

Spiritual Realities

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the importance of being active doers of God's Word and engaging in world missions through prayer and community outreach.

Duration: 58:54

Scripture: Psalm 119:11, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:1-5, James 1:22

Topics: "Spiritual"

Description

In this video, the speaker discusses the importance of understanding different types of people that God has saved. He reflects on his own journey and how God delayed him for 20 years before he arrived at Kendall. The speaker emphasizes the need for God's people to be serious about life and to serve, help, love, and give to others. He also highlights the tendency of believers to be indifferent and refers to them as 'God's frozen people.' The speaker urges listeners to awaken to the lost and needy around them and to be aware of the challenges that young people face today. He mentions the epidemic of drugs in Britain and predicts that AIDS will also reach epidemic levels. The speaker then quotes Romans 12, encouraging believers to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God and to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. He emphasizes the importance of humility and using the gifts that God has given each individual for the benefit of the body of Christ.

Transcript

I have the privilege of coming and sharing with you here in Kendal. I think I've been now living in Britain about twenty-five years. I guess that includes quite a bit of time in India and other places, but unless someone has a better memory than I do, which is not unusual, I believe this is my first time here in Kendal.

I wasn't sure I was going to get here really because we were over in the Whitehaven area and I looked on this little map and I thought, well, this little road goes more direct than this one around the coast. So we started on this road over the mountain and it seems that everybody today decided to go on that road, but there's only room for one at a time and at the top of that pass was the most massive traffic jam, people panicking and we thought we were going to be sitting up there for quite a while, but somehow the Lord brought us down from the mountain to be with you in the meeting. We have set up a very special book display and before we read from the book of books, and no Christian book compares with the Bible, books are just sermons in print taken from the Bible, I'd like to just mention some of these books with the hope that after the meeting you'll take a few minutes, not only books, but audio tapes, music tapes, video tapes,

brand new Rolls-Royce missionary map of the world, all kinds of items are there.

Let me mention first of all the new edition of Operation World, we've been waiting for a couple of years, 500 pages of information on what's happening around the world, politically, spiritually, prayer requests, maps, you'd expect to pay 10 pounds for a book like this today, 500 pages, but till Christmas it's 3 pounds 95, already the first huge edition in our warehouse as we published it is almost out of stock, and we believe God is going to use this book to promote world missions, and we have this new map of the world that you can get with it, presenting the great challenge of world evangelism.

Every time you purchase any book from our little book exhibition, you receive a magazine book free, these books originally sold for 1 and 2 pounds, but by putting it in magazine form, especially this is for Africa and Asia, we always just keep a few back in Britain, you can get them free, this is Gems from Tozer, this is one of my earlier books, Come Live and Die, but there are many other books there, we especially have been stressing the writings of Oswald Saunders and Ralph Shallis, two great men of God, this is his book on spiritual leadership, reprinted again, anyone with any kind of responsibility in the church, and I think even in the home, needs to read what this dear old saint has to say about leadership, this book is now in many, many languages, you will need to read it in English, and I recommend that, if you only get one book, perhaps you should get that one.

Ralph Shallis is now with the Lord, one of the greatest British missionaries of this generation, his French was so good that he wrote in French and had to be translated back into English, and this is one of his books from now on, a book on spiritual growth, a down to earth book, that it's not easy to grow strong in Jesus Christ, and Satan will resist you every inch of the way, and this is a brilliant book on spiritual growth, that we want to encourage you to get, healing for damaged emotion, so many people who come into our work now, a couple thousand every year, have damaged emotion from their background, unbelievable things, I don't even like to mention some of them in public, but God has been using this book, you may not agree with everything in it, written by a great, great bible teacher, he's not a psychiatrist, bible teacher, on basic biblical principles that can help us find strength when we're under emotional pressure, and we're finding that bitterness doesn't just disappear, and that worry, and inferiority, anxiety, doesn't always easily go, finally published in its British edition, one pound cheaper than it was before, Healing for Damaged Emotion, by David Seamans, well as you can imagine, there are many other books, here's one by Peter Maiden, I think most of you know him, what you may not know is that from his little stronghold in Carlisle, he in fact is the associate international director of Operation Mobilization, and he has written this book, called Take My Silver, I originally phoned him up and said, I'm opposed to you producing this book, in O.M. people are going to think we're hinting for money, in O.M. you know we believe in just looking to God, but anyway, he won, and someone else published it, apart from O.M., and I think it really is a great book, and if you buy my book, No Turning Back, lovely pictures of some mountains there, mainly messages I've given over the past years, you can have Peter Maiden's book free, I'm not sure if that's possible, but I hope we have enough copies, My Big Father, a book about Turkey, again, God may have brought me here this evening just to tell you about these books, because this is not a well-known book, and it's a book that you will want to read, one of the first persons ever to come to Christ in our church planting ministry in Turkey was Brother Canan, he is now with the Lord, but again, through this book about his life, the message goes on, there's also a lot of cassette tapes being offered at a special price by Dr.

