

Saturday Luncheon

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes total commitment to God and the Great Commission, urging listeners to engage in missions with grace and unity.

Duration: 50:05

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 11:5, Romans 11:33, Romans 12:1-2

Topics: "Convention"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of commitment to the Lord and the Great Commission. He shares the story of Lauren Cunningham, George Ferrum, and brother Andrew, who have been committed to each other and their mission for over 30 years. The speaker expresses his belief that the average American Christian is not truly committed, citing examples like prioritizing sports over worship. He then reads Romans 12:1-2, urging the audience to present themselves as living sacrifices to God and not conform to the world. The speaker concludes by highlighting the great needs in the world and urging the audience to recognize that the need is even greater than they may realize.

Transcript

This is tape number six, Saturday luncheon with George Berwer, conference 643. And has such an illustrious career that it's going to take two of us to introduce him. I'm going to ask Greg Livingstone to come up and join me, but I just want to share with you that in 1967, when I was young and had hair, my wife and I attended a missionary conference that has been going on every third year since then and previous to that called Urbana.

And we were young in university looking to God for what he would have for us for our future. And there was a young man who spoke at Urbana named George Berwer, who was a graduate of Moody Bible Institute. He shared with us how he had searched through Marxism, through materialism, through every ism, or as Brother Andrew would say, every wasm, that exists and only found reality and significance in living in Jesus Christ and how he was committed to winning India for Jesus.

And at that time, he had an incredible vision, and I think he still does, for the subcontinent. And he was challenging us as young people to give our lives to missionary service. And George is one of those people who I attribute as a motivator that my wife and I spent years in the mission field because of it and have been involved in mission work ever since.

He heads a significant ministry called Operation Mobilization, one of the largest mission groups in the world. And we in Open Doors attribute OM as a training ground for many of our own staff. In fact, my roommate upstairs this weekend is a young man who spent time on the Logos ship.

The Logos and the Dulos are two ships that the Operation Mobilization operate all over the world. And you can ask him what part of the ship he spent most of his time working on, but that's where he got his training. And OM has helped Open Doors in many ways, and one of them is in the training of some of the young people that God has sent to work with us.

So we are delighted today to have George forward. George has shared many times. I've come across his sharing as I've been home in Canada the last four years, especially on missions conferences.

We have a great one out in Vancouver called Missions Fest, a tremendous missionary conference every year. And it was there that I heard George share what a good friend he is of Brother Andrews. Well, I knew that already, but he said, if God had called me to do what Brother Andrew does and I wrote a book about it, my book would not be called God's Smuggler.

It would be called God's Bungler. And that tells you a little bit about his sense of humor. But another man who wants to share about George Verwer's impact on the world and on missions is Greg Livingston.

Greg? Because we know OM for its ships, for the literally tons and tons of literature that they have been used of God to distribute around the world, because George Verwer is a very entertaining speaker, I think sometimes we're not heart prepared for the anointing that God has given Brother George to give us what I would call a spiritual checkup, reality checkup. George, though he's only 18 months older than I am, I consider my spiritual father my mentor and believe that one of the reasons that I'm able to lead frontiers and serve the Lord some 30 years is because of how God has used this man in my own life. And I pray that we would be allowing the Holy Spirit of God to speak to us as he comes now.

George? Let's just pray once again together. I need a little prayer for my voice. This is about the 50th meeting in the last three weeks.

We fly back to London, England tomorrow. I had a seminar this morning, which I probably shouldn't have taken. I always find it hard to give only half, even at a seminar, so my voice had its big shot at that time.

But I think the Lord can help, especially this great microphone. Can everybody hear all right? Lord, we thank you for little things like sound equipment when we or our vocal cords are feeling weak. And I thank you for the grace you've given to those vocal cords in the last 20,000 or 30,000 messages.

Since you saved me there in Madison Square Garden from my sin and myself, thank you that there is reality in your Son, Jesus Christ. We thank you for the indwelling and power of the Holy Spirit. And we know you have brought us here together this afternoon.

And you have been saying already very strong things to us. And you want to say even more. In Jesus' name, guide us, help us.

