

Resourcing God's Work

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the importance of financial integrity and cheerful giving in resourcing God's work through the church.

Duration: 1:17:02

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 8:24, 2 Corinthians 9:6, 2 Corinthians 9:11-13

Topics: "God's Work"

Description

In this sermon transcript, the speaker discusses the importance of giving and financial stewardship. He emphasizes that those who give little will receive little, but those who give generously will reap a bountiful harvest. The speaker encourages individuals to give cheerfully and not to force others to give more than they desire. He also highlights the significance of having a vision for the work of God and the need for biblical fundraising.

Transcript

It's good to have this opportunity to share with you about resourcing the work of God. I share with you from a great sense of weakness and inadequacy. In fact, each day is a battle.

Each day there are the disappointments as well as the victories. That's something I'd appreciate your praying about. I'd like you to turn now in your Bibles to 2 Corinthians.

2 Corinthians chapter 11. These chapters especially talk about money. I thought I would take the old living letters.

When we first started STL, this was one of our first items. I remember when Ken Taylor took back the distribution of the living letters after a couple of years. It's about the same time that Keith Beckwith and John Watts, two founder people of O.N. Britain, were killed in a car crash.

The brother who was left carrying some of the responsibility here, I flew back and took that on for a while, recruiting then Jerry Davey and Peter Wells with their little history to run STL. But I remember them saying when they took the STL distribution, we're finished. STL is finished.

That's never a good thing to say to my type of temperament. But when we think of what the Lord has done through STL, even though this distribution was taken away from us. But I just found this very old copy of living letters.

And on the train as I was preparing, I didn't want to read this from my authorized version. I wanted to read it from the living Bible. So, 2 Corinthians chapter 11.

You may want to just listen. Of course, Ken Taylor, another one I just dropped on the phone, has revised the living Bible a bit. This is an old one, but it still says the same.

It's hard to know in the light of our time battle where to start reading, but I think we should start at verse 1, chapter 11. Try to concentrate on this, because I think the most beautiful thing about what we're doing in the area of money is that we're building it on the Scriptures, basing what we're doing on what we see in the Scriptures. And there's some things the Bible doesn't talk about, but it's good to get things that the Bible does talk about.

And it's amazing how many of God's people don't know this chapter in Corinthians, which is so basic about money. Would you, God, you could be patient with me as I keep on talking like a fool. Do bear with me and let me say what is on my heart.

I am jealous for you with deep concern of God himself. Jealous that your love should be for Christ alone, just as a pure maiden gives her love to one man only, the one who will be her husband. But I am frightened, fearing that in some way you will be led away from your pure and simple devotion to the Lord, as he was deceived by Satan in the Garden of Eden.

You seem so gullible. You believe whatever anyone tells you, even if he's preaching about another Jesus than the one we preach, or a different spirit than the Holy Spirit you receive, or shows you a different way to be saved. You swallow it all.

Yet I don't feel that these marvelous messengers from God, as they call themselves, are better than I am. If I am a poor speaker, at least I know what I am talking about, as I think you realize by now, for we have proved it again and again. Do I do wrong and cheapen myself and make you look down on me because I preach God's good news to you without charging you anything? Instead, I, this is in quotes, robbed other churches by taking what they sent me and using it up while I was with you so that I could serve you without cost.

That's powerful. And you don't see that always easily in this translation. And when that was gone, when I was getting hungry, I still didn't ask you for anything, for Christians from Macedonia brought me another gift.

I have never yet asked you for one cent. I never will. This was this one church.

Corinth. I promise this with every ounce of truth I have in me, and I will tell everyone in Greece about it. Communication.

Why? Because I don't love you? God knows I do. But I will do it to cut out the ground from under the feet of those who boast that they are doing God's work in just the same way we are. God never sent these men at all.

They are phonies who have fooled you into thinking they are Christ's apostles. Yet I am not surprised. Satan changes himself into an angel of light.

So it is no wonder his servants can do it, too, and seem like godly ministers. In the end, they will get every bit of punishment their wicked deeds deserve. Again I plead, don't think that I have lost my wits to talk like this.

But even if you do, listen to me anyway, a witless man, a fool, while I boast a little as they do. Such bragging isn't something that God commanded me to do, for I am acting like a brainless fool. Probably revise that for the British version.

Yet these other men keep telling you how wonderful they are. So here I go. You think you are so wise, yet you listen gladly to these fools.

You don't mind at all when they make you their slaves and take everything you have and take advantage of you and put on airs and slap you in the face. I am ashamed to say that I am not strong and daring like that. But whatever they can boast about, I'm talking like a fool again, I can boast about it, too.

They brag that they are Hebrews, do they? Well, so am I. They say they are Israelites, God-chosen people, so am I. They are relatives of Abraham. Well, I am, too. They say they serve Christ, but I have served him far more.

I have worked harder, been in jail oftener, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. Five times the Jews gave me their terrible 39 lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods.

Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I was in the water all night, and the whole next day.

I have traveled many weary miles and been often in great danger from flooded rivers and from robbers and from my own people. The Jews as well, as well as at the hands of the Gentiles. I have faced grave dangers from mobs in the cities and from death in the deserts and the stormy seas and from men who claim to be brothers in Christ, but are not.

I have lived with weariness and pain and sleepless nights. Often I have been hungry and thirsty and gone without food. Often I have shivered with cold without enough clothing to keep me warm.

Then beside all this, I have the constant worry of how the churches are getting along. Who makes a mistake? And I do not feel his sadness. Who falls without my longing to help him? Who is spiritually hurt without my fury rising against the one who hurts him? But if I must brag, I would rather brag about the things that show how weak I am.

God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is to be praised forever and ever, knows I tell the truth. For instance, in Damascus, the governor under King Aratus kept guards at the city gates to catch me. But I was let down in a basket from a hole in the city wall and so I got away.

What popularity! Go back to chapter 8. I really should have perhaps read chapter 8 first because that whole chapter is dealing also with this whole area of finance. For example, starting at verse 11. This is powerful.

Having started the ball rolling so enthusiastically, you should carry it through to completion just as gladly, giving whatever you can out of whatever you have. Let your enthusiastic idea at the start be equaled by your realistic action now. If you're really eager to give, then it isn't important how much you have to give.