Martin Lloyd Jones, by Alan Redpath, and some music tapes by Keith Green, and others, and I hope that at least, if you don't buy anything, you'll pick up this little newspaper about the ministry of OM, I'm not here to say that much about OM, no one said I couldn't, that's not really the first burden on my heart tonight, but

we need new people who will pray, you know, every week, approximately, one of our prayer partners goes to be with the Lord, and we need new people who will stand in the gap and pray as we move forward in the communist world, the Muslim world, the Hindu world, Africa, South America, and throughout Europe, I guess just about the whole world now, in fact, I noticed the ship Lagos is just in its 95th country, and we're so excited about what God wants to do in the next 12 months.

If you want more regular information about OM, you can fill out that coupon and send it in to our British office located now near Oswald Street. Let's turn now in our Bibles, if we could please, to Romans chapter 12. Romans chapter 12.

As I've been spending most of today praying and answering letters while at the same time looking at the beautiful Cumbrian mountains and the Lake District, I've just been reminded, as I'm sure you have so many times, of the greatness of God. And as I saw that traffic jam on that pass, I was reminded again of the folly of man. God is great, and God is wanting us to respond to his voice.

I think of those words in James. I climbed two mountains very early this morning listening to the word of God as I was climbing on my little cassette recorder. It makes climbing even more interesting these days, to go to the top of a mountain listening to the book of Hebrews.

And then we got into the book of James, and I remember those words. Let's not be hearers of the word only, but doers. Doers.

And this is what I long for as I share with you this evening. Romans 12. After those great 11 theological chapters of Romans, we have these words.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. And ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, realistically, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ. Every one member is one of another, having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us.

Whether prophecy let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith, or ministry let us wait on our ministry. For he that teacheth on teaching, he that exhorteth on exhortation, he that giveth, let him do it with liberality. He that ruleth with diligence, he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness.

Let love be without hypocrisy, hate that which is evil, and cling to that which is good. And be kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another. Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing diligently in prayer. Distributing to the necessity of saints, given to hospitality, bless them who persecute you, bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

And be of the same mind one toward another, and mind not high things, but come down, come descend to men of low estate. And be not wise in your own conceit. Let me just pray for a moment.

Father, we thank you for your word. We acknowledge that we are here to receive a message from your word. For our own situation at this particular time, and Lord as we're here, our hearts go out to Salvador, where that earthquake has suddenly thrust hundreds of people out into eternity.

Our hearts go out to Reykjavik in Iceland, where these two leaders of the superpowers meet together and discuss the destiny of planet Earth. Father, we know the hearts of kings and presidents, prime ministers in your hand. We believe, oh God, that we are here tonight in your purposes and in your will.

We would ask that we would not just be hearers, but doers of the word. For we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

To just emphasize, if at all possible, the challenge of this Dirty Hands project, the taking a very big step of faith to arrange the venue in a huge auditorium in Carlisle. I'm not sure if it's even listed on this leaflet. Yes, there it is, Sands Center, Carlisle.

I just saw this place the other day. I think there's room in there for a thousand or more people. And I can just say that this is a very, very high quality, outstanding program.

That you won't be ashamed to invite any young person to, who wants something perhaps a little different, a little unusual, in terms of methods of communication, multimedia presentation. And it's going to take a lot of prayer to really see this accomplish what we would like it to accomplish. There's an enormous need for emphasizing world missions.

In Britain today, when many, many people have become more introspective, and considering the situation in the nation, people feel, how can we look beyond the shores of Britain? But you know, for our mandate, we must look to God's word. Not to the political scene, or to the political conventions, which are now finished. But we must look to the word of God.

And we still have this command to go into all the world and preach the gospel. David Pope, some of the others who are involved in this ministry, have been out in India and have seen the need. They were out, somewhat in conjunction with our work in India.

And this series of meetings, all over the nation, are linked with what God has been doing in their own hearts. And Ian Coffey is an outstanding brother. I've met with him.

