

# Spirit-Controlled Leadership

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer emphasizes the necessity of spirit-controlled leadership rooted in prayer, community, and a deep understanding of the cross.*

**Duration:** 1:02:06

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:22, Galatians 5:24

**Topics:** "Leadership"

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## Description

In this sermon, Lloyd Jones emphasizes the importance of taking responsibility for one's spiritual life. He compares it to playing tennis, where the ball is in our court once God saves us and puts the Holy Spirit in our hearts. He warns against spiritual lukewarmness and the tricks of Satan that can lead to discouragement and a lack of presence of God. Lloyd Jones also discusses the significance of combining the training for spiritual leadership with a global vision, as OM aims to amalgamate the great truths of the Word of God.

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## Transcript

We turn in our Bibles to the book of Acts, chapter 1. I wonder if you're aware that probably tens of thousands, literally tens of thousands of people are praying for this meeting tonight. I'm a very privileged person in that I have such a very huge army of people always praying for me. I meet many people all over the world who tell me they pray for me every day.

A very humbling experience. Many more are just praying for O.M. in general, and this is one of the main events on the O.M. calendar. And I just believe, I really believe that God wants to do a great work in our hearts during these days together.

I believe a lot that God wants to do has to be over a long period of time. This is no shortcut program. In fact, it may be the entrance into the longest term program you've ever got into.

And we know the importance of teaching and the importance of getting involved. And God's program for growth. I don't know if the book from now on has been mentioned by Ralph Chalice.

Praise God for this brother. That is a book that has been used so mightily to teach God's program for spiritual growth. And our greatest burden is that you learn more of God's program for spiritual growth because that's the basis to being prepared for leadership.

On the other hand, that doesn't exclude dynamic encounters with God. That doesn't exclude crisis experiences with God when you come to the end of yourself and you, spiritually speaking, fall at the foot of the cross and meet God in a fresh way. And we're longing, we're longing for both.

The process can only begin here, it has to continue. But the crisis can take place in a few moments. As a person takes a fresh step of faith in his or her Christian life.

I've had a number of such crises in my life. Perhaps too many, perhaps I'm too emotional. I'm glad there is some room.

Even a work so filled with phlegmatic Englishmen as I have for a sort of semi-unstable, over-emotional American background character like me. But I remember when I was in Chicago as a student at Moody Bible Institute. I'd been in university for a year, or college, and I just felt I wanted to get to the mission field.

And for my temperament and for the way I thought, when I was studying at that time, for me, it was a waste of time. So I left to the dismay of my relatives, and to some degree my parents who were very understanding, my college studies, and went to Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. And a man came to Chicago named Oswald J. Smith.

Another man was already in Chicago named Alan Redpath. One of the most committed British preachers, soldiers, disciples that I've ever had the opportunity of knowing. And Oswald J. Smith was preaching at Moody Church where Redpath was the pastor.

And he gave a message on world missions, and he gave a message on commitment. I thought I was already committed. I'd been to Mexico, I'd led hundreds of people to Christ.

I was considered a leader. But I'll tell you, when Oswald J. Smith gave that invitation for recommitment, I knew God was zeroing in on me. And out of a thousand or two thousand in that meeting, I think I was the only one that went forward for prayer.

Believe me, God broke me that night, and filled me afresh with his Holy Spirit. It wasn't the total answer. But for my life, it was part of the answer.

And God may have a step of faith for you tonight or tomorrow that is not the total answer, but it's part of the answer for God's program and God's plan in your life. And I hope you'll be open to that, because Hebrews says the word preached was of no value because it was not mixed with faith. And we can pour out our hearts, we can answer questions, we can give our literature till our arms fall off, but if you don't take steps of faith, this weekend can be a disaster for you.

Because sometimes there's a danger when we go to these weekends that we become spiritual gluttons. I feel spiritual gluttony is already a major problem among some people here in the UK. We have more Bible teachers in UK per capita than any nation I've ever been in, and that's at least 50 countries.

And our churches, in some cases, are becoming more introspective. And in some little fellowships, you've got 10 people who minister the word of God. A little fellowship of maybe 100 people.

In fact, it becomes quite a problem, because, you know, sometimes people are hurt when they're not given the opportunity to minister, but if you've got 5 or 10 different people all want to minister, what are you going to do? Some parts of the world, they have one Bible teacher covering 10 churches. And I believe the

British Church should be contributing far more to world evangelism, to teaching the word of God around the world. Not lording it over God's people, but, as the word of God says, being an example and teaching in all humility and godliness.

Praise God for men like Tony Sargent. Pray for him. He's just back from Asia again, and he's not feeling well.