We're cast upon you. The situation in Lebanon, the situation in the Gulf, the situation in Afghanistan, in Kampuchea, in South Africa. So many world situations are on our minds.

And we have to cast this great burden upon you or we can't function. And you want us to function. Don't let us go from this place with any kind of token commitment.

But enable us to go from this place with total irrevocable commitment to you and to your work and to your vision, to your word. In Jesus' name, amen. God has been so ministering to me during these past days through his word and especially through a new book, which I don't even have on my book table.

It's so new for me. A book by Charles Swindoll called Awakening Grace. Twenty years ago, I saw the effect of legalism in our own ministry.

With all of our zeal, with all of our commitment, with our nights of prayer, sacrifice, vision, love. Without an order for these things to function on the mission field, we had to have policies. We had to have guidelines.

We were soon many hundreds of people. And then we soon had shifts. They needed rules.

And in the process, in our weakness, at times we got into legalism. Legalism creates judgmentalism. In our movement, we sometimes actually bypassed legalism.

We weren't really that legalistic. But our zeal and our commitment caused us to almost jump over legalism and go right into judgmentalism. And we had literally some of our people, some of our teams and some of our families come apart in the midst of the battle.

And a lot of churches in America right now are coming apart. A lot of ministers are coming apart. A lot of families are coming apart.

And I think it's a great mistake that we so compartmentalize things. Missions is over here. Marriage renewal is over here.

Abortion is over here. Holy Spirit and gifts, that's over there. And we had all these differences and we got all these different emphases and all these different issues.

There's over 200 issues that the church is fighting over. I don't exaggerate. I read a lot.

I'm involved with a lot of people. And I just thank God for this message to my own heart. I wrestle a lot of discouragement.

There's no need to pretend. I don't live in it. I don't fall asleep with it.

I've known reality and revival every day, varying degrees since my conversion. But discouragement is there almost every day. My wife and I just had a letter from one of our supporting churches saying it's all over for us.

As far as any support from that church. That wouldn't bother me. But as I see the church shrinking and as I see the judgmentalism and the legalism, that does bother me.

I know we've had a very challenging and a very beautiful picture last night. I wish I were here. I had to drive in from San Francisco after ministering there in the morning.

In which we see and we saw some of the tremendous things God is doing. And I say amen to all of that. I've just come from Korea.

We've got 10 million believers in Korea. A report out of the recent Asian Congress there says 7 or 8 million. Okay.

That's a lot of believers. That's more believers than live in all of Western Europe where I'm from. And if we talk about the Brazils where our work is just exploding, we can't even keep track of it.

We talk about Chile. We talk about Argentina. We talk about a number of countries in Africa and the phenomenal church growth.

Those statistics can be a subtle form of lying. Because a lot of people are called Christians in statistics who in no way are born again followers of Jesus Christ. They're just a statistic.

And they're very complicated. Patrick Johnson, the author of Operation World, a book I hope all of you have at least a dozen copies of, is just battling day and night to try to come out with a new edition. As it's so complicated to come out with something like that great book.

But as I look over the world scene, maybe it's because of my temperament, I see the huge unreached blocks of the world. I see 100 million Muslims. Have you ever thought about the 100 million Muslims of India? We were talking about them in our seminar.

I guess that's why I got so excited. 100 million. We only had a billion people in the world in 1835.

Now we have a billion people just in the subcontinent. Just the subcontinent. Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka.

Called South India. South Asia. One billion.

There's another one billion in China. There's over one billion who call themselves Muslims. Who are largely unreached in almost any sense of definition.

So as we praise God and rejoice over what He has done, as we give thanks for the Berlin Wall, so often I sat in my old converted bus next to the Berlin Wall. Somehow our OM work among the Turks was located in that section of Berlin. And I'd come into town through Poland and East Germany and park my bus by the Berlin Wall.

Free parking. I'd get up in the morning and I'd run along that wall and I'd go up on those little areas and look these guards in the eye. And many, many, many times I prayed, Lord bring this thing down.

It was so ugly. And then I'd go through to preach in East Germany and it felt so dark going through Checkpoint Charlie or going on the underground. What an awesome thing.