God wants you to give what you have, not what you don't have or haven't. I don't mean either that those who receive your gifts should have an easy time at your expense. But you should divide.

You should divide with them. Right now, you have plenty and can help them. Then at some other time, they can share with you when you need it.

And so each will have as much as he needs. Do you remember that the scripture says about this? He that gathered much had nothing left over, and he that gathered little had enough. I am thankful to God that he has given Titus the same real concern for you that I have.

He is glad to follow my suggestion that he visit you again, but I think he would have come anyway, for he is very eager to see you. I am sending another well-known brother with him who is highly praised as a gospel preacher in all the churches. In fact, this man was elected by the churches to travel with me to Jerusalem to help distribute the gifts.

This will glorify the Lord and show our eagerness to help each other. By traveling together, we will guard each other from any suspicion, for we are anxious that no one should find fault with the way we are handling this large gift. He is talking about money.

God knows we are honest, but I want everyone else to know it too. If that doesn't encourage accountants and bookkeepers, then I don't know what other scripture to bring in that is specific from the other general ones. God knows we are honest, but I want everyone else to know it too.

This is why we have made this arrangement. I am sending you still another brother whom we know from experience to be an earnest Christian. He is especially interested as he looks forward to this trip because I have told him all about your eagerness to help.

If anyone asks who Titus is, say that he is my partner and my helper in helping you. And you can say that two other men are sent by the churches and that they are splendid examples of those who belong to the Lord. Please show your love to these men and do for them all that I have publicly boasted that you would.

Absolutely brilliant. If you go into chapter 9, and it would be great if you could read all these chapters on your own, you will find further encouragement about giving and about finance, especially picking up at verse 6. But remember this, that if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop.

But if he plants much, he will reap much. Everyone must make up his own mind as to how much he should give. Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to.

For cheerful givers are the ones God prizes. God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more so that there will not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over to give jointly to others. It is as the scripture says, you will be able to give much to the poor and your good deeds will honor you forever.

For God who gives seed to the farmer to plant and later on good crops to harvest and eat will give you more and more seed to plant so that you can give away more and more fruit from your harvest. Yes, God will give you much so that you can give away much. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will break out into thanksgiving and praise to God for your help.

So two good things happen as a result of your gifts. Those in need are helped and many overflow with thanks to God. Those who help will be glad not only because of your generous gifts to themselves and others, but they will praise God for this proof that you really do love the Lord.

And they will pray for you with deep fervor and feeling because of the wonderful grace of God within you. Thank God for his Son, his gift too wonderful for words. It's interesting that right after that we go into chapter 10 where we have this phenomenal exhortation verse 3 through 5 about spiritual warfare, about the weapons of a war, about casting down imaginations and every high thing exalted itself against the knowledge of God.

I don't know if you've heard any of the other material I've shared in the last few years on the subject of finance. Perhaps one of the most unusual messages that will stand up and shout at me at times is the one I gave at the field leaders about two years ago where I shared this burden that I have to see huge amounts of money released not necessarily through them for the work of God and for the poor, for the suffering. And I think as we look at the giving across the world by the church, humanitarian agencies and by the governments it really is quite phenomenal.

In fact, in some places they would say surely the bigger problem is finding the right administrators and the right people rather than the huge sums of money. Recently in New York City a man who was not a Christian released hundreds of millions hundreds of millions all for the poor. He wouldn't give anything to universities who are the biggest fundraisers in America the universities.

He wanted to give it all to the poor. I think they set it up so that it's mainly the interest which is a huge amount of money going out to the poor. It's a wonderful thing.

It's a tremendous motivating privilege to be involved in seeing finance released for the work of God. And that's why I count it a privilege to be able to share on this subject this morning. And I don't want us to just think in terms of Operation Mobilization.

Some of you probably in a few years will be in other fellowships. And we want to think in terms of the whole body of Christ. I've written down a number of words.

I don't have many notes. Just that bookmark full. And maybe you can just write some of these words so that you can have pegs to do some rethinking and some of your own thinking on this huge subject.

I've had the joy of reading hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of pages going through many, many cassette tapes and seminars and courses, mainly by tape. And of course talking to literally over the past years hundreds of people about these things and finding a very interesting subject. Because I am convinced that God's work done in God's way will always lack finance.

Now that may not ring to what you've heard out of ancient history, but that's okay. We're all learning. We're all growing.

And without defining what that means, it's not such a good statement any more than the statement I used to make, God's work done in God's way never lacks God's supply. That statement also, without defining what that means, can easily miscommunicate. So we're here not just to give you one or two clichés from whoever, but to try to see a little bit what this means in the world in which we live, the society in which we live.

Everyone, I think, who's listening to this knows that OM has made the most unusual policy changes, perhaps in the history of missions. For an organization of our size and our ethos to be going in one direction with such fervor and to shift directions, you can look through the missionary books, it doesn't easily happen, especially when the old long-in-the-tooth founder is still around. You usually have to wait till this old codger goes to glory and then you can really start to pull off the changes.

I have the advantage, the advantage over some of my predecessors in the work of God is that I can read their biographies. I can read not only about the good things they did, but the stupid things they did, the problems their mission agencies had, and therefore perhaps learn, though in some ways there's no way I would claim to be able to follow the example of so many great Christian leaders that have gone on ahead of me. I can only sort of attempt that, gasping for breath and wondering how the Lord is able to even use me at all.

So I've written down some key words. As we think about resourcing God's work, we sometimes use the word development, and there's nothing wrong with that, but it is a word that needs definition because those of us committed to the African famine and committed to relief, that whole side, the word development has a different meaning. It means out there in Africa we don't want to just give them a glass of water and a crust of bread.

We want to show them or help them grow more food, dig wells, and lay a foundation, develop their society so that they can press on for the years to come without the constant handouts and the rescue service. So the word development has different meanings in different situations, but certainly it is a word often used in Christian work and in the secular field as well for the whole area of getting a solid financial foundation. Different people will add different things and use different ways of explaining development.

In the age of a high degree of professionalism, even within the Church, there is often an effort always for one person to be able to state something different than someone else. Otherwise they'll just say he's reinventing the wheel or we've already heard that. And I'm sure you've noticed that in missions as well as development, and especially out of the United States, constant change of words and vocabulary and terminology.

