

Reproducing Young Leaders

by George Verwer

The key to discipling men and encouraging others is to live the life, being broken and humble, and being willing to forgive and start again.

Duration: 34:50

Scripture: Proverbs 19:11, Matthew 7:1, James 5:16

Topics: "Discipleship Training", "Christian Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a life that reflects Jesus in order to disciple and encourage younger leaders. He highlights the complexity of life in the 20th century and the effort required to organize conferences like the one being held. The speaker also discusses the power of words and the impact they can have on others, both positively and negatively. Additionally, he encourages the audience to prioritize loving and communicating with others, even if it requires sacrifice and discipline.

Transcript

I need encouragement, I just don't have it built in. I haven't got one of these sun batteries that just go out in the sun and the rest of the year I can keep going. I saw one of these in the science museum some years ago, sun battery.

My battery just needs constant encouragement from the saints and exhortation. Well, most of us are that way. That's why, you know, there's quite, nothing quite as powerful than meeting someone who's living the life.

Living the life. I don't go for some of this rather semi-hard rock Christian music and I've heard people attack it and all the rest. And it's funny, I listened to a record by Barry McGuire some time back and it just wasn't my thing, this kind of singing.

I could hardly understand what he was saying sometimes. Then I met him, the music already sounds better. I don't understand that.

I not only met this guy, I found out that he was real. And I had people coming back from his session at Jesus 77 where he was just sharing how he basically turned his back on Hollywood. And he was, by the way, led to Christ by the agape force and when they lead people to Christ, if they're big stars, they keep them out of circulation for at least a year, you know, before they, because once it gets public, you can't

help it.

Publicity's gonna come, you can't help it. You can't despise people for that. It was the publicity that Billy Graham got in Los Angeles when a couple of big cheeses got saved that put, practically speaking, his whole ministry on the map.

God can use publicity in his timing. The mistake is just to run around looking for that. On a practical level, it was when that big newspaper man, and I think it was Hearst, sent one wire to his newspaper world and he said, just two words, push Billy.

And I tell ya, it's the same way God is using the ship. It's when that ship hits front page headlines as it just did in Dar es Salaam and the media gets on it, then all of a sudden, the tens of thousands are coming and it's when they come, they can be saved. Those who can't, don't come, can't be saved.

But that needs to be in God's timing. And if a man prematurely gets into that kind of publicity, the devil will wipe him out before he counts his fifth year. And I just feel it's significant when we meet people and we get to know them, and before that, we should be very slow in judging people.

Maybe we can put that down as the next point. A sincere love of the brethren, absolutely basic for encouraging others. And then the next point is to be slow in judging someone.

I don't know how many of you have read Hyde's book on the subject of leadership. Hyde, have you ever read that book? Raise your hand, one or two. He was an ex-Catholic, he was a communist.

And that book is very hard to get, but if you can get your hands on it, read it. And he shows in that book, he really jabs at the Catholic Church, though he now is writing this book as a Catholic who has left communism, but he's pointing out to the church that the method the communists use is closer to the method of the New Testament than the method we are using today. His main proposition is that the communists take nobodies, they take nobodies, and they just fill them with confidence.

He gives examples, some guys that can't talk, stutter problem, and they can't relate to people, they're working in some factory, they're a little nobody, they get this guy into one of their cells, they fill him with confidence. Look man, you can tear this place up, you can be the number one man, you can bring revolution. And this guy's burying himself in Marx and Lenin, he's never read anything in his life hardly.

Some of these reading Marx and Lenin, he's memorizing these things, then he gets his little cell. The other workers, most of whom also aren't that clever, because most people are not intellectuals, that's only a tiny sector of the whole society. This is what Marx and Lenin understood, and he gets his little cell, and pretty soon they turn the whole factory upside down.

This little stuttering fellow gets so confident, his stutter drops so quick, and he's teaching cell groups, and he's got this factory turned upside down, and even the Harvard graduate, the top intellectual guy, who's the top executive, he can't do anything about it. Who's taking over the world today? If it isn't the communists, it's the labor unions. The guys at the top are scared to death.

We can't even get a flight anywhere, because somebody's going on strike. And of course, this is the cry of communism, the laborers, the nobodies, the guys have been stepped on, they're going to take over, and they are. And the Christians, we're sort of toddling around, still a bourgeois middle class group of people who can barely relate to one another, much less a working class guy.