And I hope that you'll go. You know, sometimes when they have these big events, and they only have them in London, Birmingham, Glasgow, people in small places, I'm sure you never complain here, but people in small places say, hey, what about us? Why don't we get some of these big events? But you know, sometimes when the big events come, and we know that God can be in small events as well as big events, the people don't really get their hands dirty, and bring along the people who need to hear this challenge. So I just thought I would add that, and we would appreciate any help you can give in trying to get some people to come along on that important evening.

When I come to a town for the first time, I like to begin by just sharing a little of my own testimony. I would like you to turn back to Romans, Chapter 12, one of the most important passages of Scripture in my own thinking. I think it's so exciting that God is real.

God answers prayer. Many, many years ago, this little book was published, called Come Live, Die, Now You Can Get It Free, which was based on a message I gave at a large student convention of some 9,000 students on the subject of reality. In fact, the initial, original title was called Hunger for Reality.

And in a sense, this is always my burden when I come to share with God's people, reality, that we may really know God, that we may be able to express our faith to others in a realistic way, and in a way that makes an impact, that we would know reality in prayer, reality in relationships, reality in feeding upon God's Word, reality in dealing with problems, reality in dealing with the hard things in life. In my own situation, I wasn't a Christian as a younger teenager. My parents weren't Christians.

My grandfather came from the Netherlands, a little country across the water. He was an atheist. My other grandfather came from Glasgow.

He was a drunkard, and that marriage broke into two pieces, much to the dismay of many people. I didn't know what the Gospel was. I never went, as a very young person, to a meeting ever, like this meeting tonight, where God's Word was exalted.

I had got involved in a church, but this church was more like a social club. It was like a political organization. In fact, the pastor when I was there was more or less a Marxist.

And I became active in this church, president of the Young People's Group, because I thought I could bring life to the church by teaching the young people how to dance, which I did. Got a jukebox, record player in the church, and went at it. As you can guess, my father immigrated from the Netherlands.

My accent, I'm sure, betrays me, though I've lived in this country now 25 years, trying to learn the language. It's difficult. Every part of the country they speak it in a different way.

But my father was an immigrant from the Netherlands over to near New York City, and he wanted a good life, and worked very, very hard to give me everything that supposedly I would need. So that by 16, I had three businesses. I was happy, outwardly speaking, the New York nightclubs, the fun, and all the rest, especially women and sports.

But into my life, in God's providence, came a praying, elderly woman. She wasn't really old then, but when I was 17, anything over 30 looked like an antique. So she started praying for me, and she sent me a Gospel of John through the post.

And somehow, even through pride, though, I think I was seeking God. And my father was also beginning to seek God. Initially, he just sent me to Sunday school, and he stayed and worked in the garden.

But then he started to go, unfortunately, to the same church. So even though he didn't know Jesus Christ, he became an elder in the church. And we were both seeking, in many ways.

And this woman sent me this Gospel, and put me on her hit list, her prayer list, and prayed that I would not only be saved, but that I would be sent out as a missionary to reach millions of people with the Word of God. That's quite a wild prayer to pray, for a young teenager who was in trouble with the police, and who had no signs of getting involved in mission. Then Billy Graham came to New York City.

We have some of his books, by the way, available half-price on our book table. In fact, the Billy Graham books on the table are available for any donation, because we got them on a special basis. But Billy

Graham came to New York City for one night, and he had just come back from Scotland.

And I went to hear him speak, and I heard something I'd never heard before. I heard the need for conversion. I heard the need for new life.

I heard the need to repent of sin, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, if you have been reared in a Bible-believing church or assembly, of course, this is old news for you. Many of the young people that I counsel are bored with hearing this same old gospel.

It's hard to face that fact. And you know, often it's much more difficult for a second-generation Christian. I know from my three children, who have gone now through the teenage years, and are grown up, to be reared when you're fed Bible verses from age two, and then to somehow, later in life, become excited about Jesus Christ.

I thank God that over half the people in O.M. are young people reared in Christian homes. The other half of us, we just were grabbed from the pit. I came back from that meeting a new person in Jesus Christ.

I accepted Him, received Him, believed on Him. Use whatever terminology you want. Let's not fight so much over terminology.

We need more reality and less vocabulary. But something happened in my heart, in that meeting. And I went back to this ungodly school, high school, where sometimes a third of all the students were drunk.

And I just began to share Jesus Christ. And I twisted the headmaster's arm, because I'd become president of the student union, to let us have a Gospel of John distribution campaign in the high school. He couldn't believe his ears.