What an awesome thing to see the Berlin Wall come down. I couldn't believe it. And yet we know as the Berlin Wall went down, the pornographers went in, the cults went in, the crime syndicates went in, one West German woman pornographer went in and gave out 50,000 porno catalogs in a week in major cities.

And the church just so slowly, so slowly moving in to do the job. And let's not have a fantasy view about Christians in Eastern Europe. There aren't great Christians in Eastern Europe.

We're not worthy to tie their shoelaces. I ministered in most of those countries and most of the Christians are wrestling with a lot of the same problems we wrestle with. The last time I was in the Soviet Union, they

all want to talk to me about sex because there were so many sexual problems among the believers.

The last time I was ministering to thousands of people in Poland, they want to talk to me about sex because there's so much immorality among the believers. The greater difference between Christians is not nationality. The greater difference is between a man who's committed and who's growing in God and he's on target for God and a person who's not committed and is not on target for God for whatever reason.

That difference is far greater than whether you're from Moscow or California. Of course, there are other generalizations we can make. So as I share with you, I haven't started the message yet.

As I share with you my burden of those hundreds of millions, hundreds of millions of people that have never once heard. If we had one billion in 1835 living in the world, then let us remember this afternoon that we have at least one billion that have never yet heard. By radio, by literature, by any method.

I want you to turn with me in your Bibles to Romans chapter 12. That's when the message officially starts. It's a dangerous thing to ask me to speak at a banquet and give me a finishing time when I don't have to come back and speak again.

I'm known as the longest speaker in Europe. I'm one of the few that speaks longer than Brother Andrew and we've been competing in this for about 30-some years. I was preaching in Germany once where they worship the clocks even more than Californians many of whom have thrown their clocks away.

That's why they haven't arrived yet. But I was just so burdened. The young people were listening and one elderly man, I think he felt I was going too long.

I was only an hour and a half or two. I don't know why he was getting upset. And he took his watch up to try to get me to stop but he held his watch up and pointed to it.

And I was preaching about world missions and discipleship the need to forsake all to follow Christ and I saw this man holding his watch up. I told the people, look at this. Look at this man.

Praise God. He's donating his watch for world missions. I want you to turn to Romans chapter 12.

Romans chapter 12. By the way, this is the first time in history that Lauren Cunningham, George Burr and Brother Andrew have all spoken in the same place. Three brothers very committed to each other who have been in touch with each other for over 30 years.

Lauren came on OM. We gave him a job hauling the literature around the warehouse. He had the vision and the burden for Youth with a Mission.

And an incredibly humble brother wanted to come and just be with us for the summer and do anything that we were willing to assign him to do. Of course, OM and traditional lack of discernment put him in the wrong place. But God used him mightily.

And what a privilege to be together with people from different agencies. I just phoned the Youth with a Mission ship, Anastasis. Found out they were going to France.

And then to French Africa. I said, do you have any French literature? They said, hardly any. I said, okay.

You got \$2,000 worth free when you go to France. Made another phone call. And they're picking up that literature.

Then she said back to me, and I didn't know about this. Oh, by the way, we've just taken an offering here on the ship for Lagos to dry dock in Cadiz. Though Youth with a Mission and OM have very different roots and we're different people and different types of ministry in some ways and then many ministry that's similar like Winning Men to Christ.

We've had over 30 some years of beautiful relationship together. And I believe that's a testimony. Open Doors has been right in the middle of that.

Frontiers is in the middle of that. Many other groups represented here. There's good fellowship.

There's honesty. There's openness. We meet a lot together.

We pray. We agree to disagree. I want to know why the big churches, especially of different theological persuasion and roots and backgrounds, don't get together more in California in humility and brokenness and prayer to do God's work God's way.

If I have overstated that, you forgive me. I will accept. I'll be happy to repent.

I find many outstanding American Christian leaders hardly ever fellowship, even on the telephone, with other Christian leaders. And I find a lot of them don't respect other Christian leaders because I mix in all the different camps. And their lack of respect is often out of ignorance, out of rumors, out of misunderstanding, rather than out of the facts.

