

# Relationships Eng to German

by George Verwer

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*The sermon focuses on the critical importance of relationships and unity in ministry, while addressing the challenges posed by emotional struggles and external attacks.*

**Duration:** 27:54

**Scripture:** Psalm 133:1, Matthew 6:33, Acts 15:39, Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:3, James 5:16

**Topics:** "Relationships"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the indifference and lack of vision for world missions, as well as the unbelief and materialism that hinder it. He emphasizes the importance of unity and fellowship among believers, highlighting the relationships formed during a leaders conference. The speaker acknowledges the challenges and attacks from the devil, including the manipulation of emotions, the destructive power of pride, and the lack of time for maintaining relationships. He encourages repentance and reliance on God's power to overcome these obstacles. The sermon also mentions the impact of exo-Mers (former OM members) in strategic positions within mission organizations worldwide.

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## Transcript

Above all, really just give thanks to the Lord for His mercy to us over this past year and past years. It's far more difficult than it ever has been before for many of these men to be here as their men, quite a few of them with families, children in school. That's why many of the wives are no longer also able to come.

Last year they had a married women's special conference and even some of the men stayed to take care of the children and it was a great time that they had together. And I can assure you that if it wasn't for committed women, many of these men would not even be in the ministry that they're in. I'd like you to look in the book of Psalms to chapter 133.

It says in verse 1, Behold how good and how pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity. This is such an important thing in this work. And we tried to emphasize this in the leaders conference.

The importance of relationships. The importance of fellowship. The importance of this conference in really getting to know one another.

And I always feel that getting to know some is an expression of your desire to get to know all, even though of course that's totally impossible. For the next three days many of us as leaders will not be with you. We'll

be retreating down the road for a 13 hour a day conference to face very squarely some of our own mistakes, some of our sins, some of the problems in this work.

I've seen in these conferences over the past years that OM leaders are not afraid to question anything. And you can be sure our hearts are very exercised concerning some of our weaknesses, some of the areas of need, some of our failures, and sometimes of course the sin that gets in even to the work of God. I've found it to be an enormous privilege and in some ways an easy task to work with a group of men so like minded as the men some of whom you've met tonight.

Men many of whom have been a great and continual encouragement in my own life. Men who I have discovered through getting to know them personally who do live out to a large degree the principles that this work stands for. And that's true of the women as well.

I always feel that some very important people get left out when we have introductions like this. Because we know in God's work especially everyone is important. And like everything we do in life there's always some risks.

And the risk we took tonight is that someone in fact quite a few we failed to introduce mainly because they aren't here. And the devil is going to attack our relationship. Every real relationship you ever have in life will be attacked by the evil one.

And it will be tested also due to your own human weaknesses and failings. I have quite a few weaknesses in my life. And I think the greatest ministry has come from my wife who so totally accepts me even in times of failure or weakness or sin.

Not the scandalous sin that would make the Gospel Gazette but just sin that God hates. Like an unkind word or a thoughtless act or a selfish move and many other things as well. So our relationships will be tested.

I think you've been amazed as I always have been at the great cross-section of men and women that God has called to help lead this work. That they are working together to the degree that they are is a miracle of God and a great answer to prayer. And I believe one of the reasons for it are the tens of thousands perhaps more than a hundred thousand people who are continually interceding for these men and women.

I appreciated your prayers for the meeting I was in last night up in Southport. There were about a thousand people there. One of the humbling things is to stand at the door of the church shaking hands which is harder than preaching and meet people who say they've been praying for you for 15 years regularly.

Some every day. And I believe that's the power behind the leadership of this work. And I hope you will be involved in praying for these men and women.

And many others who are in training and who are coming up into places of leadership in the work. Every year it's a joy to see at least one major leader let out from OM to join another fellowship and take up a major responsibility in that fellowship. Last year God let Ron Penney out and I heard today he's in such a major and strategic position of leadership in the Bible Society in India.

We believe we are members of the body of Christ. I just said well I'm always saying goodbye to people. And sometimes it's not easy.

But when we keep the vision of the Lord then it's a joy to see men moving out and moving into other strategic ministries. The leader of the Manchester office has left to go to seminary and probably into the pastorate in the free church in Scotland. And one of the things that's very meaningful to many of us is the fellowship we have with what some people call XOMers all over the world.

To see how God is using them. To see many of them moving into strategic positions in their mission organization. And to see the influence.

As some of these principles get re-emphasized and put into practice in different places. And our relationship with people outside of OM is often just as important as relationships within the fellowship. The devil is going to attack however these relationships.

Very quickly what are some of the ways the devil attacks? Number one he uses our emotions. Our emotions have tremendous capacity to trick us, to deceive us. And I hope we will become aware of this.

As we move forward in this kind of work. Our emotions change. We may feel rejection at a particular time.

Maybe because some freak unpredictable thing takes place. And the devil will try to use that feeling of rejection to bring division. Even permanent division.

Another thing that the devil uses is our tendency to read into situations and words things that are not there. Or maybe they were there but the person has already realized that it wasn't right and he has forgotten it. It's past.

This is very important. This is linked with this danger of being too idealistic. The devil uses our idealism to destroy relationships.

We may like someone. We get a linking with him. We lift him up in our thinking.

Then we get to live with him. We see his weaknesses. Or her weaknesses.

We're disappointed. He's not the man we thought he was. She's not the woman he thought she was.

And so then a depression can come in. Or other emotions. And the foundation of unity begins to shake.

Of course so much disunity and breaking down of relationships is linked with the pride. The wretched pride that so easily can come into our hearts. Or if we could only understand some of these things and then immediately repent and claim the power of God when we see these things creeping in and destroying any relationship.