And we got a thousand students to promise to read God's Word in that school. And God's Spirit began moving in an unusual way. You know, that lady had prayed for that one school for over fifteen years.

Have you prayed for anything persevering for fifteen years? Don't give up. I find a lot of people give up when they're praying. But you know, we need to understand God's timing, God's providence, God's sovereignty.

And not give up. And so she kept praying, and she kept working. And she kept loving.

She's eighty pushing ninety now, and she's still going at it. She writes to me regularly. And you know, when you have prayer partners like that woman standing with you, I tell you, the devil gets mighty scared.

And sometimes he doesn't even bother to attack you, on some issues. So God worked in that school. In one meeting where I shared, about a hundred and twenty-five made a profession of faith in Christ.

Not all of them were converted. Then when Billy Graham came back for a crusade, two years later, because I was converted in a one-night meeting, we hired buses from this particular church parking lot into New York City, and many, many more came to Christ. My own father made a profession of faith in one of my meetings.

And then it was sort of sealed when he was working as a steward in the Billy Graham campaign. In God's providence, I went off to a very unusual college after high school. And as I went to this college, I was a babe in Christ, just so hungry to grow, and to know God's Word, that I didn't know many Christians.

And when I got to this college, I was warned. It was a very sleepy Presbyterian school, in the southern part of America. I was warned about this fanatic Dale Roton, who was baptizing people in the showers.

Some of you may have read some of Dale's books. We've been together now in this work, because through all of these things in high school and in college, Operation Mobilization was born. Though it never took on any real growth factor, until it came to Britain in 1962.

Because we didn't even have the name in those early days, Operation Mobilization. We didn't even know what God was doing. God united Dale and I together, and we ended up the next summer going to Mexico.

And our goal was to put into practice what we were reading about in the Word of God. This was always our great goal, together with reaching people for Christ, which we were already doing in the cities and towns and jails and places around where we were studying. Together with evangelizing, we wanted to put into practice the New Testament principles.

Perhaps because I was a doubting Thomas. In fact, when I studied liberal theology and philosophy and psychology, I was so filled with doubts, I just wondered, you know, is Christianity really true? This may sound strange to you, but in this one college, 50% of the young people who came in believing the Bible overthrew the Christian faith. 50%.

And many of them were ministerial students. That was back in the late 50s. And the evangelical cause, the Bible-believing cause, is a far greater strength now.

I think we have different problems now. We have people, you know, saying that they believe the Bible, but not really experiencing the authority of the Word of God in their lives, in their marriages, in their homes. And I can remember praying to God many, many times, Lord, if what I read here in your Word, Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by Him.

I was always a very sensitive person ever since childhood. Seeing my first beggar was an overwhelming experience. Seeing my drunken grandfather just about finished me.

I wanted to help the poor. I couldn't understand why I had so much, even though, I guess, we didn't have that much. And others had so little.

And when I went to Mexico and I saw people living in what we call in America garbage dumps, a rubbish tip, eating what was thrown away by other people, I just, I just was overwhelmed. In fact, I walked away into the sunset that night, I can remember it as if it were not so long ago, though in fact it was 29 years ago, almost 30 years ago, walking into the sunset of that rubbish tip in Monterrey, Mexico, and making a further commitment of my life to Jesus Christ. I transferred out of that particular college to Moody Bible Institute in order to take a missionary course and to head out while I thought the communist world.

To make a long story short, I launched my first major effort into the Soviet Union in the summer of 1961, and due to my own stupidity was arrested by the Soviet secret police and accused of being a CIA agent in the Soviet Union. They gave me a submachine gun escort back to Austria after deciding I was just a religious fanatic. And I went for a day of prayer, and during that day of prayer, I was actually singing and praising God on the top of a tree, one of the few places I can sing without really bothering a lot of people.

Two words came to my mind, operation, mobilization, and a vision, not a dream, but a vision in my own mind, of seeing Europeans reach Europe. It seemed a bit silly to bring Americans all the way across the

Atlantic, where their weakness in learning language, where their weakness in identifying to European culture, when there were so many people right in Europe who knew Jesus, and many of them knew languages. That's what led me to eventually leave Spain, where I was living, and just about learned Spanish when the Lord told me to leave and give the work over to nationals, which has always been our policy, to train nationals to be leaders of the Church in their own nation.

So in February of 1962, to my own amazement, God led me to Great Britain. Four months later, ninety British people, hardly knowing what they were doing, joined Operation Mobilization, including a young, dynamic man from Carlisle named Keith Beckwith, who was destined a few years later to give his life in service for Jesus Christ in Poland. I was just with his father a few days ago in Carlisle.

