

# Testimonies 26.9.68

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer shares his personal journey of faith, the challenges of missionary work, and his vision for future ministry and international collaboration.*

**Duration:** 1:14:30

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:19-21, Matthew 6:33, Mark 8:36, Acts 1:11, Romans 10:14-15, 1 John 3:16, Revelation 22:12

**Topics:** "Missions"

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## Description

In this sermon transcript, the speaker, Johan van Dam, shares his personal journey of faith and the impact of two books, 'The Normal Christian Life' and 'The Calvary Road,' on his spiritual growth. After joining a traveling team and ministering in Spain for four years, he experienced a profound spiritual change and a new understanding of the Christian life. He emphasizes the importance of being with fellow believers and ministering within the temple, even though it may be unseen. The speaker also briefly mentions his background, including growing up in a boisterous family and serving in the army, before finding salvation and hungering for spiritual reality.

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## Transcript

I praise God for the race. I have parents praying today for me. Parents still on the field, serving the Lord, rejoicing in the soul of being saved and being built up in the faith.

My brother, three years old, is a missionary in Morocco. My uncle, he is also a missionary. That takes care of all the lacrosse games I know.

My sister is a Christian. Her husband is a Christian living in California. So we're a bit scattered out, but God is giving us a great fellowship together, praying for one another.

I went to school for missionary kids out in Africa and then off and on was in the States. Then at 16 I went back to finish up at the States and didn't exactly know it very well. It took me a year to finally get to the place where I'd accept that they were spiritual Christians too.

Then at that time I figured it was a mission field. Even when I left Africa at 16, I said, well, it seems to be this is where I should go back to. I thought of Mauritania at that time.

I haven't quite got there yet. But through high school, I planned to go to Bible school right afterwards. I thought about two or three, applied to one, accepted, went there to Moody.

Spent three years there, growing up some more and learning some things. That's what I meant to send the light. I can't say that I came with the Lord at all on any reasonable, logical basis, really.

I would say I was forced into it by the Spirit of God. When I was at Moody, I met George there and we were a fellow. In fact, the fellow told me that George was planning to go down to Mexico in the summer to be saved.

He was not even walking with the Lord. He dated Tom Heater. He told me that was the first day when George arrived.

I took some of George's luggage over. He was figuring out he'd be in something in Mexico. It sounded interesting, but it didn't interest me personally.

I think what began my third year at Moody, a fellow living next door to me, a fellow by the name of Don Kilgree, went down to Mexico that Christmas to be saved. His first year at Moody, he was one of the campus skeptics, one of the intellectual guys, mocking the fighting fundies, this type of fellow. Then he got interested in this group.

We had some tremendous fellowship. We had a prayer together. I heard he went to a couple nights of prayer.

I think this is what sowed the seed of something happening to him. I prayed for him during the summer and wanted an interest. Then I went out to preach.

That's when it really got an interest. I felt I should go down to Mexico on Christmas of 1959. I went down.

Dale was the leader of Guadalajara. I didn't want to go, but I knew I should. I was blessed.

The next year, the same thing. I didn't want to go, but I was blessed. I knew I had to go.

Then after a week, I was deciding I knew I should either come with OM on this year program. I didn't really want to go. Or go with the Missionary Society my folks were with.

Then I felt at the time that I should go with them. I think it was right because it gave me the opportunity to work for the Holy Church, get a church behind me and a lot of other things. Towards the end of my time there, I had no peace about continuing there.

Then the Christmas of 1961, that was George when he came through with the prayers of Jesus and David. That's when I really made a final decision to come up with a year and a half program. That's kind of how I got involved.

When I came over, I knew so certainly, clearer than my salvation, that I had to come on OM. That's just about the way it was. After praying for three days and battling out, I just knew I had no choice.

For me, it was kind of losing my whole future because OM, financial policy, business policy, what was their future, where were they going? It wasn't recognized by the IFMA or the EFMA or any other associations. For me, it was kind of losing all. It was stepping out of the usual type missionary work that I had grown up in.

For me, it was kind of losing a reputation, losing everything else. Just going to throw my life into it. I wasn't really intending to stay for so many years.

I thought it was just one summer crusade of the year program. When I came over, I thought I would go to France, but the Lord seemed to indicate I should go to England and kind of get the feel of things, I was told. I got the feel of it.

I've had it ever since, being kind of at the hub. I can say this, that I never chose this path. Whatever was thrown at me just seemed that's what I should do, but I don't think I've ever asked for it at all.

I can see looking back at my life, different things where God perhaps prepared me for this kind of ministry. I am convinced now, at the moment, very much, at least for the time being, that my ministry is in Europe with an aim to see Europeans spread out over the whole world and work in other countries. I suppose a burden, there's a lot of burdens that come and go, of course, but just this morning, again, someone mentioned one or two things, I think yesterday, something Greg said, and I just thought that a real burden that even here in Europe, that we would see more contact with the international students coming from other countries and Christian students.

And I was just thinking about how, even though we're international, I feel in some ways we're not international enough, I feel maybe we need to attempt more of the impossible, but I would really like to see more people from other countries and people coming into one having more and more responsibility. And I was just thinking, I suppose maybe there was even a little grain of pride in it, pride on being able to step down, and Lord bashed me with a head on that just this morning, and yet I still would like to, I'd like to go, I'd like to be able to experience someone else coming in and doing my job completely and me working directly under them. And I'd like to have that, because I just think it'd be a good bash at the devil and all that he usually tries to do around the world.