And for the person who doesn't always have as much time to read all the latest mythological journals and all the latest material, his head can be spinning wondering what people are actually talking about. But they're generally talking about getting money, whatever terms they may be using. Getting money.

Not only for God's work, let's be honest, these people have to get money so that they can have a job. When a man goes out in fundraising in the United States, often if he doesn't produce, he's out of a job. It's as simple as that.

Fundraising in the traditional American approach, and the Americans have set the pace, the British have been in it for just as long, can be a very ruthless and difficult and almost cutthroat type of business. And this is why, this is one of the reasons that in O.M. all these years we've been so hesitant even to use these words because we're not wanting to get into that. Anything that's manipulative or cutthroat or just smacks of the world's way of going about things.

The moment we say that, we realize there are many things that the world does that we can learn from. And that the world, running around reading Dale Carnegie's How to Win Friends and Influence People, often is one up on the church on how they go about things. And often they do things decently and in order.

And often businesses are marked by a high level of integrity and discipline. And I just feel I learn so much from various companies, all kinds of magazines. I don't think anyone can imagine the magazines that I'm reading.

I now also from some years have listened to what's called Fast Track. Fast Track is a secular tape book summary presentation. In other words, someone will take a whole book, the latest book on management, and summarize it and interview the author over that tape.

You can listen to it in your car. I just recently listened to a tape, probably the best tape I've ever listened to of Fast Track, sitting on my desk marked top priority. How can I get every leader in OM to listen to that tape? It's about communication.

It's about body language. It's about how easily we turn people off. I just was stunned as I listened to that message and realized the long number of people probably through my life that I have turned off, that I have hurt, and that I have miscommunicated to.

I can assure you I'm not just saying these things. I am committed to excellency in my life, wherever it leads me. If it leads me out of OM, then I'm going out of OM, but I'm committed to excellency because I believe the Lord Jesus Christ teaches that in the New Testament.

Now, without grace, to me it's a dead end street. I'm more committed to grace than I am to excellency, but I don't think we should separate the two. In fact, to me, in the Christian life, excellency is 1 Corinthians 13.

And that tape that I just listened to by one of the top women communicators in the world is 1 Corinthians 13 in the marketplace. 1 Corinthians 13 in the marketplace. Do you know that sometimes in OM people are behaving in ways in terms of lack of love and lack of grace that they don't allow in secular companies? Because I tell you, the secular companies, after all the various theories, are saying many times the way ahead is love, it's grace, it's encouraging people, it's the boss getting out of his little ivory office up there and getting down with the people.

Surely, some of you men come from the commercial world. You've seen the shift in management concepts. Now, we know every management concept that goes up.

Someone throws an opposite concept. You can't just read one book. And, of course, ultimately it's sometimes difficult to decide your style.

So it's good to some degree to accept yourself and work with your own style. One of the worst books I heard reviewed was called The Confessions of an SOB, a word we're not allowed to use as Christians. And I thought this was really going to be terrible.

But, in fact, the guy really wasn't as much of an SOB as he pretended. I think he used that as the cover to sell the book. But he was a wise old owl in some ways.

He was a hard-line manager. And it is amazing, amazing how tough people get in the world in order to get where they want to go. But it is amazing among Christians how wimpish and how weak we are.

And so sometimes we never do get to where we want to go. Somewhere there must be a middle road there, that there can be grace and love and balance. And yet there's got to be firmness.

Talking to accountants to say that is ridiculous because you know no matter how much love, how much grace, and how many kind words there are, when you take the books into the auditor, it's to a large degree a black-and-white situation. Now, in certain countries you can have an envelope under the table. But we're not into that.

And we want to make that clear for any of you new recruits that are here at this meeting. There's a new book that's just come out. I don't think I'll read it.

It's 500 pages called Den of Thieves and it's about the guys that milked Wall Street for all those hundreds of millions. Just any of you get inspired in that direction you realize that a number of them are in jail. And also in case you think that where there is all grace, we just want you to know that it is possible to go from a Christian organization directly to court and into jail.

We're in a real world. We're in a real world and in this real world Christian organizations have been called up short. People have gone to court.

Christian leaders have been found guilty. Accountants have been arrested. Jimmy Baker's had 40 years now reduced to 18 years.

And I'll tell you people like you committed to finance have one of the greatest responsibilities in this world. It's great to have evangelists giving out tracts in the streets of Bombay. I've given out a few millions myself literally over all the years.

But if we don't have the spirit-filled bean counters, forgive the expression, spirit-filled accountants, spirit-filled people handling finance, the devil can have a field day. And the same is true when we go into the whole area of resourcing the work. Owen's new position is a higher risk position than our previous position.

And we will be getting letters back. I just talked to an angry lady on the phone three days ago. I have my own market research.

She's been angry at one of our offices, not in this country. For months and months she had the letter written. I mean angry.

She's a woman that's given huge amounts of money in the old days. And she got one of these more modern update type OM letters. And she's very angry about it.

She says, I don't need these people to tell me how to give. The Holy Spirit directs my giving. That's almost an exact quote.

She's also been on OM for a while. They're older people. And I had the joy of listening to that.

And we know with the shift of policy and with some of the experimentation we get into, we have to be willing for those kind of conversations. As we got to the end of the conversation, I said, I used her name because we're on first name terms, I know that you are a mature Christian. I was saying this by faith because I believe she is.

And I know that you therefore know how to let love and grace overcome this sin, this, I don't think I said sin, this mistake, whatever. And she dropped down about four decibels and put her husband on the phone. She was a very balanced, laid back, calm type of character and we had a wonderful conversation.

Let's pray that that woman will start giving again. And let's realize, of course, as we shift gears into our new policy, it's going to take a lot of wisdom. At the same time, I believe the vast majority of Christians who love Jesus are with us in this move.

I have no question about that. And we cannot base our thinking especially on a few people, a smaller number of people who we respect, they have a different viewpoint and who haven't been through all the discussions, all the negotiations we've been through and prayer, several years of it, and listening to the whole body of Christ. Remember the tape I sent out, Financial Crisis, perhaps the most historic tape in O.M.'s work.