I'm not a compromiser theologically, but I do believe sometimes we major in minors and we miss God's best for our churches and our lives. And I believe, unless there is more repentance with all our sophistication, with all of our big talk, with all of our prophetic utterance, with all of our Bible thumping, unless there is repentance in America, the job isn't going to be done. We can have banquets until we're all fat and have to roll home afterward, but the job will never be done without repentance and brokenness in high places and in all places.

That is a great burden on my heart. Now let's read Romans chapter 12. I got so excited, I haven't got past Acts.

I always have difficulty getting past Acts because it competes with Romans as far as my favorite passage of Scripture. We have five dynamic verses at the end of the 11th chapter of the book of Romans. And everybody should study Romans without saying.

It's about the greatness of God. It's the fact that we're not going to be God's counselor. It's the truth that we're never going to understand everything.

And the longer I'm in missionary work and world evangelism and working among the poor and doing what God's led me to do, the more mysterious the whole thing is. Maybe I'll come back to that. But I want to read Romans 12, 1 and 2. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice wholly acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Some of you have a modern translation. The word worship is included. But be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable

and perfect will of God.

Then we have 14 other heavy dynamite exhortations. In some of our theological seminaries, they, in the homiletics courses, always try to tell you to only have one point in a sermon. These people really get angry with me.

Because I only get one chance to speak to the main group in some of these conventions and places. One point is ridiculous. In pluralistic society with all kinds of people, and the Bible's that way.

The Bible in one chapter may have 20 points. It's like climbing in the ring with Tyson. You're knocked all over the place by the time you come out.

It's not always just one point. Now, of course, if you're preaching to the same group every Sunday, you may only have one point per Sunday. That's no problem with me.

I don't know what Bible you preach out of, but I don't want to project my problems on you. There's a new book that just came out of California, by the way, that I hope all of our ministers will read. And I love ministers.

I'm bonded with hundreds of ministers. Don't think I'm judging our ministers. There are all kinds of ministers.

Pastors, elders, deacons, whatever other name you want to put on them. But a new book came out of California that I discovered in England, and I thought it was a British book. The publisher totally Anglicized that book.

Took the word pastor and talked about vicar. Incredible. It's called, 101 Things to Do During a Dull Sermon.

The funniest book I've ever read. It's even funnier than God Smuggler. The book is absolutely incredible.

And I found out the book was written in California or was published here. And the original edition, of course, is all American lingo. Why do we need a book, 101 Things to Do During a Boring Sermon? Isn't it terrible that in the church we're having a problem with boredom? My feeble testimony, and I'm just a struggling character with a lot of needs and a lot of problems, I've never been bored for a whole day since Jesus saved me.

You know, of course, I have greater problems in other areas, so if you have a big problem with boredom, I'm not going to judge you. But living for Christ is exciting, brothers and sisters. And if your pastor is boring, you should still be excited.

If it's, by the way, a liberal church where they don't preach the gospel, they suggest that toward the end of the boring sermon, you just raise your hand and say, excuse me, sir, I'd like to accept Christ as my Lord and Savior. Really, it works. It works.

Another suggestion was that while the pastor was preaching, slip quietly over to the organist and ask if she does request numbers. The character who gave me this book was actually quite upset with it, because it's that kind of book. So he made me promise, which I shouldn't have done, that I would never sell a copy.

So you won't find it on my book table. It's sort of like my round-the-world jacket. You just try to figure out where you get another one of these.

Very difficult. The bottom line of what is on my heart is this whole thing of commitment, firstly to the Lord Himself, secondly to the great commission that God has given to us. And since we just have a very short time, I think I'll just bypass a lot of introductory stuff and simply say, I don't believe we are committed.

I don't really believe that the average American Christian who is classified as others is being committed. That would be a group probably like us. You know, Saturday afternoon.

This is the World Series, friends. We are a nation that worships baseball. Now maybe this is why I've got to finish fairly quick.

I don't know whether you've got a big screen in here or not. I don't even know what's happened. Last year they had an earthquake in the middle of the whole thing.