You know, anything just to, you know, fight for the middle, and go the opposite of the way that the world seems to run. But I do, I do have a desire, really, to see more and more leadership and people that perhaps come just for one or two years. Because the natural tendency is the more experience you have, they're the ones that should leave.

And I've got a certain knowledge of the spirit of God that allows us to do that. And I think we, this is one verse on my heart, it's just to really, and I think it's one step in this direction this year, it's got to be in itself, and I'm just letting Craig on that, and we don't think about this. But anyway, that's a little on my heart.

There's a lot of other things too, but yeah. Amen. Who'd be next? I'd like to be next.

Try to speak fairly loud, because we are recording this for some of the brothers. I think you realize that we only represent about one half of the coordinators in the world. A little over half.

It might be good to mention ones who are not with us. Charles Wilson in Canada. Paul, of course, in the United States.

Dick in Baltimore, in Mexico. Giovanni is not yet with us. Larry Goldberg down in Israel.

Gordon Macney going out soon to Afghanistan. Mike Wiltshire in Africa. Not really a field, but still coordinating the project there.

And then Ray Eicher in Bombay, and Ron George. David Buderer in Rajasthan in the Northeast. These areas, of course, have more people than most, any four or five fields here combined.

George Miley temporarily in the North. I've got that reversed. Buderer in the Northwest.

Miley in the Northeast. Ron Penny. And by the way, he had a relapse again yesterday, I understand.

Thomas Samuel. A.G. Phillip. That just about covers it.

So, if you can speak loud, then these brothers perhaps will have the opportunity to hear this tape, plus some others. Go ahead. I was born in a Christian family, and I had to go all the time to Sunday school.

Many times I didn't like it. But today I praise the Lord for this. They taught me all things about the Bible, and there was especially one thing that always spoke to me, that the Lord Jesus Christ will come back again to take home his children.

And when I thought of this, many times I had a great fear, because I knew when he comes back, I'm not ready. And so, several times when I was in my home, and I was alone there, my parents weren't there, I had such a great fear that I can't explain this. I remember one time I was in bed, and I had this thought, and then the parents were not at home.

I thought, well, if the Lord Jesus came back now, what, I'm the only one here. And so I thought, well, I'll go into the village and see if the other believers are still here. So I wanted to go out of the house, and at the same moment my parents came in.

And I think this was the last push to give my heart to the Lord. But I have to confess, for a long time I haven't lived a Christian life. Until I got to a youth conference where Conrad Sonderich and Josie Birks were.

And they talked about the O.M. And I thought, well, I could get their prayer letter and see, maybe I can pray for them. So they sent their prayer letter, and the Lord spoke more and more to me. And then I decided to take part for three weeks in December in 64, I think was it.

I was with a rail engineer, Udine. And we had really a great time, the Lord spoke much to my heart. And then next year, I decided to go for the whole summer to Italy, but wanted to go back afterwards to work.

And it happened that, I think we were in Rotterdam, I had no idea where to go in Italy. And then we had to go to George, and he just told me, well, you go to Mantua. Then I drove down to Italy and went to Mantua, and there Giovanni Finis was leading the team.

It happened also that I had the only small car, so each time Giovanni had to go to a certain place, I had to go with him. And I think there it started when the Lord united our hearts. When I went to Italy, I knew no Italian.

And I could tell you also that Italy was the last place I wanted to go. Many times I said to the Lord, well, I know some French, some English, but not to Italy, also because I was working in a factory with several Italians, and I made some bad experiences with them. So I hated to go to Italy, really, but I felt that I had to go.

And I praised God, I think it was only His grace that brought me down to Italy. It wasn't my desire. So then in Mantua the Lord started to unite Giovanni in my heart.

And I think I learned only Italian through listening. I don't remember now how it was possible that we were able to talk together, to do something together, because he knew no French nor English. But I praised God for His time, and then he asked me, I remember exactly where he was, if I would like to come to the conference in Bolton.

And I thought, well, yeah, I could come. If I leave OM, it can help me something, this conference, if I stay, well, it's good. So I went back to Bolton, and the Lord spoke to me very clearly to remain in OM for another year.

And I had never thought to remain more than a year. But then after the next year, the Lord spoke to me more, I had to remain in Italy. So it happened that also this year I go back.

Maybe I would like to ask you to pray for our unity in Italy, between Giovanni and myself, and all those that are going to Italy. I think this is something so important, I appreciate your prayer in this. Praise the Lord.

That was, for the sake of the people listening to the tape, Paul Stilling, working in Italy from Switzerland. Pepe Barrios from Mexico, working in Spain. Why don't you try that English? I've been told that you know far more English than you let on to.

When I was 15 years old, I left my parents, and I went to work to study at the same time. I was there for 7 years, but for about 6 years, I was much involved with many kinds of things. Because I was young, and I had money, I was living alone, and in my heart I was looking for something.

But I could find it in many things that I saw. For instance, well, yeah. Friends, girls, and things like that, dancing, clubs, etc.

And one day, I had an accident, and I could die very easily. But, just for the mercy of the Lord, I smashed my head a little bit. But after that, I was thinking, well, if I die, even though I lived with my parents, and I went to Sunday school for some years, I wasn't sure about my life after that.