All the feedback from hundreds of leaders from all different societies all over the world, 95% of whom urged us to move forward in these changes. But we make a great mistake if we as leaders, and most of you here are leaders, if we think the job is over. We still have to persuade some of our own people as to why we've gone in this direction.

We have to persuade some of our prayer partners. Our method is persuasion. We have to persuade them why we have gone this way.

What it really means, how you explain this change to people determines often their reaction. You can explain it in a way, especially if you're against it yourself, that they will get upset. Or you can explain it in a way where even sometimes the most hard-line person will say, you know, for O.M., in the light of your situation, surely what you've done is the right thing.

We don't even have to lose these more hard-line people who may not be initially happy about these changes. And I hope that each one of you who's here is persuaded in your heart somehow. It doesn't mean there isn't any compromise.

It doesn't mean there isn't any giving in to consensus. But I hope that you are persuaded that we have gone the right way. Someone protested the move at the last general council.

Saying there weren't enough people there. And the wording changed last minute. And I think I need to say a word about that.

Number one, I believe we had a strong representative body of the whole of O.M. there. We lacked in a couple of areas. But we had talked to those people on the phone.

Joseph D'Souza, whose Indians lack, made it very, very clear. He's leading the way in this, where India stands. India's already ahead of us.

So there's no question about that. Latin America, what was poorly represented, also is clearly in this camp. I don't know any opposition to this coming from Two Thirds World countries.

The opposition mainly comes from the Anglo-Saxon community, and it is relatively small. And I think for a movement stretched out across the world, as O.M. is, that to get 150, 160 people together in that kind of meeting was awesome, and we had good representation because we do operate on the basis of consensus, and surely the worldwide consensus is in this direction. Some wording did change last minute.

Peter Mayden and I both feel that the small groups thing didn't work as good as would be expected because I think some who went into the small group felt they would have sort of come up with a final

answer on these different policies. That was never the goal of the small group. It was part of the consensus.

It was to give a wider group of people the opportunity for input, but the final discussion had to be in the general council meeting itself and had to primarily focus on the wording that came out of the field leaders meetings. But somehow, and we didn't have Peter there, so I think we need to be a little bit, what's the word, flexible. Somehow we didn't, that wording got left behind, not just in this policy, but a couple of policies and we looked at new wording.

Now on some issues, the wording was incredibly important, but on this financial issue, which we've been talking about for several years, the wording wasn't so important. We all, most everyone knew what we were voting for. The agreement that OM accepted fundraising, believed in biblical fundraising, and we could, as God needed, not necessarily, we could ask for money and we will continue to fine tune that, probably even at the next field leaders meeting.

So I am excited. We still haven't passed the four month mark, so I'm trying to keep my brakes on and operate under the old policy, which by the way is a new policy, only three or four years old. To get the real old, old policy, you've got to go back a long way.

This is why language is such a problem, isn't it? You're talking to a new recruit about these things, his head just spins. What are you talking about? What is the old policy? Is that three years ago? Is that pre-taking offerings? Or when, what is the old policy? You've got to go six, seven years back. Let me share these words that will help me stay on course.

The first word I've written down is the word time. When we think of resources, and I'm going to be very brief on this point, but it's very important, I don't think we should just think of money. We must think about people, about time.

We could also think of course about all kinds of things that people give us. One of the most expensive cellular phones you could ever get, given to me free as a gift, never see a phone bill, all the phone bills paid, that's a resource. But that resource is linked with a person.

A person that I become very, very linked with in heart, in a very realistic way, which is totally beyond money. The person actually doesn't have that much money. I'm amazed that he was able to do that, and he's probably a person, he's a person who probably has huge amounts of money actually due to the bank, because as a farmer, and it's all great to have this lovely teaching about not borrowing money, most farmers could never function if they couldn't borrow money.

And if you're involved with farmers as I am, you know for most farmers today, it's tough going, even in a place like the States. I mean it is awesome. I was with a prayer partner who wrote out a check for 500 from a huge ranch, more land than I've ever been on, it would be equal from here almost down to the other side of Hayward's Heath.

His land, worth very little, of course he could sell it, and he would have enough money. He's been in the family for decades and more than a century. The thought of selling it doesn't really fit into their situation, and they are just struggling day by day.

They have no, as Americans, health insurance. I was talking to the lady about health insurance, she's 70 years of age, they have no health insurance. She proceeded to write out a check for \$500 for operation.

Immobilization, that was a ranch rather than a farm. So when we talk about resources, we're talking about people, we're talking about time, and of course we're also talking about money, and we're talking about other things that money can buy or that people can give to us. Just looking back over all these years of OM history, we certainly have a lot to thank God for.

The second word is prayer. The third word is faith. I believe that by faith and prayer we can see resources released for the work of OM and for the whole world, and this is why I don't believe the really main policy of OM, the doctrine of OM, has changed.

One of the first things I did when God began to move into high school was to talk to a businessman in a parking lot and more or less ask if he could get some money to buy Gospels of John for the high school. How in the world was this dear close friend going to figure out that I, just converted, wanted money for a thousand Gospels of John to distribute in the high school if I didn't talk to him about it? And I think we need to understand from the earliest days, the earliest days, even as we after that moved into a more careful policy and didn't talk about money so much, that we have always in OM been in fundraising. We have always been in fundraising.

It's a terrific relief for me now to be able to confess that because discerning people, discerning people accused me of that years ago, and I think on a couple of occasions I actually got angry. Maybe even said, if you have it on tape, please get it because it could be of value. I am not a fundraiser.

Something along that line. I thank God that as far back as 1971, and that's on tape and got published in a book, I began to speak. I hope it was before that that I spoke in a more balanced way.

Certainly in 1971, a lot of us in Indonesia, I took a quantum leap in regard to balance about money and terminology and rhetoric changed after that. It may have changed before that. But the way ahead is still prayer and it's faith.

And we're going to have to battle just as you accountants and financial people have to battle to get people to give their reports, to get people to do things right. It's an endless job, isn't it? And you get tired of it at times. Well, do you think I ever get tired of getting OM people to go to prayer meetings? I got tired of it two decades ago.