And I was in San Francisco at the anniversary day of that earthquake, something that I will never forget as we wept with those who wept in San Francisco and felt to some degree what they felt. But it does seem that in sports they believe in total commitment. Do you know many athletes? Do you know many top athletes? I mean, it's fanaticism.

I've been speaking a lot for 10 years about balance. Some of the young people don't like it. They like the old variety, George Verwer.

I even took the word balance off my book. It used to be called The Revolution of Love and Balance. We dropped the word balance.

It's just Revolution of Love. And here I was in front of I don't know how many thousands of young people wanting to speak to them on balance, on love, and in the middle of it I said, I quit. I have to confess I'm still a fanatic.

They just jumped up. They started cheering. Praise God.

I tell you, young people want to be led by fanatics. They don't want to be led by wimps. They don't want to be led by people that are half committed.

I don't understand it. I don't understand my own ministry. I say, Lord, what am I doing? You've got better men than me all over the place.

Nowadays He's got better women than me. That's especially intimidating. And God gave me a picture.

Ever since John Wimber, all of us in England, we're into pictures. Everybody's seeing pictures. Some of them frighten you right out of the wall.

But I got a picture of myself in a dog track in England. Now, some of you that are thinking of cross-cultural communication, you need to get to understand the English. The English are into dog racing.

We race horses over here. They do that as well. They're into about everything.

But they especially have these dog races. How many of you have ever been to a dog race? A few of you. It's interesting.

Now, in this particular... I've never been one. I saw it on television. The whole thing is linked around a mechanical tin rabbit.

I mean, why do these dogs run around this big arena? What is it? Prime rib? They're chasing after? No! It's a mechanical tin rabbit on a machine. And when they bang, they start to race. The rabbit is out in front of the dogs.

This little tin rabbit. And he's running around. All these dogs are chasing the rabbit.

And God gave me a picture of my ministry. I could never plant a church in Turkey. Just thinking about Turkey gets me depressed.

I don't think I could plant a church in the Muslim world. Many of these things I could never do. Why am I God's bungler? I also wanted to evangelize the Soviet Union.

One of the first things I did when I got in Europe, study Russian. And in the summer of 1961, I loaded my vehicle with literature. I had a Russian printing press hidden in the dashboard.

I had Gospels in the cornflakes boxes. I had thousands of people praying. I managed miraculously to get across the border.

I tell you, did we have praise and pride. That's subtle. Praise the Lord, we did it! In the name of Jesus, we did it! We weren't going to distribute any literature.

We were going to send it through the mail. But one of the Gospels got some butter on it. It's the absolute truth.

And my friend with me, he was from California. They're into wasting things. He wanted me to throw the Gospel down the toilet.

So it wouldn't get us in any trouble. Because we didn't want to put it in an envelope. I said, how can we throw the Word of God down the toilet? This is my New Jersey instinct.

That's where I was born. And so I said, we will give that Gospel away tomorrow on the highway when no one is looking. I threw the Gospel out of the highway somewhere near Chernobyl.

Nothing to do with events there. And within ten miles, they had a major roadblock. Police.

Secret police. And a farmer had picked up that Gospel, had telephoned the police headquarters, and they had us. I blew it! It wasn't really so funny.

They were going to give us a long-term, all-expenses-paid vacation in Siberia. They accused me of being a CIA agent. I didn't even know what the CIA was.

After two days or three of interrogation and finding the printing press, which they weren't too happy about, they decided I was a religious fanatic. You know one of my favorite books? Have you read Erwin Lutzer's book Failure, the Back Door to Success? Isn't that brilliant? That's the story of my life. And that book so ministered to me, I never actually read it.

Just the title was such a blessing because in my life, in my life, that's another area of failure. I start all these books. I've never finished.

Now I'm feeling a guilty conscience. I've never finished a single Brother Andrew book. I've started almost all of them.

I just started another one. You know how I read a book? I go to the middle and I look for something good. I get excited.

And really, I read something really exciting in here. And I don't know what page. And then when I give the book review, I say, I'm reading this book.

I may have started seven years ago. I'm reading this book. And I believe everybody should get a copy as soon as possible.

Really, this is his most controversial book. You're liable to read this and not think that Andrew's a Calvinist. You need to read this.