And after that, I had another accident, I think 2 months after. And I was really thinking more and more about that. And for that time, I went to visit my parents.

And they gave me a New Testament. And when I went back, I started to read. And I read the New Testament once, putting marks in the verses that most spoke to me.

And I began to think about going to an Evangelical church. But I was so ashamed before God that I couldn't go for a long time. Because I saw the life that I was living.

Sometimes I remember I went 2 blocks near to the church, and I came back. And then, I continued reading the New Testament. And I was reading through again, but reading only the verses that I was putting marks.

And during that time, I got in contact with 2 pastors. But because I had an Evangelical vocabulary, they didn't realize that I wasn't Christian. They knew that my parents were Christians, but they didn't witness to me.

But anyway, I went to church sometimes. And one night, in my room, after I was reading the New Testament, and the Gospel of Luke, I was thinking about the life that I was living, and the life of Jesus. And that night, I realized that I had to choose between the life that God was offering me, and the life that I was living.

And it was not very easy. I had a great battle during various hours. But at last, I only could say, Lord, take my life, please.

Because I know if I go ahead in this life that I am living, I will go to Heaven. I want to go to Heaven with You. And I know that at that time, it was so real for me that the Lord forgave me.

And I had joy and the assurance that He was with me. After that, a group of O.N. came to the church, and I met 2 persons in that team. One of them, I remember, was the team of Yvonne, Chris, and Pete.

Well, I didn't speak much with them, but I saw something different. And then, they invited me to go to Mexico City to meet Dick Griffin. And his life really spoke to me.

And then, they invited me to go to a meeting in the Christmas crusade. George was there, and Baltimore. And one thing that really spoke to my heart was the prayer meeting one morning in the Presbyterian Bible school that we had.

And I saw the groups praying, and I thought, well, this is something different. They must have something real. Well, I continued my contact with Dick, and he invited me to come to Spain.

And before that, I went to Toluca for some time, a short time. And then, we came back to Spain for one summer. We went back to Mexico after that summer, but I didn't have peace in my heart and the assurance that that was the will of God for my life.

And in that time, three books really spoke to my life. One that is called The Will of God, and I don't remember the other. The other was You Know My Christian Life, and the other was Passion for Souls.

And then, my wife and I thought, well, the Lord wants us to leave everything and to go to Spain. But I forgot to say something that really spoke to my heart. In a Christmas crusade in Nuevo Laredo in 1964, you remember? You were there.

And a verse from the Bible that really spoke to my heart was 1 John 3.16. Well, in many ways, I can say that that verse is one of the reasons why I am here. And now, the hunger in my heart is more and more to see His work in my life. In many ways, because I know that He has to rebuild with me much.

And one of the burdens in my heart is to see Spaniards leading the war in Spain. Do you know many reasons why a national can live better, I think, in some countries? I praise the Lord because the Italian is the best, but I think we have to see more Spaniards. So, praise the Lord.

Amen. Our time is moving, so keep that in mind. Who will be next? My name is Virgil Amos.

I was born in California. In a Christian family. During my young days, I desired to know Christ not so much as what He was and deserved Him, but what I could get from Him.

I wanted to have salvation, and I knew I was on the way to hell. And I wanted to have the best. I wanted to have all that God could give.

And I wasn't concerned at all about grace and mercy and love, and what God was and I didn't care if He was or not. I knew He was saved, and I wanted to be saved, as I was yesterday. It didn't matter if He was the God of love, and these things had no meaning to me.

God was gracious, and God was merciful. I wasn't too much interested in that. But I was concerned that He loved me, or He gave salvation, that is.

And I was concerned about salvation, and to read the Bible, and to obey what He said in His Word. About the age of 12, I trusted in Christ. I was just sitting in a church, and a man says, Believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

And I believed, and I was saved. Simple like that. After that, I spent much time reading the Bible.

I wanted to follow the Lord. I was very critical at that time. I used to criticize the church, and the deacons, and everybody in the church, telling them they were all hypocrites, because they didn't follow the Word of God.

But I just read it, especially I read the Bible about 6 hours a day, 5 or 6 hours a day, while I was in school. After that, I wanted to know more about God, because I had this great conflict. My dad would tell us every day, 365 days a year, we should go to school, and study hard, to get the best out of life.

We want to make good in life, so we should study, study, study. And I got this, study, study, study, get a good job. And then we read the Bible, and it says, Christ should be first.

Christ is more important. And I noticed, even the members go to church late. Christ is last, and business is first.

So I had this great conflict in my life, that one day I made a decision, in my years of Christ, that Christ was going to be first. And I sought to put Him first. Therefore, I decided to go to Bible school.

And I checked all the Bible schools through Christian magazine, and I just saw one good advertisement, and I thought it sounded okay. And I wrote the Moody Bible Institute. And I went there, and there I met people that really trusted in the Lord.

It was a tremendous inspiration to me. Especially the first day, I almost fainted. It was so much, so different.

And it was a great blessing. One of the things there, I met O.M. At first sight of O.M., I saw Hosea Burks, and all the people getting into an old truck, which was so small, it could hold a lot of people. And it had about ten people in there, and a whole bunch of luggage.