Who again and again leads his church, a large church in Worthing, and goes out to teach and to preach in Asia. And many other pastors are corresponding with us now about going out in this program in which we involve men of God with a teaching gift out in some of these countries where they don't always have so many opportunities, though they, of course, have some of their overworked national people. Let's look at Acts chapter 1 to the final words of our Lord Jesus Christ before he ascended into heaven, after his resurrection.

It says in Acts 1A, But ye shall receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and under the uttermost heart of the earth. Now that's clear, isn't it? One of the reasons I believe this particular Leaders' Conference is so strategic, and we've already made it clear that this is a youth leadership training conference, and in no way are we saying that anybody who finishes this conference is somehow now a qualified leader. That takes years.

But you've got to start somewhere. And some of you have already been thrown in the positions of responsibility and leadership in your churches and your CUs without having been even to a very mini-beginner's course that we're going through this weekend. I might just throw in here that if some of you are praying about going on OM and you've had some leadership responsibilities, there is a chance that you may be thrown into leadership in OM this very summer.

And if you think that possibly might ever happen to you, I would love you to visit my little special table and ask the man at the table, Bob Rose or Bob McLeod, for a copy of the leadership manual, which is available upon request for people in that category. This particular manual is going out of date, being revised, and to be honest, we would like to make use of the 1,000 or 2,000 copies that we are not stuck with, but wanting to distribute. If you actually end up in leadership on OM this summer, you will be given a short summer leadership manual.

So if you miss this one, don't worry. We'll get you sooner or later, short form, long form. And what a need there is for people who will be prepared and ready for leadership, not only in OM but other movements and fellowships this summer, because it's a way of serving the body.

It's not a prize. It's not an honor. It's a way of serving the body.

If I thought of leadership in OM as an honor or a prize, I would resign now. I'm not interested in those kind of prizes or honors. I know, of course, the deceptive nature of the human heart.

But as far as I can see, continuing in the leadership God has given me is a way of serving the body with the gifts and the ministries he has given me. It's as simple as that. Now, when I start on Acts 1-8, I sometimes never get out of it, because there's so much there.

And I was about to share with you that one of the reasons I'm so convinced about this kind of conference is that we amalgamate our burden to train people for spiritual leadership right where they are, right where they are in your CU, in Birmingham or in Newcastle or in London or some little village. And yet to combine

that with a presentation of world vision, because we don't like to put great truths of the Word of God in separate compartments. I believe, by God's grace, OM has become known as a movement that is wanting to amalgamate the great truths of the Word of God.

OM does not have one hobby horse. We believe we should be preaching the whole counsel of God. And different speakers this weekend are speaking different messages that God has put on their hearts from His Word.

But what a powerhouse the Church would be if we could find an amalgamation, a combination of the kind of biblical teaching that creates dynamic spiritual leaders in the home country with the kind of vision that we read about in Acts 1-8 which will lead the Church into a greater forward thrust into world missions. May God give it to us. We cannot read the Book of Acts without talking about the Holy Spirit.

And our theme for this evening is the spirit-controlled leader and spiritual control or spirit-controlled leadership. There are several other important verses that we need to read in connection with this and we may come back to Acts 1-8. Turn with me to the Book of Galatians.

I love Galatians 5. Some of you have read the OM discipleship manual which you receive when you make application to come on OM. And I personally feel that even if people are thinking about it and not yet sure whether they should go on OM or not, that they should get that application in and get through some of those materials. I've had people write to me and say, I've never gone on a campaign, but going through the preparation materials totally changed my life.

And then they joined some other fellowship. Hallelujah. And in that discipleship manual, you will find an exhortation to memorize the Word of God.

And Galatians 5 is one of those chapters we want you to memorize. And I believe whenever we talk about the Holy Spirit, we need to talk about Galatians 5-22. How many have read the book Calvary Road? Raise your hand.

That is very, very encouraging. That has been required reading, one of the very first required books, before I ever even wrote a book, written by Roy Hesschen on the crucified life, on the subject of brokenness, and how I praise God for that plea that our brother Peter gave last night, which I think, together with what was shared this morning, lays such a foundation for what the Lord wants to say to us this evening. I feel that a lot of our problems in our churches, and I know it's true in our own fellowship of OM, and we are not a church.

All of us go to different local churches. We belong to different churches. In most of our cases, one-third of all the people on OM are longer-term missionaries.

We are sent out by our churches. And I believe one of the reasons we have some of our problems, even in our OM teams, is a lack of emphasis on crucified living. It's not spoken about that much.

Paul, Galatians 2-20, what does it say? I am crucified with Christ. Look it up. We can come back to chapter 5. It's not far away.

I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth within me. This was the message that again and again, there at the Great Keswick Convention, going on now way more than a hundred years, would revolutionize thousands of lives, thousands of lives, and send missionaries out across the

entire world.

And I don't think it's possible for me to speak about the Spirit-controlled Christian life without speaking about the cross. We have people today that want Pentecost without Calvary. You can't have Pentecost without Calvary.