And I hope that you'll get challenged right out of your socks. I don't believe, I don't believe we know what New Testament biblical commitment is really about in most places. That should not surprise us because there is a real devil.

And the Bible says the devil goes as an angel of light. The Bible says in Corinthians, be not ignorant of his devices. And there is a form of deception.

We believe Christians can be deceived. They can be born again. They can love Jesus.

They can be sincere. And they still can be deceived. How could we possibly understand the church without believing that little simple bit of philosophy? And I don't believe it is firstly linked with the need to have another crisis experience.

As a church, we have become too crisis experience oriented. I have had many crises. And I believe in the fullness and the reality of the Holy Spirit.

I believe that there can be deliverance experiences. There can be blessings. There can be times of recommitment.

I don't despise anything that God is doing. But whatever crisis you may have, if that crisis is not followed by God's process, it will become an abscess. And we have it from California to Maine, from England to China.

People who may have started well, but now they are bogged down. People who may have started well and been saved by grace, but now they are trying to live the Christian life by the law which Galatians so warns us about. And I feel that all of us need to re-enroll, and I include myself, in God's program for disciplined living.

One of our goals in Operation Mobilization is to bring together people from different movements. The huge charismatic movement that God has so greatly used with all of its complexity in the good and the bad. My friend Keith Green before he died called it charismania.

And all the evangelical movement with the good and the bad, all the evangelical fish floating around that need to be got somehow into some mainstream of biblical action. And we're trying to pull these groups together. And we love God's people.

And I will tell you, I think it's one of the most difficult things you can ever do. You get shot on from both sides. You have a high percentage of churches on both extremes that won't let you in there even to give a testimony.

If you think what Brother Andrew has tried to do as he in Holland when this crisis broke, chose as O.M. a more middle road in order to emphasize evangelism, in order to reach people with the Word of God, he'll tell you it was no easy road. Brothers and sisters, I believe there is a great place for interdenominational events like this conference. I know they have done an awful lot of work to get what I would feel is a small result.

They won't measure that way, but I have a different way of measuring. With the speakers and the seminars you have here, I would have thought such a conference in California should be in a stadium, not in a hotel. Especially with the emphasis on prayer because if there's any area where the church is weak so often in the United States and other countries, it's in the area of prayer.

Where the book of Acts is so strong, the church seems to be so weak. I believe if I could get a couple hours with you, maybe I can with my tapes and my books, I could convince you more lovingly that you need to be more committed. You need to be more disciplined.

Not in just a general vague way. We could all easily confess to that. But in a specific way.

Let's just think of a few areas where we might be able to move from tokenism to total commitment. What about the area of food? There's nothing wrong with having an occasional banquet. But to have a banquet every day as some people do in their homes in America is not only unwise, our doctors are telling us it's unhealthy.

We need a little more fasting and a little less feasting. We are free in Christ, and I love to enjoy certain kinds of food. For me, food, as I don't need much to keep going, the psychological challenge of it sometimes is greater than the energy factor.

I have too much energy. I don't know what sometimes to do when I unite with it. My wife some years ago looked at me and she said, I was just looking at you.

Makes me feel tired. And I said, I'm going to give you a lot of my energy. And I gave her a hug.

I've been hugging her for 30 years. Let me just tell you, it doesn't work. She's here.

You can meet her after the banquet. When you think of praying for me, don't pray for me. I've got enough prayer partners.

Pray for her. It's always more difficult to be a wife of a pioneer, visionary, founder type than it is to actually be that person. Though, we have a few difficulties as well.

Because we're not always what people think we are on the surface. And when you look at me, I can assure you, you're looking at a struggler. You're looking at somebody who sometimes finds it difficult to go one more day.

Yesterday I picked up an article. I wasn't sure I should mention this, but I will. Because it hit me like a train.

It's an article about the children of the world. People all over the world clip out articles and send them to me. They're overwhelming.

About the needs, about the lost, about unreached people. This article's about the children of the world. And some of the things written in this article I've actually seen.

I guess that's why it hit me so hard. So I've seen it when I lived in India for a number of years. I've forgotten.