And I said, these people must be crazy. And I said, I'll never go, no, never go. I said, when I think of a trip, I think of having leg rest, leg room, you know, and relaxation.

These people packed in there like sheep. But the Lord spoke to me one time, because I was very prejudiced against Negroes. And at school there was a little prejudice there too, and I was very concerned about that.

And the Lord spoke to me, after I was willing, you know, I gave my heart to the Lord, and he spoke to me again, through another group, about going to Mexico. And God called me to Mexico through another

group, and then I went with O.M., through the advice of another fellow. And I understood that other group didn't like Negroes too much, so I came with O.M. and went to Mexico.

And I found myself in the same position, kind of stuck in the little old truck. Since then, I've been with O.M. off and on, different times. And right now, we're thinking about going to Iran.

Our basic vision for Iran is to see a national fellows team. We have one fellow working now, we want to see at least five or six people, he's up in the next few years. Also, we want to see nationals going out to different parts of the country, maybe establishing a base in the different parts of the country, and really moving out to the villages.

Trying to see a few thousand more villages each, so that's what we're trying to do. Raise your hand. Country.

I've been preparing to go to church since I can remember. I'm not in a Christian home. And I always believed in the existence of God.

So, no reality at all, really, in the church. Although, all the time I was searching, I would always listen to what people had to say, and what they really believed in. I sang in the choir all of a sudden, got confirmed when I was about 16, in the Anglican church.

Went into the army, still believing in God. And I remember fellows praying where their bedside was in there. Admiring them for doing this, but not really having the guts that they had anyway.

And never really also having faith for it. Not really knowing that they were different than I was. Came out of there, went to college for three years.

A teacher training college, which is just special for training teachers. Spent three years there. All the time, my big interest in life, really, was sport.

My family's got a sporting family, really. And I was brought up on it. And wanted to really make a grade in sport.

But was careful to have a job as well, because not too many really make the grade permanently when they go to work. And I wanted to have something to fall back on. So I went to... Although, the day I left school, I signed for one of the professional clubs as an amateur.

When I was 18. But I went to training college to have this job behind me, and three years there at college. Again, in a so-called nominal Christian college.

Used to go to chapel about five times a week. It was purely voluntary. You didn't have to go.

In fact, only a small crowd went. But I used to leave my pal. So I used to go down.

We were all in the sports team. All the time hungry, you know, for reality. Discussing, would argue against atheists about the existence of God.

And still believing in anybody as a Christian, I must admit. And I think the first time I ever heard the gospel was one Sunday night. I was in Exeter.

And we were going out to the pub on a Sunday night. For a drink. And there was a Salvation Army fellow on the street corner.

And it was snowing. And he stood on his own. And I couldn't understand.

And I thought he stood there in the freezing cold. And I stood there for a long time until my pals left me. And I promised to go back and see that chap.

I don't know what he said. But I knew what he said was true. Three days, I just didn't know why I was living or anything.

And I let that conviction go. Went up to Bristol again and started teaching. And signed as a pro now.

And was teaching and playing football for money. For five years. So I was seven years as an amateur.

And about three years as a pro with one of the division teams. And then after five years of teaching, I fell out there in Bristol. And like many, I was absolutely happy with life.

At that particular time. I think I had arrived as it were. And I couldn't think of anything else that I wanted.

Money. Friends. The nightlife.

The club life. Dancing. Which I enjoyed.

And I couldn't really think of where else to go. And just a fellow who lived down the road from me. He was trying to be a Baptist minister.

And I knew I was going to meet this fellow. In fact, I was courting a girl who was living on the same block of flats as he was. And I knew I was going to meet him.

And I was looking forward to meeting him. And just his testimony was the thing that started. I'd never heard anybody really testify freely to Jesus.

And he encouraged me to go to a Baptist church. And I went about three times. I heard the gospel I think the first three times.

I never really believed they were preaching to me. I really thought, well, I'm not a Christian. But finally, about the third or fourth time I went, the words that spoke to me were the words of the Lord Jesus when he said, Build not treasures on earth, for why shall a prophet manage against the whole world and lose his own soul? And that night I just was absolutely broken.

I didn't know really what hit me. But I wanted to know one thing. I just wanted to know God.

And that night I came to the Lord. And really it was through the Lord speaking about my possessions on earth that I was saved. So now, since then, I really just put a deadly sin on it.

But it was really through me building treasure on earth. So about two weeks after that, two girls, one of the twins, I think Janet, from India, he's in India now, Janet Hill and I, another girl came to a Buckingham Baptist church and caused quite a stir. They stepped on the pastor's floor and they were all like this.

And I was really rebuked by two girls. Then about three or four weeks after that, I heard that I had a meeting in Exeter and George was preaching down there in the big Brethren Assembly. And I heard that.

And I was in, already spoken about, in Italy in 1963. I was with Ray Lynch in Pudim. I was about 16 years old in the Lord then.

And when I get in there, the whole team were in prison like that. And I was like, I don't know where I'm going. But that was a real blessing.

I went to Bible school. I went to Israel three years ago. I've been in Britain two years.

And just some thoughts about Britain. I'm just amazed continually at the amazing potential in Britain. You just rush around for a year and you have a chicken in your head chopped off.

There's just so much you could do. And I'm just burdened to really know what the Lord really wants to do there. As you know, I've been in the Crusade Oaks in Bolton.