And guess which came first? I know you may not feel you're a great student of history, and some of you may be young believers, but Jesus died for our sin upon Calvary's cross and shed that precious blood, and then ascended and rose again before Pentecost ever took place. And sometimes, some seeming experiences of the Holy Spirit seem to be abortive because the person does not understand Calvary, does not understand justification by faith, does not understand what has happened at the cross. And yet he wants to go on and have power and blessing and gifts and even things that aren't even mentioned in the New Testament on top, including a Rolls Royce and a new house.

I'm concerned. I'm concerned. And I feel there's a need today with our emphasis on the Holy Spirit, which I'm going to be talking about tonight, to go back to the cross, the simplicity of the cross.

It's a place of death. It's as if Jesus Christ was saying, take up your electric chair and follow me. Don't have that much anymore.

It's a quotation from Billy Graham from about 25 years ago when he was preaching to a great student meeting like this. And here in Galatians 5, we have that beautiful picture of the fruit of the Spirit. We have that beautiful picture of the Spirit-controlled life, verse 25, or 24 and 25.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh. People don't like to hear that. It sounds like some kind of asceticism, doesn't it? Crucified the flesh.

We have so many books on psychology today telling us all how to be the happy optimist, the total fulfilled person. I appreciated what Nigel said from that panel, that life for most people involves some suffering. And it isn't always God's plan to instantly deliver us from everything and to instantly heal everything.

We are human beings. And the Bible says the rain falls on the just and the unjust. There was one book I desperately tried to get here this weekend and it failed.

It's in Bromley. It is the very best book I know written on the subject of healing and the whole area of prosperity. It's not written by someone who doesn't believe in healing.

To the contrary, it's written by a theologian from Oral Roberts University who happened to also study at Wheaton College. Quite a balance. You know anything about those two places? The name of the book is called The Pinnacle from the Pinnacle of the Temple.

And the book deals with the problem of being able to discern between faith and presumption. And with a great emphasis on faith that has blown through Britain lately, and you can be sure that I believe in faith, probably one of the greatest emphases of our whole work, and I believe God heals, and I believe in miracles. But with a great emphasis on faith without the balance of other biblical principles, we have gotten into presumption.

We have gotten into presumption. And if you want a copy of that book, I can't give it away free, but I'll be happy to get it into your hands. Because I feel with what's happening in Britain right now, this is a crucial

book.

I was preaching in a large Assembly of God church in Malaysia, staying in the home of a pastor, a church that has many people on OM, and supports them. And let me just tell you, some of the Asian churches in Malaysia and Singapore are far more faithful in supporting their young people than our British churches. That's just the truth.

There are beautiful exceptions here, but they often are the exception. And let's face it, young people, if we don't get several adults with a vision for world missions, for every young person that has a vision for world missions, we can do a lot of praying, and we can do a lot of talking, and we can do a lot of running about, but we're not going to get the men and women out to the field, not long term, not long term. And for every man that has a vision to go, we need a lot of people who have a vision to send.

You look at Romans chapter 10. We don't have time now. How shall they preach, except they be sent, except they be sent, from the pinnacle of the temple.

Is it presumption, or is it faith? And for a while, OM was doing in the area of money. What extreme healing people were doing in the area of physical illness. And I will tell you, when the lights went on, at least in my heart and hundreds of other hearts in OM, it was a glorious day.

It was a glorious day. I believe God uses medical doctors. That's one of God's programs for healing.

I believe God also uses often the bed of affliction in ways that we do not fully understand. I believe there is a divine purpose in God not totally healing Jonathan McCroskey, our European director, but allowing him to function in an amazing way on his wheelchair as a paraplegic. And the story of Johnny, the book is down on the table, and the story of thousands of other men and women of God, like Fannie Crosby, and there's now a film about her life that you ought to see, is something that we should not forget.

We need a great renewal of emphasis on what it is to be crucified with Christ, what it is to be able to plod on when things are rough and when things are tough, and when things are not going our way. Notice it says in verse 25, if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, or envying one another.

Probably the most influential author in O.M. is A.W. Tozer. Sometimes we have pushed this book so much for 25 years that we just take it for granted everybody is reading Tozer. Surely God raised up this man and gave him biblical understanding to minister to the Church in our generation.

This is one of his more recent books, as his material is still being taken from tape and being put into print. STL, together with Kingsway Publishers, has produced *Leaning into the Wind*. *Leaning into the Wind*.

I guess my favorite part of the British Isles is southern Wales, west Wales, Pembrokeshire. My goal is in these 10 years to walk or jog the whole Pembrokeshire coast. I'm a little behind schedule.

That is some of the most beautiful coastline I've seen anywhere in the world. And when I was down there, some friends said, why don't you go windsurfing? Oh, sure. You know what we always say as Americans, oh, a piece of cake, windsurfing.

