

Survivalship - Part 1

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the importance of survivalship in faith, focusing on acceptance, prayer, and perseverance through life's challenges.

Duration: 42:49

Scripture: Proverbs 27:17, Isaiah 59:19, Romans 8:1, 2 Corinthians 12:10, Philippians 4:13, James 1:2-4, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Survivalship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker explains the reason for having two speakers in the evening meeting, which is to provide a comprehensive understanding of biblical principles. The speaker shares how different principles help different people and how criticism can be both a difficulty and a blessing in life. The sermon emphasizes the importance of biblical principles in overcoming challenges and continuing to serve Christ. The speaker also highlights the significance of casting every care upon God and dealing with worry in the journey of discipleship.

Transcript

Well, I'm sure you've already been welcomed over here two or three times, but I'd like to add my welcome on top of the others. Someone made a complaint last month, and they said, would the speakers please introduce themselves, we don't know who they are. Good idea.

This is our speaker, Hans-Peter, and I'm interpreting into English. You probably didn't realize that. I'm George Brewer, this is Hans-Peter.

I've just come back from Norway, I wonder if there are any Norwegians here. One, we had some, a number of them in July. It's one of the countries that OM doesn't work in very much.

Any others? Okay. Well, I bring you greetings from Norway. The place I was at, it's been raining almost every single day.

Until this Jesus Festival started, they asked the Lord to give them clear weather. The moment the Jesus Festival started, it stopped raining and didn't rain at all for six days. And we had over a thousand people at the open air meeting on Saturday, so we're glad it wasn't raining.

I really believe, in many ways, Norway is very ripe for the message that God has put on our hearts. At the final meeting, there were over 200 who openly stood up and filled in a paper that they want to begin

moving in total commitment and in world evangelism. And I'd really appreciate your prayers as they go back to their homes.

And as they determine to find God's will. Let's just unite in prayer right now. We don't want to be long tonight.

We know it's a little warm as well, but we don't want to be distracted from what the Lord has to say to us. That's even more important. Let's pray.

Father, we need your help for this final meeting of the day. That we may be on target. We may speak what's on your mind.

We just worship you, Lord. Thank you for all you've done to bring us to this point. And we just lift our hearts in thanksgiving.

Lord, you know those who have special needs. Pray that you administer to them. In Jesus' name.

Amen. We hope you're taking notes during all of these meetings. And we hope also that you're aware of the very special display of Christian literature.

In other meetings we'll be mentioning some specific books. But you will notice that some of the books are available at very, very special prices. Last month they had a whole section of books at half price.

And there are books in many different languages. So be sure to set some time in which you go and look at the books. I'd like to just mention five authors.

Rather than show a lot of books because so many different languages, I'd like to mention five authors that I would strongly recommend you reading. The first is A.W. Tozer and his books are in almost all of the languages represented here. And I know you'll find his material some of the most challenging, conscience-striking material you have ever read.

Then I'd like to mention the name and the writings of Dr. Alan Redpath. He will be one of our main speakers at the Fall Conference here, the Autumn Conference. A man who God has used in many of our lives.

And most of his books are his sermons that are put in written form. Many of them are in German. Thirdly, Michael Griffiths, present leader of the OMF.

Next year or a year after he'll be the president of London Bible College, the principal. His books are also in a number of languages. And they are all valuable, really edifying books.

Fourthly, Dr. Francis Schaeffer. I'm sure all of you have read at least one of his books, even if you didn't understand it. But he does have books like *The Church at the End of the 20th Century*, which are easier to understand than, for example, *The God Who Is There*.

And books like his book on love, *The Mark of the Christian*, of course, are very basic. It's probably his best book. Very small.

And then lastly, I'd like to mention a woman writer to keep all this in balance. Eugenia Price. Now, if you've read one of her books and you didn't like it, again, you might want to read one or two more, because she

has two or three totally different types of books.

But *The Wider Place* and her book *Make Love Your Aim* are two really excellent books, well worth reading. And also *No Pat Answer, No Easy Answer*, an excellent book on suffering. Now, I'd like to add another 20 authors, but we don't have the time.

I want to speak to you about the subject of survivalship. How to survive on OM. I have a number of secrets that I've gathered up over the last 25 years.

And I thought I would share some of them with you. Survivalship is one of my own terms. I don't know if it's in the dictionary.