I've been concerned with the Sun Crusade, New Crusade. I'm really corresponding with so many hundreds of people in Britain. There's an amazing potential.

As you know, I'm down in Bromley and others, the literature, finance, transport, and meetings being taken from both these places. I think the biggest burden on my life is my own. First of all, my own life is that maybe it's selfishness, but to really know the Lord and to see that happen on the team, to the individuals that come on the team, that there will be reality in all the headquarters, that when people come in, they'll really see reality, not because it's some false thing, but because people really are experiencing a personal walk with the Lord.

Very burdened to see the churches in Britain really get to know what is happening in the body of Christ and what my responsibility is and what their responsibility is, first in prayer, that they're really praying. Few really churches in Britain are really praying. Also that they'll support.

You know and I know what kind of support some of the British young people get. Few of us, I don't want to say leaders, but we've got really churches behind us. There are few churches that correspond with them to win churches for the Lord this year.

One or two we saw one last year and we're just burdened to see many more won. And then through that we see many labours going. As you know, it's just an amazing potential with 52 million people and with foreign students alone, 70,000 last year foreign students, many from absolutely close lands, places, and lands like Saudi Arabia just to go out.

I think we've seen quite a few go out but if they really go out and as you said before, do some when they get there. Many go out and cause just problems and absences on the field. But all of us that go out will really be able to do some in His power when we get there.

Appreciate your prayers. I'd like to give my testimony now. Frank Buss from Florida, United States but now looks like he's out for a considerable time as the Lord leads.

And I can say this, but this verse speaks to me very definitely this morning, 1 John 3, 16. By this perceive we the love of God because He laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. I can say this, that the joy in my heart this morning is not solely and simply on my own but your

vision is my vision and it's my desire and the ministry the Lord has chosen me for and I believe very definitely it's been from the foundation of the world.

I can see today the progression of the plan and just the way the Lord saved me and when He saved me and why He saved me and given me even my wife and my family and the purpose of it all is becoming plainer day by day is to simply fit my life in any way that I might be able to serve more effectively and fully in this ministry of laying down my life and the lives that are with me and it's a great joy today probably more than ever because the Lord has brought some very fine and it seems permanent young men to labor with me that my life might be a little fuller and freer from just the daily burden and grind of just sheer work. My desire is to be with you and this means to me anyway as His part that goeth forth to battle so shall be His part that tarrieth by the stuff they shall part alike so our hearts are filled to overflowing with the goodness and the grace of God daily as we minister within the temple. This is our ministry.

It's unseen but how important it is and we praise God. I was saved about approximately and I was very anxious and boisterous and argumentative to say the least went into the army and this didn't help the Air Force and didn't help things come out and the Lord made a great need in my heart and then He saved me in a specific place. I really see this a specific place and then specific lessons following this and then the meeting in Blaisdell and then something like this literature crusades and yet the ultimate result winding up meeting Brother George and seeing the Lord lead and seeing many miracles in our lives.

The lives are then the circumstances in Blaisdell and then leading us out into the work and seeing the progression, the blessing, the expansion of heart and soul the development of one's own physical and spiritual life to live my life today for personal holiness. I think this is heading to the slow but sure the Lord is pushing this to the top and I can just say the two things I want to do is to fulfill your visions because what a joy to be able to serve so many in this ministry and to achieve a personal holiness to glorify the Lord. that it's probably done for all the people that are probably saved because of the wheels that we've done in the ministry of work.

I don't think that this is what will really please the Lord until my life reaches a level of holiness. Do I think I want to go home and be with Him? It isn't the work. I think that my work is complete today as far as teaching and training, that I could go out of here tomorrow and it would work.

Today I come to England, it's a vacation for me today. There's little or no response to me, and it's getting that way, it's out of the way. I could go home tomorrow as far as the work is concerned.

But I want to have that life that's shining for Him, like Himself. And when I meet Him, it isn't just a well-done, now good and faithful servant, but it's to look into His eyes and see that He's been satisfied with my life, from the innermost parts to the outermost part. Thank you, Father.

Frank, we want to be concerned for one another's families. What's the situation with your parents and brothers? Well, I had a real burden to go home this year and minister to my father. And yet I didn't go home.

The Lord did not lead. George said He would have wanted me to go on that plane. But the Lord did not lead.

Did the brother George here or no me to get on that plane and to go home? But the Lord has put a real prayer burden, more than ever in my life, to pray. But I think again it's a matter of this personal holiness.

My life will not speak to my father and to my mother and my brothers unless there's holiness there.

And I think this is why hell is bad. And another reason is I wouldn't be six weeks out of the Lord's will, not for anything. It's too wonderful, too precious, even though it's hard and difficult.

So they need saving. They're Jehovah Witnesses. Pray for them.

Praise God. Who's next? We can limit it to about the time that Frank took. That was just an idea.

I was born in Latvia, near Russia. And my father was born in the Netherlands. That's up in Friesland.

And I was born in the United States. I was the youngest of seven children. My father was fifty-nine when I was born, so he was perhaps more like my grandfather to my father.

And he lived to be eighty-eight and died then. And my mother died when I was sixteen. So of course all those things affected my life.

From an early age I was seeking for the truth. My oldest brother got a Ph.D. in Islamic Archaeology at Princeton University and also graduated from seminary there. So I had quite an ambitious educational desire.