But that's leadership, encouraging people, setting the example, giving reasons. George Miley's tremendous leaflet, why we have extended times of prayer. This is not something that the average Christian has thought that much about, even the average person when they join OM.

And remember, people are joining OM now with very little orientation before they come as to actually what the whole thing is about. The biggest orientation in OM is the love year of Congress. They get things before that, praise God, varies from country to country.

But the love year of Congress, I tell you, is a cold turkey baptism of what the movement is all about. The long days, the nights of prayer, all kinds of people. If you don't have a legitimate love and interest in people, I don't think you should get into this kind of ministry.

Doesn't mean God can't use you. But I don't think you should get into this kind of ministry which is high touch in a movement like OM, if you don't have a legitimate interest in people. Now there are some people who have a legitimate interest in people before they were converted.

I was in that camp. If you study my life before my conversion, I was a people-centered person. That doesn't mean I didn't have some people I didn't like.

It doesn't mean I didn't get on with everybody. But I was a people person. It doesn't mean there weren't other confictions in that.

After my conversion, those things continued to collide. The pragmatism, the desire to get the job done, to be traced back, not just to the Bible, but to my father, my family, and the desire to love people. I have a bigger bark than a bite.

And it's interesting, even the dream I had last night. I'm not much on talking about dreams, but I had to have an incredibly unusual dream last night. I went to bed I guess about 9.30, woke up at 1, worked for 3 or 4 hours, and went back to sleep at about 4. I dreamt of my closest friend from when I was 9. His name was Patrick.

Patrick O'Reilly. And we had a bonding as two friends. He was Catholic.

His mother was a swear-rock intruder, Irish. We were so close. But after my conversion, going to college, as you've had many childhood friendships, it's drifted away.

Last night, my dream, I was back in his house. His house now. His mother's house now, which probably wouldn't be accurate.

She might even be gone. But it would be in the 90s. And I'm talking about way back then.

And we were opening these books with things from our childhood. And the writing was there. The pictures were there.

In a dream. Absolutely accurate. You know, within degree, of course, in a dream you can't.

And suddenly I woke up. It was a phone call. Can you imagine a guy call me at 6.30 from the United States to see if I wanted to buy a bus in Columbus, Ohio.

His friend, who was just with me on this trip, told me this was the best time to call. When you're jet-lagged coming from America, you call at night, not in the morning. Anyway, I went back to sleep.

And I think maybe even continued the dream. Why am I mentioning this? Because we are what we are not just because we were saved. Not just because we're reading the Bible.

But because also of our background. And sometimes we need to be a little bit more gentle with ourselves when we see our weaknesses. And you're going to see your weaknesses if you go into this.

You're going to have people reject you. You're going to have people turn you down. You're going to have people decide not to give to O.M. on the basis of your visit.

That can be encouraging. And so therefore the person who goes into this people ministry needs to know himself. He needs to have an acceptance of his own weaknesses.

He needs to understand a bit why he is in a certain reacts in a certain way to certain situations. And I don't want people to think because at times I see success in this. And this is the way it was under the old teaching.

This was the greatest danger of the old teaching. We always thought it's a man of God and his prayer and his faith and the things that used to be said the positive things the negative things plenty of them too but you don't always hear them. You have to listen to some of the positive things not so much.

But when you're introduced a combination of George Muller and Hudson Taylor nice intro, huh? How do you preach after that one? If you're my kind of needy unlike George Muller Hudson Taylor Templeman. First of all both those people were British. And if anything British people have learned over the years despite their efforts to try is that I'm not British.

I'll never be fully accepted as British no matter how hard I try even if I get a British passport. Maybe by some of you tender loving people you know but I can tell you on the other side of the fence I'm an American. Many things will never open up to me in this country because I am an American.

You have to understand that. And that's why most of you being British of course you got tremendous possibilities because this is your country. No one's going to swear you on the train.

I won't repeat the swear word and tell you to go back to the United States. They might just tell you to go to H-E-L-L and true tradition but unfortunately you're not going to go there. People.

You got to believe the best, right? We've got to be concerned for people because we love people. Christ has commanded for us to love people. The Holy Spirit and this is the radical thing that does happen at conversion.

Now we have the potential to be consistent. We have the potential to love people that initially we may not like or even want to be bothered with and I believe it gives us the foundation stone for this kind of ministry. Many of the people that we love and we encourage and we show them a video or give them a book and bring them to an O-M conference they're never going to give any money.

They may give some money to somebody else. We have to be able to say, Lord, at the end of the day whether they give or not is your business. Raising finance or seeking money for the work of God in a relaxed way in which again and again we put it back upon God is the best way to go ahead.

You sleep better. You feel better. You don't get into feelings of guilt and failure and to me it's what the New Testament teaches.

The next word is the word vision. If we're going to do this if we're going to see the money for the work of God we've got to have a vision. And that doesn't exist as much in O-M as we perhaps would like to think.

O-M is everything today. There's all kinds of different ideas but people who have a real vision not for the money but what the money can do. A vision to get more books to get more tracks to help more nationals to have more films more workers.

I mean I admit I have too many visions many of them I don't even mention because I've got all these other brothers around the world who are visionaries submitting to me the average of one major vision a week. I mean what's happening right now in Central Asia I mean it's awesome. It's awesome.

You know we have to come here we get criticized for it and discuss what the Holy Spirit is already doing. We throw out that little cliché oh it's easier to ask forgiveness ask for forgiveness than it is to get permission. Be careful throwing that around because it's not exactly the truth.

We do believe the Holy Spirit leads and guides. We do believe in giving a lot of freedom autonomy to the existing fields to get on with the job. We know that Bert Thiel has incorporated a chunk of Central Asia into the Turkish field.

We're trying to monitor and watch it. We recently had a summit meeting right here. I understand it went very well.

But when you're over in the States you meet someone who's got information about OM's work in Central Asia that you don't yet have. You just learn to roll with that. I'm in I'm at a main huge church in Des Moines last minute.

David Levin who I know is interested in Central Asia used to be over in Peshawar. I thought I was for a while I thought maybe he was leaving OM but here I am in a church where I've been involved for 15 years and I discovered David and Pam are now official missionaries from this church. And they're paraded up in front of the whole congregation before I preach to be commended by the grace of God and sent forth to Central Asia.