So I, for the first time in my life, two summers ago, got in a wetsuit. Have you ever been in a wetsuit? A character like me gets in one, you can't find him. It looked easy.

You know, you just stand on this surfboard, you got this huge sail, and somehow you lean into the wind or you place the sail in a way that the wind just drives you forward. Easy. You try.

I didn't stay up even once more than a few minutes. Leaning into the wind. Not as easy as it may look or may sound.

The spirit-filled life, spirit-filled leadership. Not as easy as some people make it sound in our many special meetings. Billy Graham said it's rough and it's tough to follow Jesus Christ.

And if you're not willing to learn a disciplined life, then you might as well forget it. I tried something else after I was operated on in the summer of 84. I again had an operation on my vocal cords.

And the doctor told me to rest. And especially not to speak. Might as well tell a seagull to just go to sleep.

Anyway, I decided to rest and the next day I went to Lake George. I was operated on in Canada where I used to go as a teenager for my holiday. And I tried something else that looked easy.

Jet skiing. I was watching these people. I like to do things that I've never done before because the last thing you want in life is to be bored.

I don't remember one boring day since Jesus Christ saved me 31 years ago, 2 weeks ago. Anyway, I decided to go jet skiing. This thing is like a large pair of motor, of what do you call them, water skis.

I used to go water skiing. I only needed one ski and I could lie down on it. But I used to go water skiing.

And this is like two water skis with a jet engine built on the front of them. And well, I got on that thing. And the trouble is until you're going 20 miles an hour and outside of the shore area, you're not allowed to get up on the ski.

You have to drag behind it. And that is the most uncomfortable position. I've been in, in a long time.

Here I am, dragging behind this jet, big skis. Finally I got out past the mile per hour zone. And then you have to jam it up to about 25 miles an hour.

So I jammed it up to about 25 miles an hour. The next thing I knew I was headed straight for a yacht on a collision course. Now fortunately this jet ski is a little bit like a lot of Christians.

If you fall off it, it goes around in a circle. And so I fell off and it went around in a circle and came back to me. And I got up again.

And I fell off again. And I got up again. And I headed in toward another yacht and I jumped off again.

And I tell you, I haven't been jet skiing ever since. Then I tried one more new thing. That looked a lot easier.

I saw in the distance a man coming down in a parachute. I've always wanted to go in a parachute, but I never felt a desire to jump from a plane. I'm the kind of kid that almost jumped out of a window once with an umbrella.

But something held me back. So that day there on Lake George, not named after me by the way. You know, here in England people have a lot of false ideas about America, really.

And it's amazing the way British people can take the mickey out of Americans. It must be one of the most supreme gifts of the race. I think there was a British person going over this fantastic George Washington Bridge from New Jersey to New York City.

Huge bridge. Much more times the size of any bridges over the Thames. And now there's two layers.

So cars are going up and back and forth on both layers. That was just added some years ago. This American was boasting, look at this bridge.

It's one of the largest bridges in the entire world. And this person from London said, yes, but does it go up and down? Anyway, I went out in the middle of Lake George and they attached this parachute. This is how you do it, just in case you want to get into this.

And they put you behind a speedboat. You're on a little barge, you're moving slowly. Then the speedboat picks up speed and in that parachute you go straight up.

How many have been parasailing? Look at this boy. I tell you, this is the age of adventure. And when you get way, way up, about five times higher than this building, yeah, they let you go.

And you come down, just like in a parachute. And just as my feet hit the water, the speedboat speeded up, back up again. Great experience.

But that's not leaning into the wind. That's just going with the wind, with the help of a high-speed powerboat. You know, I find the Christian life such a challenge.

And I find that God doesn't want to just teach me every day from his word, but he wants to teach me through other things that I do. How many of you are into rugby? This is one of my favorite sports, rugby. Raise your hand.

What about the sisters? I thought the feminist movement was going to get thousands of women into rugby, but obviously it's losing steam. Rugby reminds me a lot of Operation Mobilization. Really, you got a whole bunch of people running out around the field, and they keep passing the ball.

But it also reminds me a lot of the church, with about, what is it, 30 people altogether out on the field in desperate need of rest, surrounded by thousands in desperate need of exercise. Let us clearly understand, brothers and sisters, that no matter what experience you have with the Holy Spirit this weekend, no matter what recommitment you make to the Lord Jesus Christ, as you go out from here, it's going to be rough, it's going to be tough. It's going to be downright frightening at times.

And it's going to be a lot more difficult than parasailing, jet skiing, windsurfing, or anything else you may be into, including squash. And that really does scare me. When I heard of a guy not so long ago who had his eye flipped out on a squash court, I decided to stick to tennis.

At least the enemy is on the other side of the net. I want you to turn to another passage of Scripture in the book of Ephesians. And perhaps it's one that some have neglected.