And I went to college in Connecticut. And all that time I was searching for the truth, visiting a lot of different kinds of churches, just about every kind of Protestant church. I was interested in Hinduism some, visited the Hindu temple in New York, and the Baha'i faith out in Chicago and so on.

But through all of this I didn't find the Lord. I was quite interested in music. I minored in music, did some composing in what is called twelve-tone music when I was in college.

And I was thinking of either going on with music or perhaps go on to Harvard and study history. But instead I went in the United States Air Force and I flew down to Texas and then ended up in Illinois. And it was while I was in Illinois that I tried just about everything else.

And I was studying there at the University of Illinois in graduate study at the same time. And I decided I'd go visit this Pentecostal church that these fellows had been witnessing to. And on the way over in the car I was saved as they quoted Ephesians 2, 8, and 9 to me.

And the Lord just revealed to me for the first time in my life that he was really God and that he was my savior. Well, I had a very dramatic conversion. And for the first year or two I don't think I even met a believer who had a college education.

And I turned my back on all my background. And so it was quite a while before my life became more integrated. My family weren't interested in my experience and I was sort of cut off from everybody.

And then I ended up out of Fuller Seminary after I got out of the Air Force. I spent one semester actually at Central Bible Institute Pentecostal School in Missouri because I had Pentecostal experience and I was struggling with this question of tongues and the meaning of baptism and where it goes to and so on. Then I ended up at Fuller Seminary and I met students there from all over the different churches, church backgrounds, and that helped me to integrate myself.

So I really wasn't one of these that never had a day of defeat after he got saved, as some of you. I was helped greatly during this time by the Navigators. And then I thought, then I was sensed a call to go to the mission field somewhere overseas.

And I was possibly agreed with Dawson Fromm and I might go to Nepal with the Navigators someday, although that didn't develop because he died and then other things came in. But then the opportunity came to go and study in Beirut in the Graduate School of Arab Studies with another fellow in a sort of exploratory student team, which I did then in 1957. Actually I was saved when I was 22 and went out to Beirut for the first time in 1957 after spending a summer working at the Abilitarian Crusade in New York.

And out in Beirut I was still seeking for the truth in terms of the question of church order and how you can be the most effective missionary and so on. And so it was here, out in Beirut after a year with a Baptist missionary there, quite an extreme narrow type of Baptist missionary, that we started an English speaking church there in Beirut. And then after two years there, I gave up my studies after a year, as I had done in 1952 when I was in Illinois, because somehow it seemed the Lord just wouldn't let me go on and pursue educational pursuits, but that he wanted me in some sort of more active type of ministry.

So then I was influenced, however, by some in my own decision that I should finish seminary since I had begun so many things I hadn't completed. So after a year in Beirut, I went back to Culler and took my third year of seminary and completed that. Some of you know about my wife.

I met Marian out in Beirut and her husband was killed in a plane crash in 1959, and she was expecting a second child at the time. And so after back in the United States about a year or more, I got married to her in Louisville, Kentucky after I finished seminary. Then there was a question of what sort of mission group we would identify with going back to the Middle East.

I had sort of come into a position of the Brethren Assemblies as far as church order was concerned, mission work, although I'd never met any of them up to the time I'd been in Beirut. And when we got back in the United States, then there was a question, should I seek more identification with the Assemblies and what are we going to do now I'm getting married and have to trust the Lord for my wife and myself and two children as well, or should I go with a conservative Baptist? So I had quite a struggle with this. Also, there was a possibility of going with the Christian Missionary Alliance because her husband had been with them and they had a number of churches out in the Middle East.

Well, we ended up going out with the United States and although we didn't have a full commendation yet, it worked out so we had sort of an entree in some of these assemblies, you might say, through a letter. And the Lord gave us an opening with many of them. And so then we went back to the Middle East together, my wife and two children in 1962.

Well, after we'd been in Jordan a while, I'd met Dale in the United States briefly as he was traveling around the United States. And so I was thinking at that time I really wanted to get to know him better, but he was quite busy moving around with Roger and so there wasn't much opportunity to really get to know him at that time. But I had a feeling that maybe someday out in the Middle East I would get to know Brother Dale.

Actually, from the time I first went to Beirut, I was praying that the Lord would raise up or call out some other young people who had a real heart for the Lord that I could work with them in the Arab world. And I just looked around and I couldn't find anyone out there at that time. And so later when Ray Lynch came through, I had some fellowship with him.

We had some evangelistic meetings together in Jerusalem. And then we heard this OM team was coming. Actually, I was hoping that Ray wouldn't come to Jordan when he did come because I had known a little of Fuller and I was afraid he was going to explode things a little bit when he came.

And then especially I got together with this Baptist missionary to see how we could keep OM out of Jordan. Because we thought that they really, from what I had heard, they used literature rather indiscriminately. And we thought that they really would blow things up.

And then I got to know Dale a little more. And I met Maynard Tom and was quite impressed with him. And I went up traveling with Dale through Turkey.

And then we had this opportunity to work with OM some that summer. And from that point on, I just felt that the Lord had knit my heart together with Dale and some of the other brothers. And then some of the rest of you, as I got to know you, at the conference here in Europe.