Praise God. What about Chile? We decided that we could not go ahead with this training school in Chile. We weren't going to put any money into it.

Very little very firm decision. Peter Maiden usually sits over there I stand by the piano get out the door quick and very firm and he made it clear in a memo to Frank Dietz but this huge property has just been given to us. How do you handle that one?

No doubt we can send Mike Light down but it does seem that the sooner we can ratify that Chile maybe this happened in the last general council when I went out to the toilet the sooner we can ratify that Chile is a full OM field in OM the more sensible I think it perhaps will be and I don't think it's necessarily wrong because we have had a very good set of breaks on Chile for many many years but it may be the time and that will be discussed in this room that we sort of put our mark of acceptance on what the Holy Spirit seems to be doing in Chile at the same time we may be quite firm as to how far this can go because up to now there has not been a single full-time worker of OM in Chile Peter has been very strong on that this is being done by volunteers interesting I praise God that there

is so much vision in OM I'm glad that most of the pains we have in OM are growing pains I am not even though I'm getting older and I'm a grandfather not wanting too many shrinking pains at this time my mother used to tell me before she went to be with Jesus she felt she was shrinking I don't know if you've seen the film The Incredible Shrinking Man or Woman but a lot of Christian organizations and a lot of churches today are suffering from shrinking pains they're getting smaller they're having to fire people they're having to merge or to be swallowed up a lot of terminology being thrown around in there so I'm sort of happy that a lot of our pains in OM are growing pains doesn't mean we're excusing ourselves but I tell you we are involved in something that is hot and these young Brazilians

and Koreans and Papua New Guineans and Italians and French all these people we're linked with they have a vision but we now need a vision of how we're going to get the money for all these visions that's why we're here in this little session it is actually easier in many ways to get an idea and a vision only one out of ten great ideas and visions in the world ever happen including Christian world that's why I don't like always just talking about the success stories I'm for failure testimonies if you guys have some good failure testimonies how about putting them in print too many success testimonies we need some failure

testimonies because that ministers to people and you and I know from my own feeble ministry I can tell great stories about OM and this and that but what really hits the

audience is when I start sharing my failures and my struggles and I tell you you can almost see people coming into revival because so many of God's people they feel beaten down they feel they're not making it and the great success stories don't always radically change their lives and a message at the general council I think two years ago I shared the little visions and I'm asking you to go home after this week you might by the way go into a pretty heavy storm when you do go home if you're headed north you hardly know it right now with the sunshine out I'm asking you to dream dreams to have visions of how how we can see more money released for the work of God I've got lots of ideas I'm practicing I'm learning it's exciting but I know that you also have something to contribute to this some

of the ideas we get a hold of for finding money will be a little bit ridiculous we're going to have to be ready to be shot down we've got people ready to drive bikes to China to raise money I'm not saying we shouldn't do that but that is going to take a lot of time from other ministries vision and the little visions and when you have a vision for this then it's exciting it's not drudgery it's not oh one more person to phone one more person to write top priority for me this afternoon is thank you letters that's number one Vera gets letters from me some of them say Vera see me others say Vera see me today that means before the sun goes down she's got to get every other week I tell her to get more aggressive she doesn't actually she's got to mail me because after I give these things to her I

get in a different mood I don't want to ever see these things again at least for the rest of the day I've got other things I'm doing and Vera that's past so she has to get me this afternoon and the top priority this afternoon are thank you letters to gifts that are pouring in some of them in connection with this house project I'm involved in and we need to motivate our people and encourage our people who are in the thank you letter department that's not small business that's the heart the money coming in being prayed over entered in the computer a thank you letter going a writing closure sent to the right person so the little visions of how we can improve on every level right down to who is opening the post do you think opening the post is some small time thing in the United States you're

not even allowed to open the post without two people other countries may have something similar little visions on how we can see the finance come in unlimited scope but not the time to go into it in detail now we might have a little time for questions and answers the next word is integrity integrity reading about that in the old testament we read about it in the new I think if I had to say and give one word in the area of morals that means more to me than any other word I would say integrity it means a lot to me when I come in to the customs yesterday to go into the red zone and tell them exactly what I had and I tell you I had a lot I had all these jackets and they're twenty pounds a piece they're worth you got VAT you got duty I try to negotiate with them the ones that are going to go

out of the country I told them 75% of these that are going out of the country are actually going to go out on people's VAT so you can't prove that so he can hit you with VAT and he was just so great British customs I tell you I can't speak higher of the group of British customs they always negotiate with me they always give me a discount there's no bribes of course and I told them what number are going to stay in the country pay duty and VAT on those and what are going out maybe seems like a silly story we know the person who aims for a high level of integrity will fail I failed yesterday because I'm not as organized as I should be and I forgot about all this film all this stuff I was carrying for David Conkle that I forgot to tell the customs about well one of the reasons I'm on the

black list of India is because though I'm committed to integrity as a human being I make mistakes and I made mistakes in India 25 years ago I've written here integrity that will produce credibility the strongest thing we have going for us in OM in many ways is that people believe in us they believe in this work I mean it's awesome really and we don't want to presume on that there are a lot of people out there now an increasing number because OM is big they don't believe in us so much they have stopped giving it's not a lot but I can tell you learn a lot from the people who stopped giving one of the persons very strong in favor of our old policy seems to have stopped giving that has proven to me that the new policy and the changes we made are correct why has he stopped his giving he

stopped his giving on the basis of new information new information that we have changed our policy and on the basis of that new information he doesn't want to give to us anymore and his giving previously was based on information he found out about our policy he knew that we didn't ask for money generally he knew that we were in this particular camp he liked that camp that was his camp and so he blessed us by giving because we were in the same camp but it's all information it's not just a matter of him praying and the Holy Spirit zapping him to give it's based on information and I can tell you for everyone that we may have lost I believe we've gained 50 in the past 5 or 6 years or at least 20 the giving to O.M. in the past 5 years is awesome people say well why do we still have such