Probably doesn't exist in some of the languages. It means persevering. In Spanish, *aguantando*, going on, continuing.

And I believe it's part of the life of victory. I believe there are many false views about the victorious life. And these false views are guaranteed, guarantee they'll eventually discourage you.

I'm sure in my early ministry, I must have managed to discourage quite a few people along the way. Maybe giving them, I hope not, but probably at times giving them a distorted picture of what the victorious life really, really is. Later on this week, I'll be speaking about spiritual balance.

And in a sense, these principles I share with you tonight about survivalship are a balance on some of the strong principles you've already heard on tapes and other and books on discipleship and commitment. And these principles of survival and spiritual balance are a balance on some of the strong principles you've already heard on tapes and other and books on discipleship and commitment. We want to open Isaiah 59.

Isaiah 59, verse 19. Glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

If we study the life of the Apostle Paul, we read about a life of almost perpetual difficulty and problems. Probably some of you already, even since leaving your home, have faced some difficulties and some problems. And many of these problems came from God's people.

If you are still surprised by crazy things taking place among God's people, it's probably a mark that you are still very young in the things of God. Paul had to deal with problems in the Corinthian church where men were going to sleep and having sex with their own mother-in-law. In fact, every church he planted had problems.

And if you want to get a sort of view of what he was facing at times, just look at the book of Philippians. We all know Philippians 1.21, for me to live is Christ and to die is gain. But how many of us know Philippians 2.21? Look at that one.

Paul is speaking about all of his co-workers and the churches, all the people he was working with. He says, For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. I can't think of a more depressing situation.

The Apostle Paul even came to a point in his ministry where he despaired even for his own life. He even thought it might be better just to die. He spoke once about coming to the people in much fear and

trembling.

And much weakness. He obviously had some kind of physical problem. Though some say that the thorn in the flesh was something else.

And we will not argue the point tonight. Obviously, obvious from reading his life that at times Paul was just battling for survival. It was just day by day survival as he plotted on against impossible odds and every kind of problem a man could think of.

But he knew how to draw upon the resources of God. And that's what we've got to learn. How to draw upon the strength of the Lord.

For things that we don't like. For some of our own struggles and our own weaknesses. That we may be together if it's God's will 20 or 30 years from now and each one who's here will be carrying on for the Lord.

It's a thrill to meet people that you haven't seen for a long time. Find out they're going on for God. I flew from a little place called Molda to Copenhagen.

Then I took the train. And the plane stopped at a little tiny place called Olsen. I was singing of Tom Olsen.

Some of you have met him. And someone got on the plane and I thought, oh, that looks like someone I know. I was singing of a brother named Helge.

He was in the Arab world seven or eight years ago. Now I only know about 15 or 20 Norwegians. As friends.

And I thought, he just can't be. He wouldn't be getting on this plane at this time in this little dinky village. And so I said, well, it's not him.

And I looked at him, no, it's not him. Lo and behold, when the plane landed, we both had to get in the same line for our transit tickets and there it was. Helge, he was a fellow on the plane.

His wife's father had just died. She's from Finland and they were just going to Finland. Both of our planes were late in God's timing.

What a tremendous time of fellowship we were able to have there in the airport. He was surprised that I knew his name. But he had forgotten that he had given me a picture of himself eight years ago that I've used to remember him in prayer.

And I want to tell you one of the reasons I'm still involved in these summer crusades. And this is somewhere around my 20th summer crusade or 22nd summer crusade. I count the ones in New Mexico.

It's because I have seen so many. Hundreds and hundreds who've caught the vision here, who've got some training and who are serving Jesus Christ all over the world today. I can tell you, it's way over the thousand mark.

And we know that God is going to do a deep work in many lives here this week. Some people may feel, I don't think many, but some feel, well, why do we have two speakers in the evening meeting? One of the reasons is because we know for many of you, we will never ever get this chance again. And we don't want to give you half the story.

We want to give as much of these principles of biblical and biblical teaching as we possibly can in this limited time, which is also cut in half through interpretation. Last month for two nights I spoke on spiritual balance. And I just had another letter today from someone's team saying, you know, it was those principles that have really helped on their difficult team this past month.

Different principles help different people. Some of you already have some of these things that are said. Others don't.

Some of you have been to Bible school. Seventy percent of you have not. It's just a rough calculation.