Always a mystery why young lives are often just suddenly taken. But God was planting a work here in the British Isles, which was not to be a one-year, two-year fly-by-night program, but which was destined to become one of the major missionary efforts in the history of British Christianity. And I guess some people had to give their lives for that to become a reality.

By the next summer, nine hundred British young people joined OM, and soon the work spread through all of Europe, the Middle East, and on out to India, where British people still, back in the early 70s and late 60s, had a tremendous open door. It was in these journeys out to India that seed thoughts for getting a ship came to the minds of a few of us in a converted pub in Bolton, Lancashire. I presented the leaders of OM with this burden God gave me, to have an ocean-going ship for world evangelism.

That ship has been sailing for seventeen years, has reached fifty million people with the Word of God, has seen tens of thousands profess faith in Christ or return to faith in Jesus Christ, and is now in its ninety-fifth nation. Thirty, no, it's now forty thousand men and women have had at least some kind of training on OM and are now working with mission societies and churches in almost every single nation in the world. These young people, when on OM, face-to-face have given the Word of God to over four hundred million people.

One unknown woman dared to believe God for a loud-mouthed, lost, confused, egocentric, pornoholic, high-school young person, and persevered, sending the Word of God through the post to that person. And God, in a sense, did the rest. It's called Operation Multiplication.

You can read about it in every page of the Book of Acts. As I've walked with God these thirty-two or thirty-three years, I have again and again been overwhelmed by my own weakness, my own inadequacy. And I guess that's why, in many ways, reality, the word reality, is still one of my favorite words.

I have a long way to go in my Christian life. I battle discouragement every week. I fail the Savior, but I know He is real.

And I refuse, by God's grace, according to His Word, to be intimidated by my mistakes and my failures, by my weaknesses, but in fact use them as stepping stones to go forward in my Christian life. One of the things I began to do when I was a young Christian was to read the Word of God, as Ralph Chalice urges us to do in this brilliant book, but then also to memorize Scripture. How many of you memorize Scripture, even one verse a week, even one verse a month? I like to be big-hearted.

I used to be so narrow. I'd make people all feel so guilty. So now I'm much easier to live with.

That's what some people have told me. Anyway, how many have memorized Scripture, even one verse a month? Raise your hand. Encourage my heart.

Prove to me it's different here than London. Seven hands. Well, eight.

Well, you're the same as people all over the country. I don't know why people don't memorize Scripture. The psalmist said, I have hid thy word in my heart that I may not stand against you.

Today you can even get the Word of God on tape. You can listen to men reading the Word of God as you're doing something else. We have so many advantages today to get into the Word of God.

Yet because of the pressure on our times, because of television, because of other good things oftentimes, because the good is often the enemy of the best, today the Bible is neglected by God's people. I don't believe it's enough to go to special meetings. I don't believe it's enough to even sit at the feet of the greatest Bible teachers in Britain.

I believe as Christians, if we want to have ongoing reality in our lives, we need to know how to feed upon the Word of God. If you're meditating intensively upon God's Word without necessarily memorizing it, that's fine with me. But many people aren't doing that either.

I found, speaking in Christian unions all over the nation, that many Christian students have never read the Bible through even once. I won't take that survey. One depressing survey is enough in any one evening.

But it's amazing how many people have never read the Bible through once. There's a word that rings in my mind tonight together with the word reality, and it's the word seriousness. When I got to the top of one of the mountains this morning, I switched off the Bible reading and turned on the news, and I got the reports on the Tory political convention.

I don't know what you think of politics. I don't know whether you're Tory or Labour or Liberal or whatever. But I can tell you some of these people, not all of them, some of these people, and I follow politics, are incredibly serious about what they're doing.

I happen to be an immigrant. I happen to also be an admirer of your Prime Minister. I'm sure not all of you are in that camp.

But I'll tell you whether you like her politics or not, you have watched these last few years a woman who is committed to what she is doing and makes a fool out of many Christians, including missionaries. Forgive me for getting strong. But I will tell you, in the church today we so lack seriousness of purpose.

We so lack people who will put their hands on the plow and not turn back. There's not one out of fifty Christian young people today who is serious about the things of God. It's a great big sort of religious game in which once or twice a week we're a little bit semi-serious, especially around the Lord's table, but the rest of the time, really, there isn't much seriousness about it.