financial pressure do we realize the jump that this movement has made in this decade do we realize how many people suddenly have families we basically moved from a group that would be classified as fanatic the way I was living in Tweedy Road in 2 rooms with 3 kids and many other people under my pressure and the Lord's pressure I hope we moved from a simple lifestyle which in some cases was extreme and ugly and hurtful other cases not only history will tell we moved into a modern lifestyle which is in line with basic survival in line with esteeming the family in line with so much so many things which are all basically good the negatives thrown in that leap is huge do you know how much money it now takes just for survival in O.M. a huge chunk of our money back in the 60's would go for

ministry um literature ship tools supporting nationals that has decreased and a huge amount of money now for all these families just to live and there's nothing wrong with that and all the offices and all the back up you need for families and for movement that has come of age that is mature that is doing things better than we often did in the 60's and of course the price tag has been huge but we paid it by God's grace at the end of every year we basically have a movement that's been in the black it's a miracle now there's been a lot of pain in the process and I'm not defending things that were done wrong I'm not defending judgmentalism which crept in but I am saying that God has led us in these past 5-6 years to make this change that can be more communication I believe a more biblical and

beautiful and sensible way of going ahead especially in the light of the complexity of OM the internationalization of OM and the fact that we want the two thirds world people to be able to come into the movement on basically equal status with no second class citizenship talk about idealism do we understand the complexity of being idealistic we are an idealistic movement I use idealistic in a positive sense idealistic I use idealism negatively I'm defining my term idealism to me is like a neurosis and it becomes destructive and church after church right now is being divided and destroyed by idealism and all these things that are good we are reading all these different books mythological books and spiritual books and miracle books and we want all this to happen in our church because we have

seen it happen over there everybody is looking at willow creek the willow creek thing is dividing churches now all over the united states even though the pastor told them not to do that the disciples go further

because they want the willow creek to become their church but willow creek started from nothing with some young fighters a unique group of guys linked together from nothing they want to take this to an old church with a 100 years roots and make all these changes in one or two years churches are coming unglued pastors are coming unglued and probably you read one of the men who pioneered willow creek type thinking different kind of church but a similar thing we just found out he is living in adultery for nine years recorded in christianity what do you think that does to the church we

have to keep our ideals but beware of idealism and in the area of money some of the greatest problems and controversies come into OM even here we are all different we are all strong minded as many of you here you have no problem disagreeing with me used to be years ago people don't want to take on that day I think people are quite ready to take me on including my own wife and all of my children and I am actually looking for a few people that would like to stand with me and go ahead in unity talk about intimidation integrity that will produce credibility but at the same time being aware of the danger of idealism where we develop a perfectionistic view of how everything should happen every team should work everything that is submitted to the government and all these tax problems we become

neurotic a lot of these things have to be goals and aims other things with everything within us we must try not to make a mistake because of the complexity involved in the fact that we could end up in jail the next word I have written down is unity as we make these changes as we move ahead as a movement so diverse stretched across the world spending what seemed like a fortune just to communicate with one another and people all over the world are complaining they don't have enough they don't seem to I'm very seldom in a letter people acknowledging what communication costs these telephone calls this emergency call I just had which could have at least that man was being taken off as far as I know by the police within the next hour and one or two ways it would be a mental institution or maybe

something worse I don't know and I think of the phone calls of Peter Maiden I think of the faxes I think of the prayer information I think of when we have an emergency like the hand grenade attack upon the staff the amount of money spent on communication are we going to say in the midst of that thing we can't spend the money well it's complicated even in the midst of that we were calculating all the time as much as we could calculating expense but with all stops out making the emergency a priority unity in the midst of diversity I'm sure in our discussions here I felt yesterday the hour I was with you to me was so stimulating because I think it's just so valuable even just to be able to listen to one another but we presume that a movement of two thousand people is going to be able to

listen to the main leaders of the movement perhaps as much as they did ten years ago it's all over therefore there has to be more grace more love more believing the best because we just have so many more people we're committed to I needed five days in Atlanta I just went through Atlanta I had so many friends so many people I want to talk to my total time in Atlanta was just hours I went to David Terribury and I think he understood what I was saying as I tried to share with him that in my new ministry I'm trying to give more time to donors more time to the prayer partners more time to the people who are praying and supplying the finance but God hasn't given me any more extra hours now I know a little more about redeeming the time but basically I have to carve that time out of something

else and I must confess to you it is being carved out of O.

Emmers O.

Emmers is still getting a lot of my time but they're not getting as much as they did 15 years ago and it's one of the toughest things I battle with and I just share that because you're going to face the same thing if you're going to give more time some of you and I'm hoping some of you in this room are in this camp to prayer partners to donors to those who want to sit down and talk with us then you're going to have to carve that time out of something else and you're going to have to be able to share with your own team or other people you're involved with that you don't have as much time for this or as much time for that and I'm soon to go on a two full day retreat with my own team and the strong commitment to my team is another reason I have to carve out time from somewhere else because

in a sense that's my inner family and because I don't function well I don't know about you I don't function well on a team where things aren't going relatively well where there's disunity and confusion and backbiting and problems I've been in it a long time since I'm 17 I just thank God that he's given me a team of people that are cooperative and patient and like minded I'm sure I've failed them and that somehow this unique international coordinating team is going ahead in grace and unity and a lot of blessing is coming from that in the midst of our weaknesses unity you're going to have to work on it we're not the IBM we're OM we can learn from IBM at the end of the day we have people with doctrinal peculiarities you don't think it takes any time in OM if you don't you're living in

fantasy land doctrine is still one of the biggest problems we have and we had people leave us last year because of doctrine and we had people leave us every year because of doctrine just because we don't take it to the doctrine committee doesn't mean it's not happening and today we are being hit with doctrinal pluralism that touches every aspect of church life it's just absolutely awesome probably I read too much but it's amazing the things that get into the hands of people even while they're on OM from some book they picked up and if they're in your accounting department you're wanting them to get on with a job they're wanting to talk to you about the possibility of the computer being invaded by an evil spirit and wanting you to lay hands and pray on the computer to get the evil spirits