And I praise God that some of you, even in this room, quite a few of you are just nobodies. Some of you didn't make it through college, you had trouble getting out of high school, praise the Lord. You get so filled with the Holy Ghost, and you realize that God has specialized in using weak people, and you get your confidence in God, and in His resources, He is going to use you.

He is going to use you. I just so strongly believe that. And we need to beware when we think someone doesn't have any leadership potential, because you can't judge that.

And you may think, oh, I'm not a leader. Of course, I think it's important at this stage to perhaps define leadership, maybe someone else has done that. But let me just say, there are many kinds of leadership.

When you get married and you have four children, are you going to be the leader? Any men here that are thinking someday you may get married, you know, your own possibility. Raise your hand, raise your hand, anybody? Most of the rest of you are all married. Any leadership needed in the home? Of course.

Then the girls immediately say, well, that means we need to be followers, giving us lectures, how to be leaders. Women have to be leaders in the home as well. Co-leaders with their husband, because first of all, the husband is away a lot.

Boy, I'm seeing my wife's leadership capacity tested to the last inch. She feels sometimes she's a little out of it. She just can't go.

Keeps telling me that, but she keeps going, because actually my wife has a gift of leadership. It may be under a basket sometime. And women, you need to be a leader someday in your home.

And one of the greatest needs for every leader is to be able to relate to the leader over him. And women, if in OM you can learn a little bit about relating to the leader over you, it's great training for someday when you get married. Whereas you, you're going to have responsibilities.

My wife once told me, she said, I have more trouble sometimes when you return. That was a new change. Sometimes I'm away a long time.

I'm away for five or six weeks. During that period, she learns how to handle her situation. She's got to make more decisions when I'm there.

All kinds of things she has to do that she tends to throw back at me when I'm there. Then suddenly I come back, and she's still moving along, and she does something, and I jump on her. Hey, what are you doing? How come you didn't check with me? Well, this is ridiculous of me because she's been functioning for six weeks.

Then, you know, I parachute in, and all of a sudden, you know, get back on the throne, and wonder why she's not checking with me before she buys something or some other thing. So there are many different kinds of leadership. And leaders have to learn to relate to leaders.

And as you think of the task of training younger leaders, and right now, how many younger leaders do we have needed for next summer? Some of you will be in that capacity. Some of the people that should be in this session are not here, but I can't tell you how desperately we need now to start training men, preparing men for next summer. But we don't do it because very few people have this vision.

Part of it is organizational. Part of it is lack of initiative. Part of it is no one thinks that they're a leader.

Part of it is we judge too quickly he doesn't have any leadership potential. And so what happens, we come to July, and especially August, and we're just grabbing people out of the trees who haven't even read the leader's manual, and who haven't even had some of the most basic Bible teaching, even for followers, much less leaders. Of course, God overrules that because often that first opportunity proves to be a tremendous success, and we discover potential that we wouldn't have discovered it otherwise.

So God can overrule, but we don't use that as an excuse. What is one of the biggest problems missions have made as they've gone out to these countries? They have not trusted the nationals. Now we can't speak the way we used to speak because everything is international now.

We are all nationals in our own country. I believe we need in America and the United States some really spirit-filled Englishmen, and spirit-filled Africans, and spirit-filled people from other countries to come in and disciple us in the States. We could use such a few people, and we would be the nationals.

They'd have to learn to relate to the nationals, and when I go to England, I've got to learn to relate to the natives. I use that as a joke to point out one term that we should actually never use in referring to people in Africa and the third world. Natives, that is out, and yet I still hear people using it.

Our great work is native evangelism. That word is just a loaded term. In many areas of the world, they think of a native, a guy's just climbed out a tree with a loin cloth around him, and a banana, and he's illiterate, and we come to Cambridge University, and we're going to teach him how to read.

There is still a wrong image in many people's minds stamped there from childhood, a wrong image of what some people call the third world, a wrong image of Africa, a wrong image of India, a wrong image, and we can, with that wrong image, tend to think that we are going there to sort of teach the natives. We're going to teach them how to do, which means, of course, we already know. Whenever you say you're going to teach, it means you know.

And I think this is a great hindrance to really discipling men. The hindrance is that in that area, we're not really living the life. Get it? There's pride there.

There's a wrong attitude. See, pride, wrong attitude, superiority. We've had these things in OM.

I can't tell you the troubles to this day we are suffering in this movement because some people, the last thing to go in their life is their superiority feeling or their pride. And people feel it. That's why, to me, discipling men is not how much you've got in your head and whether you've memorized some little system and whether you can teach outwardly, but it's are you living this life? Has God broken your pride? And are you willing to allow it to continue to be broken? And I think of a terrific job that people, like Brother Ray Eicher has done out in India, and he's not here yet, so I can say this.