When it comes to making an impact for God, when it comes to winning people to Christ, when it comes to the huge task of world missions that God has given us, when it comes to stewardship and giving of our money for world evangelism, when it comes to even the smallest tasks that need to be done that the church may function properly, often it's a few people who are doing all the work. I don't know if you've ever read the writings of A.W. Tozer. You can get one of his bookazines free of charge at the end of the meeting.

But Tozer said if any secular company needed as much raw material as the Christian church to get so little finished product, it would go bankrupt in six months. And you and I know that. Some of you are businessmen, some of you are farmers.

If you ran your business, if you ran your farm like we are running the church in terms of the total task of world missions, you would be out of business. And my plea tonight in this one feeble visit, perhaps in my lifetime to your town, is that you may take the Word of God in dead seriousness. That you may take passages like the scripture we read tonight, which would take us a week to expound, Romans 12, and decide this is the way you are going to live, whatever it costs.

And it will cost. It'll cost you some of that television time. It'll cost you some of that gardening time.

It'll cost you some of that other time that may go at present to good things, but is robbing you of the best. Many Christians today do not witness to anybody about their faith. They don't talk about Jesus to anyone.

I'm not asking you to become some militant, aggressive o-mer moving down the streets of Preston or Manchester with the Word of God. I'm only asking that somehow you would take some steps of faith in earnest to be His witness, because that's what the Word of God commands us in a dozen different places. Jesus, in Acts 1-8, says you shall receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth.

It's not just some of the people in the political realm who today are so dead serious about what they're doing. We see salesmen very serious about their product. We see sportsmen willing to train and buffet their body for two or three years.

We see people in many walks of life that seem to be far more committed to what they are doing, even opening a McDonald's in Kendal, that every man in the world may eventually have a hamburger. The goal that this tiny little corporation set years ago, which is now one of the largest companies in the entire world, started by one man who bought one little stand and decided the whole world was going to feel the impact, and it almost is. If it can get as far as Kendal, believe me, they are moving into the regions beyond.

Not really serious about that, of course. Amazing business people, sportsmen, political people, staying up late hours, sacrificing their money, risking their lives, like the day Margaret Thatcher got on the plane after she was almost blown to death in Brighton, and was headed out to New Delhi, of all places to go, where Indira Gandhi had just been assassinated. All these heads of state literally walked ready to be assassinated.

One of these little pipsqueak reporters tried to get a few words, you know, they are always trying to intimidate people, you know, aren't you afraid, aren't you worried? And she just said something very quick, like, you know, this is just something we learn to live with. And she got on the plane and risked her life to go to a funeral in New Delhi. She just tried to kill Indira Gandhi's son as well.

What a world we live in. Righteousness, do you love righteousness, my friends? When's the last time you were ever angry for unrighteousness? Do people being raped and murdered all around you stir you to do anything? We had another little lady in Crystal Palace just a few days ago, 75 years of age, raped and robbed on the doorstep of the vicarage, or inside the door, it started on the door. And not far from here, a friend of mine, went north of here, wrote me about her friend who was just raped and murdered.

And some people sit back as if there's nothing we can do about it. Abortion, slaughtering thousands and thousands of children, injustice on every side, wickedness, evil, there's so much to do. Even if you didn't believe in world evangelism, it seems to me you could get serious about life.

Serving, helping, loving, giving to others. And yet so often, God's people are indifferent. Somebody referred to them as being God's frozen people instead of God's chosen people.

Which is it really? And of course, these days if someone does happen to come along and share a strong message, you can be sure we'll engage in operation excuses. God's word says, 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. Have you been amazed by the growth of terrorism across the world? Have you been amazed by people who will climb into a plane with hand grenades, strapped around their waist and give themselves up as a sacrifice for a cause? And when we read about it, does Romans 12 somehow jump into your mind? That we as Christians should be presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice.

We should be willing to take risks for God. We're not going to plant churches in Sudan, Mongolia, Turkey, Bhutan, the regions beyond unless there are men and women willing to take risks. We're barely getting enough long-term missionary candidates to keep up with the death rate of British missionaries at present.

Did you know that? That's why these brothers and sisters have launched this Dirty Hands project, with the hope that somehow, through prayer and work, there could be a new wave of missionary interest. Many of the newer fellowships around Britain hardly believe in missions, and if they do, they have a unique style of missionary approach, which means that generally they will not send any missionaries to any missionary society, like OMF or WEC or OM, or dozens of the other great societies raised up by God to be extension outreach arms across the nations of people sent out by their churches to do the job. What a dangerous devilish trick if we allow division between the local church with their expertise and their roots into the local soil, and those outreach agencies like OMF and so many others reaching out across the world.