Maybe conveniently forgotten. This article talks about 100 million children in the world who are basically slaves. It's great to emphasize the new freedom.

It's great to see new countries open. It's great to talk about democracy. But in the midst of it, because of the sinfulness of man, 100 million children are in slavery.

The number one country for this slavery is the land of India. As tens of millions of children under 10 years of age work in factories, work in quarries, in stone mills, in matchbox factories, in the most unbelievable employment in the world. Many of them for less than a dollar a day which goes to their parents who are so poor.

As I read that article, I just physically was experiencing, and I dictated a long memo to our Indian leaders this morning and other leaders of OM around the world, what are we going to do about 100 million children. Actually the laws of India forbid this. India is a country of great goals.

It's a wonderful democracy in some ways. The laws of the country forbid this. But the complexity of a place like India baffles the imagination.

800 million people. Poverty and fatalism because of Hinduism so raw that you can barely emotionally handle it when you live there. Brothers and sisters, you all know that there are great needs in the world.

That's why you're here. That's why some of you are financially supporting open doors which I just so greatly believe in. That's why you're praying.

But in the shortness of time, let me just say, the need is 10 times greater. It is 10 times greater than you perhaps realize up until now. Would you accept that from me? I don't ask you to accept everything I say.

Search the Scriptures and see if these things be so. For 35 years, almost non-stop, I worked in other countries of the world. First Mexico, then Spain, then that interesting experience in the Soviet Union.

That led me to a day of prayer, by the way. And it was in that day of prayer that God gave me two words, Operation Mobilization. Before that, our work was called, Send the Light.

And that vision was to see Western Europeans form a mission thrust that would reach the people of Western Europe and then spill over into the Muslim world, which was our first burden, and into the Communist world, which was our second burden. God had something bigger than we thought or prayed on that day of prayer. And in His mercy, these 30 years, through 50,000 graduates and campaigns and two ships, it has spilled over into perhaps at least three-fourths of the world, though in some ways, in some countries, incredibly small.

Incredibly small. And we are not patting ourselves on the back. We are crying out for mercy just to keep going.

I said in my recent prayer letter that went around the world that our greatest burden is neither people or money. I'm sure people read that with great surprise because they know I'm always talking about both. But our greatest burden is that we may be more effective in what we do.

It was only five men in Acts 13 that had a vision, and they launched the first great missionary thrust out of Antioch. If we wait for all of God's evangelical fish in Southern California to get a missionary vision, we'll be in glory before it happens. Let's join together with those that will obey God's Word.

Let's realize that He wants to raise up a Gideon force, and that with a Gideon force from a place like California or America, we're talking about hundreds of thousands. We're talking about hundreds of thousands. As those people begin to live in discipline, begin to live in reality, begin to find a balance of truth like Swindoll talks about in that brilliant book, and there are many other similar books, I believe it can happen.

We can see the world reached. At least we can see by the year 2000 everybody at least having a chance. Now some missiological leaders would say, well, that's not enough.

We want a church in every people's group and in every section of every major city. I admire those people. I'm with those people.

Please understand that. I don't yet have that much faith. I'm not sure how that all works out in my own struggles, but I'm not against it.

But at my own faith, my own struggle, at least as everybody by the year 2000, and probably it will continue beyond that. It may not get that far because the Lord will return. Surely we can try.

I'll be careful in my vocabulary. We can try to give everybody with every inch of our energy and our prayers and our money the gospel, at least the gospel of John, the New Testament, a radio broadcast, a cassette by the year 2000. The theme of this weekend is we've got to escalate.

We've got to increase. The French have one of the fastest trains in the world. They want a faster train.

I live on British Rail. 125 miles an hour. No good.

Faster train. They want faster planes. Faster football throwers.

Faster everything. And I believe, though I may be going too fast, and I need to slow down, and I'm trying to listen to that exhortation, I believe the average person is going too slow. You've got to backslide to get into fellowship with them.

And it would be my prayer, it would be my prayer that we would go from this place and take some steps in regard to our prayer life, so that every week we are involved, preferably every day, in some kind of real intercessory prayer ministry. I don't think that's asking too much. I would ask this to go faster in our financing of the work of God.

