even begun to tell you some of the weaknesses, struggles I had, even almost completely losing my faith. Even in Bible college, I thought half the professors were backslidden and surely more than half the students they were, you know, if saved, they were surely backslidden. But God somehow kept loving me and teaching me about grace and helping me to find the other scriptures, like, my God will supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

That's good for the forsake all crowd, isn't it? And praise the Lord, his grace is sufficient. Someone once said to me, or maybe I said it myself, I get a little confused that when God, when God wants to birth something new, he often has to use people of extreme temperance. And then when it's birthed, and I'm sure this is tied in with other factors like human error and immaturity, but God is sovereign.

And when it's birthed, then he has to bring other people that can help bring it into balance. By the way, this man I met at college, Dale Rothern, I was warned not to even talk to him. They told me he was baptizing people in the showers.

And he became one of my closest friends. We've been together in this ministry 42 years. He was a more intellectual type.

He was a more even, you know, even temperament, you know, those even temperance types, steady, pragmatic, always the same. People like me, they just get on your nerves, I can tell you. But my co-director of this whole movement who does 75% of the work of leading OM, I only do 25% is Peter Maiden from Cumbria.

Have you ever met people from Cumbria? Lay back, steady, most of them never go out of Cumbria, pressing on. Peter Maiden, the co-director of this work, never moved out of Cumbria. Still an elder in his local assembly, but travels all over the world ministering.

When we went to Europe, we first went to Spain, things began to explode, soon 2,000 people. We're on OM summer campaign. It was actually through a failure in the Soviet Union, my main passion was Muslims and communists in closed countries, and for Britain, no thought of even coming here.

But through a fiasco in the Soviet Union, I was arrested by the KGB, the whole thing was really immature. You've heard of Brother Andrew, God's smuggler, today you've got Brother George, God's bungler, I really blew it. Nationwide headlines, American spy arrested in the Soviet Union, that ministry was over.

I was humble to say the least. Went for a day of prayer, and in that day of prayer, God gave me two words, operation, mobilization. He gave me a vision to come to Britain, where I knew the church was the biggest in all of Europe, and to work with the church, to work with the church, to mobilize the church, to be involved in serving, to train, to prepare, to recruit.

Little did we know what God was going to do. Never did we dream in those days this would become such a large, major mission force, with over 1,000 people in the 1040 window, many of them in church planting ministries, many speaking two or three languages, many of them there 15, 20, 30 years. They all wrote on, finally left the field, went back to California to start a regional office and raise money for the ships.

He came short term. He stayed 39 years. Hundreds and thousands of OM people initially came short term, have been over 20 years on the field.

Ron Penny recruited out of Moreland Bible College, not with OM in recent decades, still in India. I remember when he first went, his mother wanted him back right away. The father died, and he said, he's got to come back and run this grocery shop in Fulham.

I said, what do you mean? He's one of my best men. No, he got this grocery shop. I said, I'll buy it.

Ron Penny will stay in India. Pretty soon I was stuck with a grocery shop in Fulham. That's another story that I don't want to tell.

We have a great God. We have a prayer answering God, and the OM story is not my story. It's the story of God working through young people, working through his church, and enabling the gospel to go out, especially to the Muslim world.

So let me give you my seven words, one word per minute, and maybe we'll have a few minutes for questions. It's a miracle I even get invited to places like this, because I'm known as the longest speaker in Europe. I sometimes go an hour and a half, two hours.

I never forget in Germany going on. Young people were there. They were like blotters out of the Sahara, but one older man tried to stop me.

He's sitting in the back. He put his watch, started pointing to his watch. You ever had that in an English church? And I saw his watch.

I said, praise God. Look at this man. He's donating his watch to world missions.

Got me in a little difficulty at Keswick as well. Seven words from Acts 13. The first word is church.

The local church is the key to world evangelism. Learn how to esteem your local church. Learn how to understand your local church.

Write to your pastor. Most pastors are under more pressure than ever before in the history of the church. Many are being knocked out through fiery darts of immorality, unbelief, you name it.

Satan is thrown in at pastors. It's so easy to be critical, so easy to make idealistic generalizations about everything should be. But I will tell you, churches and pastors today are in phenomenal spiritual warfare.

We need to understand what old Andrew or Dale Carnegie wrote in his book. I used to be required reading at OM in the old days. How to Win Friends and Influence People.

If it's not in your library, your library is incomplete. We'll send you a copy. One of the widest selling books in the history of literature.

Not a Christian book, but many mission agencies required people or some missionaries to read it. Columbia Bible College, one of my favorite Bible colleges in my top 100 group, they used to require some of their students to read that book. Now Stephen Covey's book, Seven Habits of the Effective Person, that sort of has replaced old Dale Carnegie.