Both entities are found in the Book of Acts, and if the job is to be done in a world where there's now 5,000 million people, it will take a terrific working to get it. I think sometimes God gives us crisis experiences. My wife had her life turned upside down through Keswick and the Keswick ministry in Chicago.

She was a woman of terrific struggle. Her father killed in the war in the Battle of the Bulge. She suffered from various difficulties.

I talk about that in my latest book, No Turning Back. And it was there through the ministry at Keswick, men like George Duncan, that she came to a whole new walk with God. Most of you have probably been to Keswick.

I don't know how you could live in this part of the world and have an excuse for not going to Keswick. I'm looking forward to ministering there again next summer. But believe me, no matter what crisis you may have, if it's not followed by a process, it will become an abscess.

There is a sense in which we must present our bodies every day as a living sacrifice. There is a sense in which as Christians, we're daily in the battle. Jesus said, if any man come after me, let him deny himself.

Daily, take up the cross and follow me. A lot of young people today share that they don't feel called to the mission field. Many do not even consider it as a live option or a possible career.

It's amazing. They think perhaps missionary work is for the super spiritual. They think perhaps missionary work is for people that have excessive courage.

I'm not courageous by nature, I'm a coward by nature. Don't imagine missionaries as some great, huge, Bible-carrying heroes moving through the jungles, attacking, invading armies of cockroaches with their bare hands. There's many a missionary who in himself is weak and overwhelmed and just a struggler, like perhaps many of us here tonight.

But they believe the Bible. They believe that they had a cause to fight for, to live for. They believe that Jesus Christ actually lived.

We don't live as if Jesus actually lived. We speak as if he actually lived. We gather in our various churches as if he actually lived.

But we don't live as if Jesus Christ actually, God's Son, lived and died on the cross. If I told you right now this roof was going to fall in, what would you do? If you really believe me, would you perhaps write a chorus about it? That's the latest thing in Britain, a chorus a week. We've got so many hymn books now.

I went to one church recently. There were six different books. They handed me.

Many of them ended up on the floor. Maybe you'd write a chorus or maybe you theological types would have an argument about the theology of falling roofs and how that, you know, what would happen when it actually hit your head. I can tell you if you were living in El Salvador today, you'd be a serious-minded character.

What does it take? What does it take to shape God's people? What does it take to waken us to the lost all around us, to the needy all around us, to the drug addicts and the drunkards and the blind and the lame and the maimed? What does it take to wake us up to where the average young person is headed today, to the divorce courts and to the pits of immorality and every other kind of mental and emotional physical difficulty that we can face? Drugs in Britain right now is in epidemic stage. They predict in five years AIDS will be in epidemic stage. Did you see that woman interviewed on TV a few days ago for AIDS, pleading, crying out that someone would bring her that new medicine that they have in America which can at least retard AIDS.

A young man came to me a couple of months ago when I was visiting this ship in Canada. He said to me, he was ill and when we were having supper together, I said, what is actually wrong with you? He was one of the most committed men to the ship visit to Canada. And he sat across that table from me that day, I'll never forget it, and he said, I have AIDS.

He got it from blood transfusions because he's a homophiliac. It's not just sexually promiscuous people who get AIDS. What will it take to wake some of us up, to make us serious minded people about the kingdom, about the worth of God, about world evangelism, about our own lives? Not that I want people to become hyper serious and neurotic.

I'm accused of having a wild sense of humor, probably one of God's safety valves for characters like me who tend to be too intensive. I think it was Mr. Beckwith in Carlisle who first brought that word to my vocabulary many years ago. He said, Brother George, I sense you're a rather intensive young man.

I've been thinking about that ever since. And when you are intensive and when you are sort of a natural extremist like myself, you need a sense of humor. You need to get off in the hills and run around a little bit and burn up excessive energy.

Some time ago my wife just looked at me and she said, you know, just looking at you makes me really feel tired. I don't know if any of you are married to such a character, but you'll need a sense of humor. I don't believe being totally committed to Christ, filled with a spirit, serious about world missions, eliminates the human factor.

We're still, all of us, who are committed and who are serious, very, very human. We make mistakes, we get discouraged, we get angry. I'm still battling this great challenge of being a spiritual driver.

As someone who came to Christ through Billy Graham, I read a lot of his sermons and he has one highway safety of spiritual problem, certainly is with me. Maybe you're more spiritual when you're driving up here in this part of the country. But down in London, even among God's people, there seems to be a lack of sanctification behind the wheel.