Don't let anyone convince you otherwise. God has committed the financing of His work to us. Let's not blame God for the mess we are in in different parts of the world.

The lack of money for Scriptures. The lack of support for workers. Let's be honest.

God's Word teaches honesty. My 35 years and 40 nations says that the work of God is hindered everywhere by the lack of finance. Yes, God is doing great things.

God does overrule. He is on the throne. I don't have any doubt about that.

But whether God's people are on the altar, that I have doubt about. And it's only as we put ourselves by faith on the altar, including our finance, our life, everything that God can really begin to use us in stewardship and giving the way He wants to. Brothers and sisters, I'm sure most of you think this weekend is fairly important, right? Otherwise, you wouldn't have been here.

But I believe and I speak, I think, in God's mind on this, what's happening here right now is one of the most important things happening in California tonight and today. What is on the hearts of these people about the lost, unreached people, the Muslims, the new open doors? This is ten times more important, I would say, than even maybe some open door staff members are willing to admit. I know that many OM staff members, loving people, wonderful people, sincere people, and yet because of life and the complexity of it and the devil's trickery, many of them tonight or this afternoon are probably discouraged.

Maybe even thinking about quitting. Not really convinced they should spend the rest of their life among Muslims. Or wrestling with some other difficulty.

We're all wrestling with problems. We've all got our struggles. Great faith and great mission vision is not in the absence, not in the absence of struggles and problems and difficulties in the family and the work.

It's in the midst of those things. Let's break free from this fantasy world that we were taught about maybe at Bible school. Let's get into the real world.

It's rough. It's tough. There'll be heartache.

There'll be sorrow. I'm reading Gordon McDonald's new book, Forging a Real World Faith. Praise God for that book.

Praise God that in His sovereignty, though Gordon McDonald fell into adultery and our whole nation had to hear about it, he bounced back after a year in the desert. And he's a man on the cutting edge of what the Spirit of God is doing in 1990. Yes, God can restore even the years the locust has eaten.

And maybe there's someone here. You feel you've been a failure. You feel you've missed God's plan.

You feel you're not on the cutting edge of what the Spirit of God is doing. I say forget those things that are past. Live for the future, not for the past.

You may be crippled as Gordon McDonald admitted he was, and walk with a limp the rest of your life, but God can use you. God's way of measuring is not our way of measuring. We look at the Brother Andrews.

We look at the George Fairworths. And we're embarrassed by the introduction. But God looks at all of us.

And every one of us is a vital, intricate part of what God wants to do. Even though we may feel much failure, much weakness, much tears, and sometimes wonder if we can survive even one more day upon planet Earth. Brothers and sisters, forgive me for this weak presentation.

Thank you, you've used God's smuggler and you've used God's bungler. And whatever one we can relate to, you will use us. And we look to you as we go forward together to increase, to increase.

Thank you, you've used God's smuggler and you've used God's bungler. And whatever one we can relate to, you will use us. And we look to you as we go forward together to increase, to increase all that we're doing for the kingdom in love, in grace, and in balance.

For we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. On my book table I have a whole pile of books.

I carry them with me almost everywhere I go. Sometimes up to 15 boxes on an airplane. Very interesting.

A book that I believe can be a great preventative of immorality in the church. Written by a woman, the snare is the strongest preventative next to the Bible for immorality in the church. It's one of God's gifts to His people.

Because it is a snare that is trapping so many into impurity. Two of the greatest books on prayer ever written. Destined for the throne and touched the world through prayer by one of the first missionaries I ever met when I went to India, Wesley Duell.

A new dynamic missionary book that comes from a veteran, Norman Lewis. Priority One. Which we're giving at half price.

Power Through Prayer. The strongest item on prayer ever written for pastors. You can pick up free.

A book on revival. Out of the East African revival that many people have paid \$4 for. You can pick up free.

There's tremendous literature tables and displays all over out there. Visit all of them. And get some of this material.

Not just for yourself. Don't just think of yourself. But what you can give to others that we may take the blessing and the responsibility of this conference and multiply it a hundred fold through spirit filled living.

God bless you. Amen.

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