Great books. Don't only read Christian books because we can learn a lot from others and we need wisdom because sometimes the world has more wisdom than we do in certain areas. The local church, verse one, absolutely crucial.

The local church that sent out these two workers. Our second word is the word worship. They were worshipping the Lord.

One of my favorite authors, J.W. Tozer. We don't have any of his books. That's okay.

You can write me and I'll send you a free Tozer book. By the way, this is the age of email and you can get my email address at the end of this meeting. By the time I get back to where I live in West Wickham, there'll be an email from you in front of me.

I tell you, that always gives me a challenge and I usually send everybody an email back quite soon. I have a lot of secretarial help, of course. The second word is worship.

While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, make sure you learn how to worship. Don't let all your academic pursuits squeeze that time of worship and praise. Learn to get away with God.

Read books like John Piper's book, The Writings of Tozer or Andrew Murray. We see that it was when they were worshipping, God spoke to them. It was actually during that day of prayer when I was worshipping, God gave me this name, which was to effectively stick for almost 40 years, Operation Mobilization.

My passion, as you shared in your introduction, even from my teenage days, was worship. The third word is the word prayer. To me, worship is included in verse 2. The word prayer is included when we talk about worship.

They were praying, they were also fasting, but also we read in verse 3, after they had fasted and prayed. Prayer should precede everything, as much as possible, that we do. And you're going to discover as you go out into ministry, and some of you may be in ministry in this country, that's not being a second-class citizen.

Some of you may go to join Lloyd's Bank, or work with NatWest, or go into farming, or go into nursing, or go into the business world. I don't believe that's second-class citizenship. Many of my heroes are people in that world.

Two of them just killed in a motor accident last week, in their mid-seventies. Two of the greatest supporters I've ever had, whose business was blessed, and they gave the prophets a world mission. They were in an accident, their petrol tank exploded, they were taken to eternity.

A big blessing to the mid-seventies, and that's pretty good. How important it is to understand some of these things. I know much of what I've said this morning probably is in the way of remembrance.

Maybe you've already heard these things, but most of us human beings have to hear things a number of times, with a little bit of oomph behind it, before it goes deep into our hearts and minds. I'm finding a lot of prayerlessness today. I found in my own Bible college that a high percentage of students did not know how to pray, especially gathering in any kind of prayer meeting.

It's interesting, when I was at Bible college, a wild Irishman came there, and he preached on Acts 12. I'll never forgotten it. Peter was in prison, but the church would gather together praying.

I'm sure there are prayer meetings here at your college. Find out when they are and where they are, and consider them just as important as your academic studies. I want to tell you, if you don't learn to pray, if you don't learn how to engage in spiritual warfare, you can end up a greater hindrance on the mission field than a blessing or a help.

The Bible says the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty unto God to the pulling down of strongholds. Tozer was much stronger than me. He said, we've graduated a generation of mascots from our colleges instead of a generation of prophets, and believe me, we paid an awesome price.

The third word, or the fourth word, is the word send. It's a small little four-letter word, but we find it twice in this passage. First of all, we find the church sending.

So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. Our movement was influenced by a movement in Chicago known as the Open Brethren, who had a strong emphasis on prayer and a strong emphasis on the local church. And Emmaus Bible College, the Open Brethren Bible College at that time in Chicago, became the second or the third major Bible college to become really proactive with OM.

When William McDonald left the presidency of that college, he came up with more than 50 hard-hitting books like True Discipleship, which he dedicated to that first OM team. That went to Mexico. And this is why the OM was in short term.

The OM in its early days especially focused on mass literature distribution. After some years, our main focus became church planting in the Muslim world, running parallel. And then of course Europe, because the Europeans weren't going to be left out of this.

But the key in a lot of this was local churches sending workers to us. 90% of our long-term people have an Acts 13 experience. They've been sent out by their local church.

For some of you, that may mean spending a year in your local church before they will commend you and send you out. I know sometimes it's more complex depending on the kind of church you're involved with. Many present churches, including a lot of these new churches that I'm quite linked with, send out no career missionaries.

And if you don't know what's happened in OM and in the UK, I mean, in the past years in connection with getting churches to send out career missionaries, well, no doubt you'll find out in the near future. Praise God for that little word, send. Then in verse 4, two of them were sent on their way by the Holy Spirit.

That's my fifth word. By the way, one of my favorite verses on send is Romans 10 15. How will they go? How will they preach unless they are sent? Some of you, your passion may be to Central Asia.

I'd love to talk to you for an hour about Central Asia. It's our fastest almost growing field. Every nation in Central Asia is open.

And people are coming to Christ in most of those countries. It's tough. Turkmenistan just suddenly changed the rules.

People have lost visas. But those Central Asian countries are open. And new generation missionaries should be thinking more in terms of Central Asia rather than most parts of Africa or most parts of except

North Africa, Latin America, where they are now gearing up to send 10,000 missionaries out to the 1040 window.