Ephesians chapter 5, verse 18. And be not drunk with wine in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit. That's a command.

Billy Graham gave the most powerful message. I guess I'm biased, having been converted to Christ through his ministry. I think most of you know my testimony.

It's touched on briefly in my book, *No Turning Back*. I don't feel I should share it tonight. But Billy Graham often speaks, be ye filled with the Holy Spirit.

I believe that is the privilege of every believer. And if you're being prepared for leadership in the work of God, it is absolutely essential that you're filled with the Holy Spirit and that you know it. Tozer is stronger on that latter point than I am.

Because I have known people who I'm convinced were filled with the Spirit, but they didn't seem to know it. I guess maybe eventually they discovered it. There's such a great danger today that we think being filled with the Spirit, and especially when we combine it with the controversy in connection with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which Christians have not been able to agree on for many, many, many years, that we end up in a jungle of controversy instead of on the highway of holiness and Spirit-filled living.

In OM now, for a couple of decades, we have had a large number of people who believe in a very strong way in what some people call a second work of grace, and they call it the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The old Methodists, the old Salvation Army people, were teaching that long before more modern charismatic people came in, speaking technically and gave a greater emphasis to the gifts of the Spirit. Salvation Army, Methodists, many others in different camps, emphasized the baptism of the Holy Spirit for holiness.

Have you ever been to the great Holiness Convention in Southport? I probably preached there seven times. Baptism of the Holy Spirit for holiness. That was the message of men like Brother James and others who were involved in that convention for so many years.

Some of you, many of you come from that kind of church, and we respect your church, and we will not, as a fellowship, as a missionary agency, attack the doctrine and teaching of your church. That's what makes Operation Mobilization a little more complex than some groups. Another great segment of people in Operation Mobilization, including, to a large degree, the earlier roots of the work, prefer to emphasize the fullness of the Holy Spirit, prefer to emphasize ongoing sanctification.

The historical position we have in Christ through what He has done on the cross and the ongoing work of sanctification. And one of the most beautiful things I have seen in our fellowship is people in these different camps respecting one another. And guess what even happens? Can you imagine? People even change camps.

Woo! And OM gets blamed. We get phone calls from churches. I sent my daughter on Operation Mobilization, and she was a lovely little Pentecostal tongue-speaking girl, so absolutely convinced about all of our doctrines, and she's come back from OM, and now she's not so sure about exactly this or that or some other thing.

Then somebody else phones me up, and they said, I sent my son on Operation Mobilization, and he's come back home, and I found him speaking tongues in the closet. And of course, OM is always to blame. We're always to blame.

As if we can control young people in our generation with all they hear on television, with all they read, with all the different people they meet at university before they ever come on OM, where this is a much more controversial issue actually than on Operation Mobilization. Yes, we do change. And some people who are

strong in one persuasion perhaps become a little more balanced and lean a little bit the other way, and some who are strong this way, they lean maybe the other way.

You think this is too much for God to handle? I'm sure God is really worried about this. I will tell you, if I didn't believe that God could overrule some of our folly and some of our struggles and some of our doctrinal peculiarities, I really get depressed. And I think sometimes our problem is, as J.B. Phillips once said, our God is too small.

We have put him in a denominational box. We have put a label on him. We have told God exactly what he must do and how he must do it and when he must do it.

And I will tell you, when you try to put God in a box, you're going to get in trouble. You're at least going to lose your box. And I think it's a beautiful thing that whatever our background, at least as this is what I'm hoping for tonight, we can agree that every Christian, and certainly every Christian leader, should be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Billy Graham, in speaking about the Spirit-controlled life, said, I don't care how you get it, just get it. I say, Amen. Hallelujah.

By the way, that book, I misquoted a title on a book this morning. It's not the praise factor. It's the hallelujah factor.

I want to ask you, are you filled with the Holy Spirit? If you're not, you're not going to have a Spirit-controlled life. If you're not born again, and we've had people even born again in conferences like this, if you're not born again, you don't even have the Holy Spirit. All who are born again have the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity dwelling in Him.

The Word of God says, if you have not the Spirit of Christ, you have not Christ. But now we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Another place the Bible says, yield your members unto righteousness.

I personally believe that you can be a Spirit-filled person without necessarily knowing the vocabulary. Many godly people I met in India were illiterate. They could not read all these victorious life books.

They could not read a different book about the Holy Spirit every week. But they yielded to the Word of God. They yielded to the Lord Jesus.

And I want to tell you, when you yield to the Lord Jesus and to the degree that you yield to the Lord Jesus and follow the Lord Jesus in obedience and praise God for those messages on old-fashioned obedience, we need that today. Trust and obey, there's no other way. That's not bondage.

That's glorious liberty in Jesus Christ. And I'm sure that many of you have probably been filled with the Holy Spirit at times and perhaps haven't even thought of it as that. But it is good to be sure.