out and if you don't think people sometimes get any of these things you obviously aren't doing much reading what about the nuances on territorial spirits are you into territorial spirits that teaching alone is enough to blow OM right out of the water and I just stand amazed as every week we got another book seemingly on some of these issues and different Christians are believing different things every time I return to the states there seems to be more disunity rather than unity because there are just so many strong streams of teaching and can you imagine in OM on Sunday they all go up to different churches to get loaded up they all go up to different churches to get loaded up and try to bring this you sometimes can hear it in the Monday morning prayer meeting especially prayer emphasis

week the different prayers relate what's going on in their local church one guy is praying one way another guy is praying against him I try not to do that but I tell you it is a temptation unity is going to have to continue to be a major effort because if all this money comes in and at the same time we're not in unity and this area leaders group comes unglued or some field comes unglued beautiful relationships like Desi on Umberto key to Brazil Satan will attack that relationship I said back in 1981 at the field leaders meeting every significant relationship in OM between people will be attacked another murderer off the wall statement in the next decade we saw it almost fulfilled and we know that that's not unusual it's not unusual the church I was just down in Des Moines it was the

number two man they had 10 year linking they were the co-founders of the church the number two man that tried to pull a coup removed the pastor he already won the staff he won the staff because he had a lot

more time to talk to the staff than the senior pastor so when the senior pastor is feeding the sheep and doing all these other things he's winning the staff to pull off the coup and they tried it they got 300 people out of a church of several thousand the board backed the senior pastor and the missions pastor my close friend backed the senior pastor I was just back there again the other church has never grown this church has continued to flourish meanwhile almost everyone in the state of Iowa read about the split it was front page this is one of the biggest churches in the state let's

work for unity let's value unity let's keep talking things out let's try to stay calm when people do things that really upset us and practice what we're all reading about in that great book Grace Awakening and if you feel that's too modern as some a few OM conservatives do try Calvary Road it's a similar message and thank God that Grace Awakening started in OM from the beginning and has continued to persevere the next word I've written down is loyalty some of you know my tape why it's so hard to win loyalty in the 80s it's now 91 I don't think it's getting any easier you may want to listen to that tape I want to thank you in this room for your loyalty to the fellowship your loyalty to Peter and myself it's not easy even to say that because in a sense we don't have a great campaign to win

loyalty and yet if we're leaders we've got to win loyalty one of the things that's helped my life the most is the tremendous loyalty of my wife not because she always agrees with me she doesn't but I've never felt even when I really blew it I never felt that she was going to give up on me no longer be loyal and I tell you if anybody says something negative about Vera with my wife around I have a rougher time than generally if I'm around and aren't you glad your wife's like that she sticks up for you she's loyal she might be in a little blind spot now of course sometimes she may fail under pressure don't jump all over at that moment she needs your loyalty as well and I think loyalty is a valuable asset in life we not only accept the good things that happen in OM as being part of our

responsibility we accept the negative things we take part of the blame we can't disassociate ourselves I believe this is even true in the body of Christ that's why I do not dissociate myself from my brother Jimmy Swagger I want to and I've never been involved with him and I never even liked his style or anything else and I'm careful to some degree and I believe I must be the leaders I get sort of intimately bonded with you can't just go around and bond with everybody some of them don't want it anyway so that makes it easier but I still feel he's part of the body I'm praying I'm sympathizing there's a nerve in me reaching out that's why I phoned right through the columns last night and just let them know people in England were praying maybe that will get back to the president of the

college maybe it will get back to Swagger and I just believe that there is a place for loyalty it's not a blind loyalty it's because of Christ and it's because we want to get the job done and we know even secular history has proven what a united team can really do in this area I think it's now one o'clock isn't it?

I'm still on USA time so I'm just going to bring this to a close because we have lunch the next word I have is communication a lot of my other material I talk about communication so I won't go further into that we're talking about personal communication we're talking about that prayer letter one of the most important things in the whole movement got my British one this morning we're talking about private letters we're talking about fax we're talking about phone it's a lot of work it takes a lot of time and we have quite a bit of material and seminars about that then I've written down this whole thing of communicating through expressions of love anything we can do to show people we appreciate them we love them it may be a word it may be a leaflet it may be a birthday card it may be being

there at the funeral of the death of a loved one it may be being there at some other event in their life I can't even begin to tell you how important this kind of thing is and only the Holy Spirit as we yield our members to righteousness can do it now at the end of the day we've got to have some strategy and each field in OM is working on a strategy and already most fields have a strategy though we're lacking more people to give themselves full time though surely the way ahead of OM is to have some full time people in this but to have as many people as possible and considering personal support everyone involved at least part time in helping find the finance and I believe we can my final word next to the word strategy is follow up I might just incorporate here one of the biggest changes

that has taken place which has been very difficult but it has been our willingness to be open to have contact with people of wealth there's almost a phobia about people of wealth that causes the OMer to run the other way it's true these people live in a different world some of them and God has shown us I believe I've shared this in my other messages that we need to reach out to these people they need encouragement money doesn't necessarily bring happiness these people are happy often when they can get linked with a trustworthy movement and fellowship that is to a large degree has an ongoing experience of being delivered from greed and materialism and who basically wants to use all the money for world evangelism realizing there's nothing wrong with using some of that for our own needs and

raising money for a house to live in is a great tonic for a character like me I can assure you it's almost all come and from the most surprising places like 20,000 from a Korean church and 10,000 from a Jordanian businessman tell you brothers and sisters that people out there they want to give they're all different they all want to give to different things and they want to give to different things on different months just like special projects most people don't want to give to the same thing all the time variety is a spice of life so beware of little generalizations in this whole field it's enormous and the scope is enormous and I hope that you will think through these issues and develop your own strategy and believe me we're going to see phenomenal results because of it let's pray Lord I

don't know where the time goes but we did get a very late start so we commit to you these thoughts and this burden and by your Holy Spirit we'll contextualize this into our own situation add to it what you're teaching us and by your grace make it fly Lord we don't want the plane to continue to taxi around the runway we want this plane and development and resourcing your work to fly and we believe it is flying we want it to fly better and fly higher and touch more nations and more people in Jesus name amen I just want to say to anyone who's listening to this by tape not to hesitate to write to me letting me know that you've heard this tape I can't always answer your letter immediately but you can be assured I will read your letter and I just want to continue maximum correspondence with

people who are linked with us with this vision or who have maybe have some questions there's other people

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