So I believe that verse in Romans is just so powerful. How will they go? How will they preach unless they are sent? But my next word is not just a word, but a person. Mentioned twice again in this great passage.

Verse 2, the word or the person, of course, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, the chief executive officer of all missionary work. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, isn't it sad that there's been so much division in Britain and around the globe on the subject of the Holy Spirit? It really is quite bizarre. When the Holy Spirit's first major work is always to bring love and the fruit of the Spirit among believers.

So how we can get in such a state of division and confusion with hundreds of churches splitting on this issue is beyond me. It's good that God is so patient and so loving. I know some people are conservative and I come from a bit of a conservative background, but always embraced everything that could possibly find about the Holy Spirit from the Word of God.

But I know a lot of my friends reacting to things that were extreme about the Holy Spirit, reacting to that they ended up in the deep freeze of dead orthodoxy. Don't do it. There is a way of balance.

Billy Graham said in speaking about the reality of the Holy Spirit, I don't care how you get it, just get it. Sometimes a lot of confusion comes into Bible college because we're all so caught up wanting to find all the answers to these questions and sort out really where is the New Testament church and who is most spiritual among us and what is going to be the cutting edge strategy to change the entire world. I'd urge some of you who may have a temperament a little like me, may the Lord have mercy on you, especially if you're a woman, to just, you know, mellow out a little bit for the next, you know, just take it a little easy here.

You know, don't go around praying for the assassination of professors who you don't agree with. Just, you know, let love cover and I think the Lord will honor that. But the Holy Spirit is the chief executive officer of mission work.

We must listen to His voice. We must allow Him to do the sending. It isn't just the church on its own.

Verse 4, two of them sent on their way by the Holy Spirit. And then my sixth word, am I up to six? Sometimes I lose track. The sixth word is the word proclaim.

Verse 5, when they arrived at Salinas, they proclaim the word of God. Proclamation is being played down in some places. I say that's okay, but we are not going to stop proclaiming the gospel.

We're not going to, you know, say that Billy Graham and his method of proclaiming the gospel is outdated. Franklin Graham has something of the anointing of his father and is seeing thousands come to Christ, even in Scotland recently. We need to continue with all of our other methodology, proclaim the gospel, both one-on-one, in all of our efforts to be holistic, and holistic ministry is important.

Sometimes we're playing down the need to open our mouth and share the plan of salvation. It is possible to find the balance in these areas, but it's not easy. And as you start reading widely as a student, may the Lord have mercy on you.

It is not going to be easy here if you're a thinking person in the next couple years. And if it gets to the saturation point and you need special prayer, send me an email. I'd love to pray for those who are just about to have a nervous breakdown, but do try to get to me a couple of days before it happens.

They are a little hard to predict. So many people predict that I would have a nervous breakdown because of the way I was. I've never had one all these years.

People are stunned. I have caused a few. That's a bit of a worry.

And my final word, and we'll have to have a question some other time, is the word helper. Right there in verse 5, John was with him as their helper. Isn't that a beautiful little word? You know, O.M. is not a story of George Burwell.

I'm one little tiny part of it. O.M. is a story of teams of people, most of them ordinary people, many of them with largely the gift to help. For every one racing driver in the Grand Prix, I'm very fascinated with Grand Prix racing, every one driver in a Grand Prix race, 50 are on the team.

That's why if you're going to the mission field, you need to go out and be able to go out and build a team. That will stand with you. A team of helpers, helping through prayer, helping through practical gifts.

By the way, this didn't really work out this game. Did you notice that as you read the book of Acts? They had to send John Mark home. This guy's a flunky.

Send him back to college. But later on, Paul and Barnabas had a bust-up over this guy. Paul says, I'm not taking this guy.

He's a failure. Barnabas, you had a little more compassionate, choleric character. Paul, who was always getting in trouble, going over the wall in baskets and all the rest.

But later, Paul had to admit, yes, I think we'll have him back. Isn't it wonderful God gives a second chance? Many of you had a lot of failure in your life? Many of you, you know, am I the only guy in here that's had a lot of failure? You can autograph my Bible. I didn't bring mine.

Actually, I borrowed this from the from the dicker here. Principle. But some people feel that they've had a lot of failure in their life.

They're not on plan B or plan C. They may be on plan F. You know what I say? And I'm going to close with this. Praise God for a big alphabet. Press on.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this little time, this little passing in the morning of two Holy Ghost trains in which I can just share a little bit what I feel and what I think about this passage and about world missions. Lord, we've touched on a lot of basic principles.

And as these students study these things in depth from the word, from their teachers and in books, may they become some of the most dynamic, spirits anointed missionaries that ever graduated from this college. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

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