Then another thing that destroys relationships is a lack of time. It takes time to maintain a relationship. We're all supposed to be winning other people to Christ.

When you lead a man to Christ, there's someone else who needs some of your time. You only have so many chunks of time in a day. Nobody has any more or any less than anybody else.

This is why to maintain relationships, especially in a movement like this, every man must exercise faith and believe the best about other men that he may not get time with, even though he would like to. All my life I've wanted to have even five minutes with my own spiritual father. 25 years I've been waiting.

I've never even met him yet. Of course his name is Billy Graham. He's got quite a few spiritual children.

And I personally don't even feel that I should waste his time. Probably I've had a lot of wrong emotions trying to wrestle at times with my spiritual father. But one of the wonderful things is that we are going to be, all of us, for all of eternity together in heaven.

So at times we're going to have to be willing to sacrifice even things we would like to do here with one another in order to get on with the job that God has given us to evangelize the world, because that's going to be all over for most of us very soon. Another thing that brings disunity is the fact that we actually do believe different things. We have to face facts.

There are areas where we just do not agree and no amount of talking, in some cases, is going to cause us to agree. Even if you could get the many hours, which often you can't, to sort of come together on one subject, sometimes, even if you could, you still would not come out agreeing. I think the way quite a few leaders have survived with me is they've just agreed to disagree and then get on with the job, kept their eyes on Jesus.

There are legitimate differences in theology among the leaders in this work. We have some who lean toward a more Calvinistic position. We have quite a few who lean toward an Arminian position.

There are many people that would tell you right there, that's completely crazy, these two groups cannot work together, so forget it. And there are people that would tell you right there, Calvinists and Arminians cannot work together, so forget it. And this is just one of the many groups where unfortunately there is not one opinion.

And I would like to put this in front of the beginners, where they all have different opinions. And one exists not through uniformity, or the means of uniformity, but through different activities and through the miracle of the Holy Spirit. And it is this kind of unity that we see in us, it is the stereotypical uniformity, which is not in contact with the Holy Spirit.

And that's the pressure of the work. You see, there is work to be done. This conference generates masses of work for many people.

As we think, some of us are already recruiting, I am already recruiting for next summer. Many of us, by the nature of this work, must stay one year ahead, always one year ahead, and at the same time, we've got to live in the present. Sometimes the pressure gets too great, we don't get enough rest, we have our human limitations, and under that pressure, things get said that should not be said.

And then the devil tries to take what was said under pressure, and spread it around, and use it to divide and destroy the troops, or the work of God. If Paul and Barnabas could have a division, I'm sure such things can happen within any work of God. As we've observed over the past two decades in this work, we've seen that the devil will go to almost any end to slow down the work, and to cripple the leadership.

One of the biggest things that divides is just straight forward sin. 1 John chapter 2, we're told to sin, but then we're told what to do if we do sin. I'm sure some of my sins have been a great hindrance to this work.

Remember, as believers, we can sin with our minds. This in turn hinders our prayer life. And if our prayer life is hindered, then anything can happen.

And sometimes it does. Another thing that brings confusion and disunity, perhaps one of the biggest of all, the sins of the tongue. I believe this at times has been one of the greatest marks of the devil getting into

some OM situations.

The sins of the tongue. There's not time to read you those verses in James, about the tongue. And in almost every chapter in the book of Proverbs, it speaks about the sins of the tongue.

I'll never forget reading Billy Graham's sermon as a young baby Christ, about the sins of the tongue, and it became one of the greatest goals in my life, still not totally fulfilled, to have absolute control over the tongue at all times. And of course, I know most of you have this same conviction. You want a spirit-controlled tongue.

As we look into or look forward to another year, on a practical level, we are faced with many problems. Perhaps more than I've ever seen or known in my 20 years in this work. Humanly speaking, the work has expanded too quickly.

The offices cannot keep up. Leaders tend to be overworked, not giving enough time to family, to study, to other areas to bring spiritual balance into their lives. Though there are some churches wonderfully behind the work, great majority of churches remain, at least practically speaking, indifferent to what we are wanting to do, even though they may have young people actually on the crusade.

The indifference of so many of God's people has perhaps been the greatest struggle of my whole spiritual life, and at times has almost totally overwhelmed me and dragged me into depression. Because of this indifference and lack of vision and practical concern for world missions, and all the unbelief and materialism that moves with it, I cannot see anything but a hard and difficult road ahead for any who would trod in the steps of the Lord Jesus Christ. I find that when I really get into the heart of the battle, for every encouragement there are five discouragements.

And the way to survive is you better meditate a little more on the encouragements. And keeping your eyes upon the Lord Himself. So we are faced with some severe growing pains within OM at this time.

In some cases even the health of a leader and a leaderess. Has been affected. Because they are very linked together.

And this is why we so desperately need to band together in these days. Even though we may not agree on every point. Even though at times we may be tempted to quit or to give up.

We need to take God's Word. With our eyes on the Lord. Our hands on the plow.

And go forward. Together. Of one heart, of one mind.

Believing the Lord will give the victory. I hope you'll pray for us during these three days. As we will be praying for you.

As we have a night of prayer. As we are ministered to by a guest speaker from outside the work. And trust that his words will be strong to our own hearts.

And I believe when we return next Monday. There will be a difference. And victories will have been won.

No, the road ahead, if you're going to join OM, will not be smooth. But I'd rather be with Jesus on a rough road. Than with the devil on the greatest motorway in the world.

So let's band together. Let us pray.

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