And therefore there needs to be a lot of patience. Some of you are thinking about going to Bible school. But believe me, when you get to Bible school, the amount of teaching you will have to absorb each day and for two or three years straight will be a lot more than you're getting here.

And there will be times when you are tired of hearing more and more and more. Let us just share a few of these basic principles of survivalship. Number one, knowing that you really are accepted and forgiven.

Ephesians 1, 6. You are accepted in the beloved. This is so basic. So important.

And yet people come on OM and they miss it. They get caught up in the activity. And they get caught up in the work.

And for a while things may be alright. But ultimately it doesn't last. Because there's deep emotional difficulties.

Things that they have never talked about. Rejection of parents or of friends that's deeply buried. And all kinds of things.

On the train and the plane I read through over 200 prayer requests from 200 people from Norway. Basically the same as I get from other countries when I have the same kind of meeting. Many of them write the same thing.

I don't accept myself. One person was very honest. She said, I'm afraid of everything.

As we dealt with the subject of fear. And what a blessing it is when people begin to acknowledge some of their problems. They begin to face some of their hang-ups in reality.

And then begin to find God's solution for some of these things. I had many problems with this area of accepting myself. Probably still do.

I remember when I was a young lad in school. I was so ashamed of my being so skinny. And I saw this advertisement in the newspaper.

Of a big strong fellow. There was a skinny fellow on the beach next to this very beautiful girl. And the big fellow came along and knocked the skinny fellow away.

And he took the girl. And I saw this advertisement. And I thought this is what's going to happen to me the rest of my life.

And it said right in today, Charles Atlas, muscle building, weight gaining, guaranteed. I filled it in, sent it in. For months I was lifting weights.

I was eating extra food. I gained about half a kilo. Now it may sound very funny to you.

It was a very big thing in my life. And I had what you call the mirror struggle. Just to look in the mirror was a struggle.

And all kinds of struggles within myself. And this of course affected my behavior. I had struggle over my nose.

Look at this nose. It goes out like this. That's the way other people have drawn my nose.

And the worst crisis was in 1968. I was already on the mission field. I was now a mature Christian.

I was dead to self. Supposed to be. I was giving out tracts in the streets of Thailand.

Now the Thai people, like the Chinese people, they have these much nicer noses. They're more into the face a little bit. And Thailand, if they don't like a foreigner, because for them most of our noses are a bit funny, they call them a long-nosed foreigner.

That's a long-nosed foreigner. Now I was giving out tracts in the street. And a man came along.

Instead of taking the tract, he reached out and he stroked my nose. I think if I had ever had a missionary call, I would have lost it right there. Do you know, it was a wonderful time and more and more, I realized that God accepts me.

I must accept myself. And even be able to laugh at yourself. It's basic to be able to laugh at yourself a little bit, once in a while.

You can cry sometimes too. There's place for everything. But we are accepted.

God loves us. He created us and He doesn't make mistakes. And He can use people who have even great disabilities or this problem or that problem.

And I think one of the greatest miracles in O.M. is it's a story of God using many weak and powerful people and ordinary people through prayer to accomplish great things. Those of you who come for a year will be hearing a lot more on this subject. Sometimes at the main conference we have a whole message or two on this subject.

The second principle of survivalship is casting every care upon Him. 1 Peter 5, 7. And then Philippians 4, verse 6. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything in prayer make your requests known unto God. Now if you'll just get this, you don't have to be very long tonight.

Try to get this next few thoughts. Because if you get all the message of discipleship and don't learn how to deal with worry, it's useless. It's useless.

It will actually do more harm in your life than good. And I say this because it's possible even to be excessively worried about our spiritual life. We get all caught up with ourselves.

And we'll do anything to become more spiritual. That's why Tozer said the more careful you are the more keen Christian is more easily led astray. Because they're desperate to get spiritual answers.

And because of this, in haste and because of worry they'll grab onto something that may not be God's answer but some false cult or some extremist group or something else. Have you ever watched, gone into the forest and watched a tree grow? I don't think so. If you met someone in the woods and he said I'm watching this tree grow you may wonder about him just what he was doing.

But trees grow. When they're in the right soil in the right situation in a natural, beautiful way they grow big and strong. And if you abide in Christ and you just trust him stay in his word and deal with sin and repentance a few other of these basic things you will grow.