You know, many people are missing a Spirit-controlled life because they are overreacting against extremism. We have this in O.M. Because I'll tell you, we are archenemies against extremism. We've written books on it.

We've got tapes on it. And it's true. I wear this little carpenter's level as a challenge to anybody who sees it to become more balanced.

To get the bubble in the middle is very difficult. I think it's broken, actually. Spiritual balance.

We need it. Some years ago, my daughter came to me and said, Now you're getting extreme in the whole area of balance. You cannot win.

You cannot win. Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit. What a danger.

When we overreact to some of the extreme things that are done supposedly in the name of the Spirit and we overreact and we end up in the deep freeze of dead orthodoxy. That's worse. Brother Andrew said it's easier to cool down a fanatic than warm up a corpse.

My dear brother or sister, don't be afraid to express a little emotion in your love for Jesus Christ. Don't be afraid once in a while to weep over your sins and the coldness of your heart. Let's not be afraid to weep over some of the lack of vision and the lack of love and the lack of generosity that so often is expressed in this materialistic age in which we find ourselves.

When's the last time you shed a tear for a lost soul? When we're filled with the Holy Spirit, we will know what Acts 1.8 talks about. And we will also know the kind of reality spoken about in Acts 13. Because when we think of being Spirit-controlled, we are not just thinking in terms of God directing us emotionally and God guiding us in terms of our practical Christian walk with God, but we are also thinking in terms of the Holy Spirit directing our missionary endeavors.

Tozer felt that the Holy Spirit was the missing persons in some of the committee meetings, some of the church board meetings. And I feel that's often true. We need to not just acknowledge and experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

We need to know the Holy Spirit as sovereign director over our lives and our affairs. And, of course, that is inseparable from the Lordship of Jesus Christ. And, praise God, there's no competition in the Godhead.

The Holy Spirit and Jesus are not fighting in heaven over who's getting more attention in the church. And we know, according to the Word of God, that one of the main ministries of the Holy Spirit is to exalt and lift up the Lord Jesus Christ. Can you say, absolutely, this evening, that Christ is Lord of your life? Is the Holy Spirit guiding you as to how you spend your money? Who you date? Where you go when you date? What you watch on television? What you do about the future? Is it possible for the Holy Spirit to guide us in these practical areas under the headship of Jesus Christ? I will tell you, if I didn't believe that were possible, I wouldn't be here.

In Acts 13, we find the birth, in some ways, of missionary work as it was known in those days. Look at Acts 13. What does it say? It speaks about the Holy Spirit speaking.

Verse 2. They ministered to the Lord and fasted, and the Holy Spirit said, Separate me, Barnabas and Saul, for the work unto which I have called them. Verse 4. So they being sent forth by... Underline it. You know, it revolutionized my Bible study when I learned to underline and mark my Bible.

Believe me. That's so helpful. At least for characters like me.

So they being sent forth by the Holy Spirit departed on to Cilicia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. The Holy Spirit. We don't have time to go through the book of Acts and see the leadership of the Holy Spirit through the body of Christ.

This is practical. This is not just something you experience in a great worship meeting with a band and where there's a great clap and a great praise and a great blessing. Hallelujah for the increased emphasis on praise.

But let me tell you. If this increased emphasis on praise doesn't lead to more reality, more passion for souls, hard work, world evangelism, then it's a cul-de-sac. It's a cul-de-sac.

It's short of what God would have it be. We need the whole counsel of God. We can't just take the blessings and not the responsibility.

We can't just study our Bibles like going to some kind of cafeteria. Pick and choose. Have you ever been to that kind of restaurant? You know, a little salad, a little potato, a little meat.

No olives for me, thank you. Oh yeah, a little lettuce. Oh, none of this salad dressing.

Pick and choose. Any fussy eaters here? When you go to the Word of God, there cannot be cafeteria Bible study. You've got to take it all.

And I will tell you, as one man of God said, in our Christian lives, listen, there will be no gain without pain. And I'll tell you, some of us, if we're honest, our biggest problem is laziness. I am so burdened about what I'm going to share with you right now that I'm going to try to just tie this together.

So many people feel they are not functioning in their spiritual life because somehow they need a fresh touch from God and they haven't had it. And so we go to one conference after a conference. Probably you're already signing up for some other special conference in the summer.

And we hear messages and we make a decision or we at least pray a prayer. And we often hear this prayer, Oh, Lord, touch me. Have you ever prayed that? Lord, touch me.

Lord, deliver me. Lord, help me. Lord, do this.

Lord, do that. I feel that some of us are asking God to do things that he is expecting us to do ourselves. And I thank God for men like Dr. Lloyd-Jones who makes this very clear in his writings.