I might just say, concerning the Arab world, it's awfully difficult to really know how to say anything briefly, except that I am tremendously burdened for these hundred million people. And since 90% of them are Muslim, and since the overwhelming majority of them have never heard the Gospel, this is perhaps my greatest burden, is that we might see Muslims turn to Christ. Sometimes, of course, I am tempted to wonder why it is that Muslims are so hard to win to Christ.

As you know, there's verses in the Bible about God being impartial, and yet we see so few missionaries really are in for the Muslims, and especially the Arabs, it seems. And also, it seems like there's so little real working of the Holy Spirit going on in their hearts. But this just challenges me all the more to realize that this is just a challenge from the Lord for us to commit our lives to him, to make ourselves available.

And so I'm convinced that he's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come from repentance. And yet we see so little of it up to this time, of real ministry among the Muslims. So I've written up some of these targets on our heart, but one, for instance, is I feel for me to be more effective, I really need at least one other, if not more than one other fellow, married or unmarried, with whom I can pray and really who will persevere in the Arab world and be, as Dale mentioned in the OI supplement, one of these addicts who won't give up after a few years.

What we really would like to see is a revolutionary cell of foreigners. And you say, well, aren't you interested in nationals? Well, we really are interested in nationals, but I'm not sure that I will be able to persevere as effectively as I should unless I see at least one or two other foreigners with me who are really souls to the Lord. And then secondly, of course, our major burden, which comes along after that, is to see the Lord get a hold of the lives of a few Arabs and really bind them together and use them then to work in the Arab world, with us just standing behind them, praying for them, supporting them in every way we can, and seeing them put forth.

And through all of this, of course, there are many different ways we have our burden for possibility of getting richer out through the secular stores or any way we can, especially reaching Muslims who come to Beirut or some of these more open cities, because it seems that we can't win them there to Christ. We can't expect to win them out in the villages to Missouri. And so all of these things are just shared with you as you pray for us.

We pray for you. And I count it such a privilege to be part of the fellowship with you. And though I have failed the Lord greatly at times, I know more of His grace now than ever before, and I do believe that He has a purpose for our life up there.

If you're interested in seeing the pictures of my wife and children, I might just pass those around on the slides and you could... Praise the Lord. Who will be next? I was led to the Lord by my father at home after reading the Word of God one night. He was very faithful in especially this area, and I noticed his faithfulness in many areas, and that's probably one of the things that kept me from throwing out Christianity.

This and also my mother's great warmth towards we as a children. He was very interested in us. My father's faithfulness and my mother's warmth towards us, those are probably the two things that hit my mind the most.

Because when I got to the States, there were many allurements and easy to get sidetracked on, and therefore my spiritual life went up and down quite a bit. I was very much interested in aviation, and so my dream from childhood was to be a missionary pilot. But the Lord kept bringing back to me the fact that I kept seeing people all around Chicago, all around New York.

I was afraid to have contact with them, but at the same time I knew that somehow, someway that Christianity was a people-centered project. And although I didn't want to get involved, at the same time I wanted to, and I was stretched right there. The devil didn't want me to, the Lord did.

And so really what I needed was an example, and when I got to Moody, I was given the example by a number of fellows, some within O.M. and some outside, but there weren't too many altogether. And when I got contact with the O.M. group, I was very much surprised by their prayer life, at least in public. And so I got involved with the group there and began to pray.

And their burden for the world also helped me to look on the world and to get interested in praying for it. And that's probably why I'm here right now, because they seem to get more involved in what they believe than many others, and I wanted to get involved right along with them. God has been using this group to change my center of interest.

At Moody I wanted to get out and reach the people, and now I'm learning more and more about seeking God and getting to know Him. Just this conference has been such a help in this area, and realize how much I need to center my thoughts on the Lord and who He is, and not get sidetracked and begin pendulum thinking with the great aid of the devil and my flesh and the world. And my burden right now, of course, is to be a faithful man myself.

When I went out to Iran a couple years ago, this is probably the greatest thing the Lord showed me, because my mind was getting other faithful men, and I realized that I need to be more faithful too, because the fellows I had contact with in school, many of them, the reason they made mistakes and didn't go on well was because I wasn't praying for them enough. Besides my becoming a faithful man, like Pepe, I want to see more men raised up for Spain, more Spaniards take over leadership in that country. And also that we'll pray, all of us, for literature that has gone out.

Because just thinking about the testimonies of Isente Galan and others just shows us that this is where our work stops. So we need to learn more of prayer as well. Praise God.

Next. I came to the Lord because I was interested to hear a quartet that was singing somewhere in Holland. And I went to that church, and I didn't remember anything what the pastor said, I didn't remember anything, but the fellow at the end of the meeting said, I wish you a blessed Sunday.

That was the only thing I really thought, and it made a deep impression on me, that he was so interested in my life. Now I forgot about it through a whole year, and exactly the next year I thought, I go to that church again. But there was nobody in that church, and so I went to a telephone cell, and I made a telephone call to one or other pastor, a Protestant pastor, just any, I didn't know anybody there in that town further, and he told me, now they have a street meeting this evening.

I went to that street meeting, and I listened through the whole meeting, and at the end of the meeting they spoke with me, and they asked me to go home. Now that home was the home of the family Zwart. Different ones know him because the son of that family is the leader of OM, was the leader of OM in Holland, Belgium, part of France I think, and Italy I think also was he responsible for.