Ray Eicher isn't sort of the phenomenal great orator and dynamic, turn a place upside down. He had terrific struggles in his early days in OM. And one time I let him down something fierce as I was his leader, and he had great struggles in many, many areas, but he just battled on and he's battled on.

And one thing we know about Ray and Alfie, whatever gifts they have or don't have, these two brothers are living the life and they are discipling men. They are discipling men. And that doesn't mean perfection.

Listen, get this straight. Part of the living the life is repenting. When you're, the brother you're trying to disciple, when he sees you repenting, when he sees you crawling back to the cross, grabbing the dust,

then he knows you're living the life.

It's not, it's, it's, I remember brother Jonathan finally one day sharing with me, you know, one of the reasons he stayed with me all these years. It wasn't that I was living the life in this sense, you know, but the thing that hit McCloskey in this, what he told me is that so many times he's had the funny or strange or whatever privilege of seeing George Verwer crushed and broken by God, acknowledging his sins and his mistakes, his fat mouth and his irritability. I get to, I'm one of these kind that in myself can get upset quicker than a cockroach on a Bunsen burner.

And if God didn't just keep breaking me and humbling me, I couldn't lead anybody. I couldn't lead my family. My kids have seen me do the most carnal things, but they have seen that part of living the Christian life is to repent.

It's to go back to somebody and say, look, I was all wrong in that. Would you please forgive me? And that speaks more to them than any sermon. And especially as we go out to disciple people in their own country, cross-cultural discipling of others is as sticky as trying to walk across an electric organ with mountain climbing boots without making any noise.

It's almost impossible. Do you know how many troubles we have in O.M. just through language alone? Those of us who speak English as our first language, we have no idea of the struggle others sometimes have. Whether what we are saying is sarcasm in the humor, hyperbole, exaggeration, word game playing.

I mean, I'm, it'll take you one year to get used to listening to me and some of the things I say. Because I have, I play word games and in English we have a way of saying something just the opposite of what we really mean. Well, this is ridiculous.

They don't know that. You're saying the opposite of what you mean? And we can so hurt people. And you know, I just thank God that at, I guess age 20, I was in a cross-cultural situation, offending people.

I just thank God I learned how gifted I was. Terrific gift I had in offending people. Because even now with 20 years head start on some of you, you know, I'm still not scoring what I should be.

And so some of you who've got started late. For instance, see, when we go into some of these countries, people already are feeling inferior. They're already feeling inferior.

Not because you feel superior. In fact, you may also feel inferior. You don't realize it.

Therefore, as we move, we must move with great tenderness. And I want to give you two very key words if you're going to disciple and encourage nationals or people in any cross-cultural situation. Tenderness, kindness.

Have you ever read those words in your New Testament? Tenderness, kindness, tenderness, kindness. Especially those of us from Anglo-Saxon background. We tend to be job-oriented rather than people-oriented.

We got to get the job done. And we walk on people in the process. We got to get the job done.

But in most of these countries, the people are more people-oriented. The main thing is not the job. The main thing is to maintain our relationship in the midst of doing the job.

Now, that's hard. It's impossible. But that's the challenge that God has given us.

In OM, we have been very, very slow to kick people out. Our way has been a way of forgiveness. Some of our best leaders today, when they were in their training stage, and they still are in training, they made many mistakes and sin.

Not just mistakes, sin. Plain, ordinary sin. And yet we felt they should be forgiven.

Going into our question session, but I'll just keep talking as they come in. We felt they should be forgiven, and they should be loved. And you're just never going to disciple people, encourage people, unless you've got that mentality.

Ready to forgive. Ready to start again. Patience.

That's why one of the greatest things you can do, I've learned this, and I still make a mistake. When you're upset, whatever you do, don't open your mouth. Wiggle your toes, wiggle your ears, write letters, go out and buy a steak, but don't open your mouth.

Very seldom, when we are upset, someone has upset us, can we say anything that really is edifying. And you can undo in one minute of bad temper and what someone else has tried to build up in five years. You can do it.

And that's why we go back to this basic foundation that if you want to disciple people and encourage younger leaders, then live the life. Make that your aim. Make that your strategy.

You want a strategy, there it is. You live like Jesus. There it is.

You say, that's too much, I'd rather get a different strategy. And that's the challenge. And that's why I find myself still very highly motivated even 22 years later because I've got so long to, so far to go, so far to go.