If you play tennis, it's a very simple game. When the guy on the other side of the net hits the ball over the net into your court, you simply hit it back. And you continue to do that throughout the course of the game.

Simple. Brothers and sisters, I pray that you will not forget this. When God saved you and he put the Holy Spirit in your heart and your life, then the ball was from then on in your court.

And the next step is yours. And the spiritual lukewarmness that so often we find, the discouraged Christians we so often find, the people who got mightily blessed in a summer conference, but six months later they're lukewarm or they run out of steam or they don't feel the presence of God is one of the biggest tricks of Satan that exists. Especially if they live that way week after week and month after month.

And they ask people to pray for them and they go to special meetings and they read more books and they pray the same prayer, Lord change me, Lord touch me. Oh Lord, if it only were like when I was first saved. Nehemiah taught his people to rise and build.

The Holy Spirit is in us and as we confess our sin at the foot of the cross, in brokenness, the Holy Spirit will fill us. And I like the emphasis of D.L. Moody who went on and said, be filled again and again and again. Isn't that the problem with many? We were filled, maybe the way you think of it, it was a baptism of the Holy Spirit, but it's one year ago, it's two years ago, and yet today, there's not the fruit, there's not the reality, the joy, and we're wondering what's wrong.

Be filled again. And it's just a matter of taking a step of faith. It's a matter of obedience.

It often involves confession. If some sin is in the way, if some wrong attitude, bitterness, pride, anxiety is blocking, that I refer to as grieving the Holy Spirit, then there has to be repentance and confession. 1 John 2, verse 1. H.A. Hodges in his book, Unseen Warfare, said this.

This is brilliant. This is the quote of the night. Don't try to find this book though.

This fervor, he's speaking here not of our first love, but of the initial fervor we had when we first became a Christian, and I would often say perhaps when we first had some experience with the Holy Spirit. This initial fervor is especially characteristic of beginners, and its drying up should be welcomed. Its drying up should be welcomed as a sign that we are getting beyond first stage.

To try to retain it, or to long for its return in the midst of dryness, is to refuse to grow up. And if you're going to be a leader, it's time to grow up. He goes on to say, it is to refuse the cross.

On the other hand, by our steady adherence to God, when the affections are dried up and nothing is left, but the naked will clinging blindly to Him, the soul is purged of self-regard and trained in pure love. Brothers and sisters, if you and I could get into that kind of training program, and that kind of biblical understanding, there would be no turning back. The privilege of every believer is personal revival.

The privilege of every believer is the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The privilege of every believer is Christ reigning and ruling in the heart, or as Roy Hession calls it in Calvary Road, cup running over. And when it's not, then you repent, and you come back to the cross, and in simple faith you believe and appropriate, appropriate the promises of God.

Once a little lady said to D.L. Moody, by the way, a secular encyclopedia said he depopulated, it was an American evangelist who depopulated hell by one million souls. Not bad for an overweight character who had a lot of struggles and couldn't speak proper English. If you want to read about something wild, read how the Holy Spirit used D.L. Moody at Cambridge University, and in Glasgow.

And a lady once said to Mr. Moody, Mr. Moody, why do you keep going on about being filled again and again and again with the Holy Spirit? And Moody just looked her in the eye and he said, Lady, because I leak. I don't know about the rest of you. Maybe a few of you who are older have heard that before.

But every time I repeat it, it's a challenge to my own heart, because I am one very weak, leaky Christian leader, and every day I need a free refill. And so I don't only pray God touch me, I pray God break me, God kick me, God, you know, send me up in a parachute, but somehow, don't let me somehow rust away or fossilize into one more frozen evangelical monument. I want to ask you, because our time is gone, are you filled with the Holy Spirit? Are you experiencing and seeing the fruit of the Spirit in your life? Not perfection, because the filling of the Spirit, please don't miss this, does not destroy your humanity.

We dealt with that in my seminar. I don't know if that's on tape, but I touch upon it in my book, No Turning Back. It doesn't destroy the human factor.

If you're filled with the Spirit, you're still going to have struggles. You're still going to fail at times. What a danger there is, once a person is knowing the fullness of the Spirit, once a person is knowing the Lordship of Christ, of Satan and counterattacking and trying to get this person into extremes.

He almost changes his strategy. I've seen it happen on OM again and again. It scares me.

Somebody gets right with the Lord. They begin to know discipleship and commitment. They experience the filling of the Holy Spirit.

They start to win people to Christ. They start to move in the things of God. And then Satan changes his strategy and tries to get them into extremism or into false doctrine or into super-spirituality, and there's plenty of that going around, or into extremism or into exclusivism.

You know, our church is the only true real church. Oh, it's too bad you're fellowshipping down there on the other end of the road. Please, you know, really pray.

You need to get with what God's doing today. What is God doing today? Only what they're doing on one end of the street? God is doing a lot of things today. And it doesn't all begin in the British Isles.