It may not be spectacular. Weeds grow in a very spectacular way. One week your lawn is looking lovely the next week there's all kinds of weeds and funny little orange flowers popping up all around.

There are so many areas where we're tempted to worry. This is a temptation I have to face almost every day the temptation to just engage in a little bit of worry but I know it's from the devil and I've got to deal with it specifically or I'm going to be destroyed. The devil is trying to get us to go mountain climbing over little mole hills.

And the devil is so clever some little thing in our life the devil tries to make it bigger and bigger and bigger. They get into a place where they function and then they're recruited to be a leader in some other organization and you know what we say? Praise the Lord. In OM we are in a perpetual leadership crisis.

And if you don't believe it tonight wait till you see your team leader. You're going to be in for some surprises. And yet God is holding it together and people are coming and people are growing and organizationally actually God has done a miracle.

And some problems that we will face will come no matter how much we plan ahead or organize because God allows them and because life is like that. Life is filled with the unpredictable. We as Christians know that the unpredictable element of life is one of God's greatest teachers to make us more like Jesus Christ.

But we as Christians know that the unpredictable element of life is one of God's greatest teachers to make us more like Jesus Christ. Within the last few days I've been hurt again by somebody about what they've done. You ever have that experience? You get in God's work it will be a weekly experience if not a daily experience.

You go to the ship it may be a daily experience. And if we're going to survive if we're going to be rejoicing 30 years from now we're going to have to learn to be hurt. Learn to love those who hurt us.

Jesus said bless those who persecute you. In fact one of the greatest tests of spiritual maturity is often misunderstandings. Or criticism.

How do you respond to criticism? Criticism? Oh praise the Lord. Good old fashioned criticism. Is that your response? What about when your mother gives you a real going over? How do you react to that? You just walk away praising the Lord.

Oh Lord bless mom. What a wonderful mom I have. Criticism can be the greatest difficulty and the greatest blessing in your life simultaneously.

There are so many verses on that whole area. Well tomorrow night I'm going to continue some more principles of survivalship. I believe with all my heart if you'll become serious about these biblical principles

nothing will stop you from going on for Christ the rest of your life.

Yes the Holy Spirit gives the power. And without Christ we can't keep these principles. But these are the principles that the Holy Spirit and that Jesus gave to us in his word and we must draw upon them and understand them.

It was not for these things the Lord has been teaching me. I believe I would have been wiped out in my spiritual life at least a decade or more ago. I certainly would not be a leader in Operation Mobilization.

These are very basic. They may seem very simple especially some of you who have been around a while. But are they a reality in your life and in your practice on a daily basis? That's the challenge.

Let's pray. Our God and Father we thank you for your son the Lord Jesus. Thank you that he lives in us.

We thank you that he has accepted us and we are accepted by you because of him. We thank you that even tonight we can cast every care upon him. And that we can make you oh God our goal.

We'll give you the praise. Let's just have a moment of silent prayer. I wonder if there are some who are really honest who have really been weighed down by worry in these last couple of days.

Now worry has to be often dealt with over a period of time. But also God can set people free. And Peter says cast every care upon him.

If you have some worry really bothering you I want you to cast it right now upon the Lord. And as an outward expression of an inward transaction I want you to just raise your hand. Not to me firstly to God.

You're saying Lord I'm laying this worry on you. I'm going to carry this thing through the rest of this conference. Believing you for a miracle to take this worry from me that I can focus in on the word and what I should be at this conference.

You want to do that I'd like you to just raise your hand. And I want to pray for you. I haven't done this in a long time.

I just feel that I should do it tonight. God bless you. Many, many perhaps 50% of us we want to cast the worry on the Lord.

Let's pray. Just hold your hand up. Father I pray for those that have their hand up right now.

They're willing to acknowledge they've got a need. And I've got a need. And we cast this specific worry or area of worry that's eating away at us we cast it upon you in obedience to your word.

And we believe you can set us free. You are a mighty God. And you can set us free.

And Lord if we have to battle it again tomorrow at least we'll know what to do with it. And Lord we acknowledge it as sin. When we doubt you we doubt your ability to take care of us.

When we doubt your word we doubt your power forgive us Lord and cleanse us and set us free for we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Let's just stand and sing seek ye first the kingdom of God as the closing of this meeting.

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