But you wouldn't expect that the likes of most of us are going to become totally Christ-like in two decades. It's a life challenge. Keep looking for men that can influence you and disciple you and encourage you.

Their books, their tapes, their lives. And in the process, don't keep it to yourself, but give it to others. Spending time with them and loving them out of a pure heart, regardless of what comes back.

In fact, one of the greatest blessings in my life has been to keep loving people who found it impossible to love me. Just keep loving them. Don't love people just for what you can get back.

It's a wonderful thing when someone returns love to you, isn't it? That's a wonderful thing. But Christian love is, you're willing to give it and give it and give it if all you get is rejection. That doesn't mean you don't use your mind in terms of not wanting to be overbearing with that person.

With some people now, the only way I can keep communicating love is I just keep praying. I know that for me to pick up the phone is not gonna help the situation. It's just degenerated too far and through miscommunications and problems and changes of doctrine.

People who no longer believe the Bible. I went and visited a schoolmate who I really had a love for in the Lord. After I visited the person, the person's away from God, gone into wild philosophy.

I couldn't even barely talk. I did have some degree of communication. And I just felt for a while, the only thing I can do is just to pray.

There's not much more I can do. The Holy Spirit has got to work in that person. So I just pray.

Maybe phone once in a while, just say hello. And I've had so much result from that. People after years writing back.

People who I had heard were really avidly anti-OM, anti-George Phil, or some people get the two mixed up. And I just kept praying. Phone once in a while, drop a letter once a year, a little postcard.

And boy, I tell you, over the years, it can wear it out, even the toughest people. And you may find them back on your team, back with Jesus. Don't give up on people.

Perhaps I can end with that. Don't give up on people. I'm still following up on people I went to first grade with.

First grade. Because I believe, even back then, before I was converted, that some of these people that I went to school with, there was some purpose in that. Nothing God allows is without purpose.

And some of those people were in my class. By the way, to explain it, people I went to first grade with, most of them I stayed with until seventh grade. So that's seven years of my life I related to those people.

Maybe as a child. But is our childhood insignificant? Is that pre-human? And I believe, as we just give ourselves to people, and this will revolutionize your letter writing. You know why you don't write letters? You don't love people.

I won't listen to any excuses. You're gonna be, I'm not disciplined. No, that's part of it.

Of course, that's part of it. You can use that escape for everything. But the basis of our lack of letter writing communication, we don't love people enough.

When we love them enough, we'll write them, we'll pray for them, we'll communicate to them. Can't do it for everybody. We'll sacrifice time.

We'll lay aside things we like. We'll say, today, I'm not gonna eat any food. I'm behind in my letter writing.

I'm just gonna feast and write four love letters today for Jesus, instead of having, we heard, they're having steak today. But I'm just gonna write these four love letters for Jesus and forsake that steak. You won't have too much of that conflict around here.

But it's exciting. It's exciting. All right, let's have questions.

I don't know all that was said in the other session. You wanna have them stand up? Yeah, I think I'll say that now, that this is just half of the question session. The first question session is gonna be with me.

The second half tomorrow, when I'll be on the ship, and we've seen God just put this trip to this ship together like a jigsaw puzzle. Last night, it was impossible to get reservations. We met here after the meeting.

Everything's closed. God just brought it to my mind. Phone New York.

They're still awake in New York. The computers are still plugged in. We phoned Paul Troper, and he's got almost all the reservations for the two of us to get to Venice and back tomorrow.

So I can be here the night of prayer and Captain Graham Scott has to be back in London in church on Sunday morning. Then this morning, we found out we didn't have reservations on the last part of the trip because it involves four different flights. And we've just got a phone call back that though the plane was full, somebody's dropped out.

We've got into that plane. It's a very difficult time of the year to get to places like Venice. It is a slight tourist area.

So the two engineers with Frank Dietz have already left by car for Venice and Captain Graham Scott who's on the board of the first ship and helped pioneer the first ship. He's a captain and first mate for 14 years. I myself will be flying down to join them.

We leave at 7.50 in the morning and arrive back here 8.50 tomorrow night. So tomorrow night, there'll be the first speaker and I wanted to ask Don Hemond to make sure he has that message ready and I haven't been able to find him. So now he knows.

But then you'll have a time of prayer. See, so you won't have a whole message. You'll have a time of prayer and then when I come back, you'll have your second message and continue on in prayer.