My plea is for what dear brother Bilheimer speaks about in this book. Love covers. That areas where we don't agree and where we think differently and there's plenty of difference of thought among us, even among us as OM leaders who are here, somehow let's learn how to compassionately disagree.

I'm looking forward to a copy of Nigel's letter to the Archbishop. I think it's going to be a challenging letter. I wrote to Margaret Thatcher some time ago.

Felt that she should have a copy of Charles Colson's book, Love Covers. And I included no turning back as a bonus. Don't let that sidetrack from what the Holy Spirit is trying to say to us right now as we come to a close of this message.

Is Christ Lord of your life? You know why we're not seeing more candidates headed to the mission field? It's very simple. Because from the word of God we know the Holy Spirit is interested in world missions. Acts 1E, ye shall be my witnesses.

In England, Scotland, and Wales? No, ye shall be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, that includes England, Scotland, and Wales, and Ulster, and all the rest. But in Samaria, the Belgians, the French, the Spains, the Italys, and what? The uttermost part of the earth. Be honest, how many of you, before you came here this weekend, you feel that you can say you had a fairly significant interest in the uttermost parts of the earth? Raise your hand.

Maybe you were at Expo. I took a survey there. And that was the beginning of vision for the uttermost parts of the earth for many people.

Brothers and sisters, it is clear that the Holy Spirit is interested in those uttermost parts. Jesus is interested. He said, pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers.

Do you pray for that? Christ is Lord. And if the Holy Spirit is in control, then you are going to be involved in world missions. And that's why our first burden isn't world missions.

It's to see the Holy Spirit reigning, ruling in your life, in the factory, in the college, behind the wheel of the automobile, in your home. Not in perfection, but in reality. And I believe God has brought many of you here because He wants to fill you afresh.

Some, it may be the first time. There may even be some ignorant of these things. But God wants to fill you with the Holy Spirit and make Christ, not forcing you, absolute Lord in your life, your time, your relationships, your money, your future, what you think.

This is total commitment. This is the message that has burned on our hearts for over a quarter of a century. That has put men and women out on the mission field in almost every single nation in the world, with still a majority of them back in their own home churches, trying to light the fire at home that the church may know ongoing commitment to revival and renewal.

Ephesians 5. Be ye filled with the Holy Spirit. Let us bow in prayer. I mentioned in the beginning that the Word preached might be of no avail if not mixed with faith.

And I know God has prepared many of you before you ever came here. And I know many of you are hungering and thirsting after a deeper walk with God. But perhaps you haven't realized the ball was in your court, that you must act.

You must take steps of faith, not just tonight but every day. Denying self, taking up the cross and following Christ as He taught. Obeying God's Word when you don't feel like it.

Standing on the promises of the Lord when the winds are blowing contrary against you. And I believe that we're not just calling people to make a decision tonight, but we're calling people to take a step of faith in which every day from now on it's going to be different. Because every day from now on, by God's grace, you're going to purpose to be a disciple and follow Christ with all your heart, though it may be rough and though it may be tough.

Wherever it leads, whatever the cost. And if God has spoken to you and you want to take that step of faith and ask God to fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit, that Christ may be absolute Lord over your life in every practical area, then I'm going to ask you to pray your own prayer of faith right where you are. Commitment.

Confession. And as you pray that prayer of faith, I want you to take an outward step to express that inward transaction. I want you to just quietly stand up where you are that I can pray an instant prayer for you and then a prayer of dedication for everyone.

God, I believe, has led me to give you this opportunity to stand as I did those many years ago when O.J. Smith gave the challenge and when God filled me afresh with His Holy Spirit and took me further on in what it was to be a crucified disciple of Jesus Christ. If you're serious, you mean business about total commitment and being filled daily with the Holy Spirit and going on as a disciple into the battle front, then I'd like you to take that step of faith and quietly right where you are to stand up as you pray right now. And I'm taking it that as you stand, you're saying, Lord, I believe.

Help Thou my unbelief. I'm a doubter. I'm a struggler.

I'm like this character Verwer. I'm just a needy, weak, leaky Christian. But I want to be refilled.

And I want to walk seven days a week as a disciple and soldier of Jesus Christ with Him as Lord of my life. God bless each one of you. God burn it into your heart by His Holy Spirit.

Anyone else before I pray? Hallelujah. Let's pray. Oh God, you see each one standing before you now.

Tens of thousands are praying for this meeting. And we know, oh God, that you have answered prayer and you have convicted us of our lukewarmness and our laziness. You have convicted us of some of our extremism, some of our pendulum thinking and generalizations.

And, oh God, we come back to the cross tonight in simple faith. And we ask you, Lord, to fill us even now. And each day we're going to come back in the same way.

In your word, in prayer. Oh Lord Jesus, fill us now. In Jesus' precious name, amen.

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