And so I came to know the Lord there, afterwards I went into military, and after military I was planning to go to Austria to help there under the refugees. And there was in the south of Austria there is a camp with some Dutchmen working there. But it was only girls and it was rather hard just for a fellow to help there.

And I had to wait a very, very long time on the answer of them, and I never got it in fact. And after military I met George and Dick together at home, and they talked with me about OM. And because I was planning to do a year of similar work like that, I was excited to come.

And I came in the OM headquarter, I just came out of military, and the OM headquarter was just like heaven to me. I was so thankful to be there. And it will be good if you knew me just at that time.

I was the first open air meeting, it was just the next week, and they asked me, can you give a testimony? Oh, I was scared. And I didn't say, perhaps two or three words, but honestly more than three words it weren't, because I just couldn't. The first prayer meeting, I tried to pray.

I had to stop there in the middle somewhere, that was at the Youth for Christ group, because I was just scared, I couldn't get one word out of my mouth. And when I came in the headquarter, I was so thankful that they could do the dishes there, and that they could do the parcels upstairs, sending the books away, and copying the tapes. And afterwards I started working with Peter Fry on the vehicles, in the garage with Tiny and with his other brothers in Israel, and we bought cars in Germany.

And so I did on OM my first door-to-door visits. Oh, and I still remember, I hated that work. I tried to convince everybody that that's the most stupid way of working there is in the world.

And I went this summer to Spain, and in Spain I was deeply impressed by the need in that country. And after that year I decided to go to a Bible school, and after three years of Bible school I came again to OM. And I'm still here, and at the summer times of the Bible school, I joined also OM, two times at least.

One of the things for Austria, what's very much on my heart, is that we will manage it in one or other way to reach the country. You see, though it is such a tiny little country, just when I think of it, to reach the country for the Lord, I just get headaches. And that the Lord will help us in one or other way, really to make an impression on the masses.

And besides that, to win some Austrians who are going on. And that's also really a miracle what has to happen in the churches, when they will ever come out of the churches, or under the converts, that they are going on and that they just start working for Him. That is one of the main burdens, of course.

And then for a strategy of the coming year. Because in fact, a real definite plan, I not yet see. And so, when you could pray with us for the country there, to really see something definite, where we are not only working, looking on a short term, but really seeing through to the end, and really working toward a definite aim, and seeing more or less a road to the way, to the end.

That we just not work on a corner, but that we really create the country as country. And really, I don't know exactly how to come through at this point, and really to see something from the Lord in this. Johan van Dam from Holland.

I'm working also in Austria. And then, next. When I was born, my parents were already Christians.

However, I was really converted at the age of 14. The first eight years of my Christian life were spent in a state of spiritual failure. It's the normal life of many churches.

But it's not the normal life of the Word of God. And it was in that time that I was exchanging several letters with Federico Apparisi. We had already met in a camp about a year or two previously.

And I don't know why, but our lives were very intimately linked. So that we were sharing with one another our different experiences. He began to tell me how he met Jorge.

He began to tell me how he met Jorge. The plans that were beginning to unfold in Spain. I didn't understand, and it seemed to me they were a little crazy.

But in that manner, another couple of months passed. And then I began to read this book, The Source of Power, which Federico sent me. And I read it again and again, and then I continued to read it.

And it was such a big challenge for my life that I began to think about something new. It was such a new thing in my life that I began to think in a new way. Also, it was proposed to me that I go with him.

All this brought a great conflict into my life. Not only in terms of my way of thinking, but also my future plans, my family, my work. I had a whole month of great struggles.

Almost continuously, day and night. But at last, the Lord overcame. I made a decision.

Not because I saw things very clearly, but mostly by faith. I still remained for a time there. I was reading The Normal Christian Life and The Calvary Road.

And these books are the ones which God really used most powerfully in my life. I owe the spiritual change and the vision which the Lord gave me more to those books than to any other person or thing in my life. After that, I joined the traveling team.

And I was traveling for almost four years without stopping. Through all of Spain. The work was to distribute literature, prepare the summer campaigns, work with the churches.

Naturally, the experience of those years was something so special that it was the basis for what God was going to do next. I had a change. It was like a third birth.

I experienced a change, you might even say a third birth. Because really, in the first eight years of my Christian life, I had never known the spiritual life into which I had now entered. It was something completely new.

It wasn't just for one week, but it lasted a month, another month, another month, and year after year. Until the present day. Afterwards... Afterwards, God granted me to come into contact with some brothers who had a great spiritual desire.

This was in several trips that we made to Barcelona. We would pray together. And we felt that we should see something new in Spain.

But it was difficult to see a change in the churches. We thought that rather, God wanted to do something new, starting with a new work. And it's because of this that our lives were knit together more and more.

And thanks be to God, he unfolded to us a plan, which we have been following. With the purpose of reaching all of Spain. Not simply as Spain, but as part of the world, because that's the vision.

We are still at the beginning. But we trust that God is going to do great things, really. But we are trusting that God is laying a foundation for great things.

One of these purposes is to prepare young people to go to other places where there are no churches. And to raise up churches with a real vision to reach other places. We haven't seen much yet, but we hope that God is really going to raise up believers in Spain.

With a vision not only of the country, but of other countries. It's something that hasn't been seen yet. But if we trust God, he can do it.

Amen.

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