So tomorrow afternoon, you'll have the second half of this question session. It doesn't just have to be on what we're talking about this afternoon. This is your chance to really get at the leadership.

Find out things that are bothering you. We've had very good question sessions in the past. All kinds of hot questions.

We wanna, some questions you ask may not be things you're convinced about but you've heard these negative things and you see these problems in OM and you wanna know, well look, is there any answer? And what does OM feel about this? And as much as possible, I don't wanna just answer my own thoughts. I wanna answer what the Bible says and I wanna answer what we as OM leaders feel the Bible says in that situation. Though if you know anything about OM, you know that as leaders, we do not all believe the same thing in many areas.

There's a lot of things in OM that we leave up to you. You don't have to work that out yourself. We'll accept you either way.

We may not agree with you either way but we'll accept you either way. All right, who wants the first question? If you wanna write out a question, we'll ask someone to run around and pick up the papers. Yes, good and loud, it saves us repeating the question and not too fast.

I think there are quite a few leaders that do encourage Bible school but there are some who don't. There are others like myself who encourage it for some people and do not encourage it for others. But I think the proof is in what happens.

The fact that a large number of people have gone to Bible school as a result of their time in OM. Because though some people may mouth off certain things that they're concerned about in Bible schools and there are things. People know, for example, that quite a number of us have been to Bible school.

Most people know that I graduated from Moody Bible Institute. And so they figure there can be something in this. In fact, one of our biggest manpower sources are in Bible school now and will be with us next summer.

And a lot of our prayer groups are in Bible schools. In fact, at Moody Bible Institute, do we have any here from Moody from this year? Anybody at all? Most years, there's at least some people from Moody. I know the group is still going on there.

And I think there's some coming over on the plane. By the way, 15 more people arrived. 11 o'clock tomorrow morning.

Back from the States. But I think we have leaned, and this is in trying to present our burden of people being trained on team, being trained on the job, which obviously we're stronger convinced about. In the process of doing that, perhaps sometimes we have miscommunicated and given the wrong idea about Bible school.

I think we don't mean to do that, but I think sometimes it happens. Also, we react strongly against the idea, everybody must go to Bible school. Everybody must go to seminary.

This is what causes me to overreact and sometimes say things that perhaps could have been balanced out a little more. Yeah, everybody hear the question? How can somebody within OM, he wants to discover his gifts, his abilities, how he can best grow and develop. How does he go to find out the best team to be on for that situation? Of course, I think you've got to spend time with different leaders to see what their field is doing.

There is a terrific difference between one field and another within OM. Even one team to another. When you go into OM, you better get ready for two things.

You better get ready for what you had hoped for and what you expected by talking to the leader in advance, seeing what that field does, talking to people who have been on that field, and always be sure if you talk to somebody who's negative, you find somebody who's positive as well. Keep the balance. So as you go out into any training situation in OM, you will get some of what you expected.

You will get more of what you did not expect. For a number of reasons, and I think this is important, life is complicated. This is the thing that really amazes me in the 20th century, how incredibly complicated life can be.

You know, few people realize all the work done behind the scenes just to have a conference like this, it's no game. To bring people here from all over the world, literally all over the world, that doesn't happen automatically. All the time there's organization going on, letters, communication, miscommunication, telegrams that disappear, automobiles that break down.

And so things get complicated. Also when we're trying to have long-term goals and long-term strategy and people function together with short-term goals and short-term strategy, you try to put those two together. And then in that, you want to have a study program, you want to have lots of prayer, you want to have lots of fellowship, you want to get everything that Tozer can give you, everything that Gothard can give you, and everything that several other different people, and it just gets a little complicated.

Someone has said, probably myself, it's good to quote yourself, that we are trying to do too much at once. This is one of our weakest points. It is hard for me to resist helping people.

A lot of the extra things we do in OM is because we find it difficult not to help people. Like that phone call I was telling you about, in which I was desperately trying to help a man who's in a court case, who's been thrown out of his home, who's got problems seeming much greater than mine, and even though it has nothing to do with OM, I wanted to help him. And this gets us into a lot of interesting things.

So fellowship with leaders, as many as you can, with people coming back from the different fields, read the literature about the fields, find out what their program is, then find how good they are at sticking to the program, if you're going to choose that program, find out whether they stick that, or scrap it at the end of the first month, and then of course eventually you have to make a decision. Does that help at all? One thing that may help also is that, don't try to get the total training, leadership, Christian experience in one year. That helps as well.

That is linked with what I said during this past hour, that life and.

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