Perhaps when people cut you off and bump the back of your car or do something else wrong, perhaps you just roll the window down and say, God bless you. But I'm having a little struggle in that area myself. And if I do roll the window down, something is liable to be said other than God bless you.

Being a committed follower of Jesus Christ does not destroy the human factor. And I'm sure some of you are already more committed than I am. You probably know God in a greater way than I do.

So don't be intimidated by your failures or by perhaps the fact that this is going wrong or that is going wrong or you don't feel spiritual. I'd love to get the autograph of any of you who feel perpetually spiritual. Because I have a struggle with often feeling very unspiritual and wondering how God even saved a character like me.

And if I have turned you off in my speaking for being too loud, I can sympathize. I watched a Verwer video tape the other day and was completely turned off. But I'll tell you one thing.

This treasure is in earthen vessels. And as God's people, we need to learn how to understand the different kinds of people that God saved. Maybe that's why God delayed me for 20 years to get to Kendall.

He didn't want to frighten any of you. Until I came more into balance. Because if you think I'm strong now, you should have been around when I landed on these fair islands 20 some years ago.

A friend of mine, a very committed man, a businessman, gave me this little clipping. Can I read this to you? Because I believe as we go out of the door of this church and as we seek God's face in a fresh way and present our bodies as a living sacrifice to Him in real commitment again, He is going to show us some new opportunity. This little article says opportunity not only knocks but is playing an anvil chorus on every man's door.

The trouble is, opportunity looks so much like hard work that oftentimes we fail to recognize it. A professional is a man who can do his job when he doesn't feel like it. The amateur can't even do his job when he does feel like it.

People can be placed into three classes. The few who make things happen, the many who watch things happen, and the overwhelming majority who have no idea of what has happened. The man who is looking for magic or some mysterious shortcut to success will be disappointed because ability without agility doesn't win.

And the worst bankrupt in the world is the man who has lost his enthusiasm. But many a man never fails because he never tries. I want to ask you in closing, is God real to you? Are you experiencing the reality of daily total commitment to Him through the struggles, through the battles, through the heartaches, through the tears, through the victories and the failures, pressing on, hands on the plow, holding high the shield of faith when those fiery darts of discouragement or whatever else come toward your heart? This is a question I believe God's people need to ask afresh.

As perhaps the church in this coming decade will move into a period of persecution. This is a question we cannot put aside. Am I really a serious minded disciple? Am I as serious about Christ and His kingdom and missions as some of these politicians are about their particular causes and their particular ideas? Am I as serious about running the spiritual race, Hebrews chapter 12, as these great athletes who run in things like the Commonwealth Games are about running physical races? Am I as serious about God's word as a new young actor is about that new manuscript that he or she has to memorize in five days if they want to get that part in that next play in the theatre districts of London? Brothers and sisters, we need, we need to take steps of faith to show, to prove that we are God's committed people.

And when we begin to move like that, I will tell you all Kendall and all England will feel the impact. Let us not listen to the intimidations and the lies and the subtle compromise of Satan. Let us not be discouraged when things go wrong or when there are problems in the church or difficulties among God's people.

Of course there are problems in the church. What scripture can you show me that says that the church will not have problems? We are still people and wherever there are people there will be problems. We've got plenty of them in Operation Mobilization and on our ships, but they don't intimidate us.

They recharge our batteries, they drive us to the foot of the cross and they cause us to realize that in the flesh there dwelleth no good thing, but by God's grace we can go through to victory. Let us pray together. Let's just have a moment of silent prayer.

We can search our own hearts. We can take steps of faith through prayer to be the men God wants us to be, the women that God wants us to be, to go where He wants us to go and to do what He wants us to do. It may be only a small step that God's leading you to take, but if you take step one He'll lead you into step two and the ultimate prize will be very great.

Lord, just help us pray silently right now. We're so used to ending our meetings and entering into fellowship and having our cups of tea and there's nothing wrong with that, but help us to silently in our hearts now to really do business for You and with You. Just pray your own prayer.

Just open your heart to God and take steps of faith. Our Father, we believe You are hearing our prayers even at this moment and we believe that by Your grace from this day we shall never be the same. Fill us afresh with Your Holy Spirit that we may be the kind of committed, serious minded disciples that You want us to be.

We know that as this happens it will not destroy the human factor. It will not turn us into some kind of fanatics, but it will make us the kind of loving, committed people that can make an impact on a town, on a nation, on a world. We ask this, we pray this together in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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