

Testimony of George Verwer

by George Verwer

George Verwer shares his testimony of how he came to know Jesus Christ and how he has lived for Him, emphasizing the importance of perseverance in prayer, faith, and living for Christ.

Duration: 47:02

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 1 Timothy 4:12-16

Topics: "Christian Balance", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of finding balance in the Christian life. He shares personal experiences of being overly zealous in evangelism and prayer, to the point of neglecting other aspects of life. The speaker warns against becoming neurotic or foolish in our pursuit of total commitment to God. He also highlights the need for young people to be aware of the realities of the world and to seek God's guidance in prayer meetings. The speaker encourages listeners to enjoy activities that bring them joy and to find a healthy balance in their Christian walk.

Transcript

1 Timothy chapter 4, verse 12. Let no man despise, you could say, make fun of, mock, ridicule, belittle. Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers in word, conduct, love, spirit, faith, purity.

Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, that's what we're having right now, to doctrine, that's what we have in God's word. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.

Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. I want to thank each young person who has come here this evening, as I announced last night that I especially wanted to speak to young people. The message, however, I trust by God's grace will be for everyone.

One of the reasons I like to speak to young people in a lot of my meetings are young people's meetings. Some of you perhaps attended the meeting when I was preaching 21 nights in a row together with Sheila Walsh, the Earth Invaders meetings a few years ago. I remember when I was at Liverpool.

These meetings were not mainly missionary meetings, they were general teaching challenge meetings. And I just mentioned briefly about the challenge of missions at that meeting in Liverpool. And God gave us five or ten recruits on OM out of that one meeting.

Sheila, by the way, together with Steve Taylor, have just been ministering over in Antwerp, Belgium. It's Operation Mobilization that sponsored and organized the conference or the concert. One of the reasons I just so appreciate speaking to young people, whether there's five or five thousand, is because it was when I was 16 and 17 that God completely turned my life upside down and inside out.

And because of that I ended up, of all places, in Bolton, Lancashire. When I was a young teenager, though my grandfather came from this part of the world, I hardly could find England on the map. Maybe I could just explain, first of all, how I was converted to Christ.

There may be someone here that's not yet born again, not yet a follower of Jesus Christ, in terms of having experienced real saving faith. And I share my testimony especially for you. I wasn't reared in a Christian home.

How many of you come from homes where your parents are not practicing followers and believers in the Lord Jesus Christ? Many of you come from that kind of situation, quite a few. And my parents were good people, you know. My father wasn't in the mafia, though we came from New Jersey and the mafia was all around us.

He was an immigrant, my father, from the Netherlands. His father was an atheist. My mother's father from Glasgow was a drunkard.

That marriage blew in two pieces. And so there wasn't too much of a spiritual heritage in my family. And a dear elderly lady came into my life and began to pray for me.

And I want to just emphasize this. There's a number of lessons, as I just tell this story, true story. There's a number of lessons I want to emphasize.

If you forget the story, fine, but don't forget the lessons. They're biblical lessons. And I find years later, people forget most of what I've said in a message.

But they remember these stories. The story of the elderly lady who prayed for me. She prayed for me for three years and every year I got worse.

But she didn't give up. What about you in your prayer life? Do you give up on people? Do you pray for a while with great enthusiasm and then a week later you stop praying? The Bible speaks about persevering prayer. Do you know anything about that? This lady prayed for the grammar school high school near my home.

And she prayed for 15 years that revival would come to this drunken, ungodly, sex-saturated high school. Life in New York City is very, very fast. They're young people at 13.

They've been in every sexual experience that exists and they're bored stiff. The next step is heroin or marijuana or perversion or masochism or something else. This lady persevered in prayer for 15 years for this high school.

And she prayed for me because I was one of the more difficult, wild, loud-mouthed students. And was sort of elected by my fellow students as sort of a student leader to try to bring about a little bit of revolution in the school. And she heard of my bad reputation and so she started to pray for me.

She sent me a Gospel of John through the post. Have you ever read the Gospel of John? What a little piece of spiritual dynamite. The Gospel of John.

It's good for every Christian to have a few dozen Gospels of John in his car or his briefcase or somewhere. And just give them out. We're here on an international team.

One of our brothers is just giving his holiday to serving Christ with us. He's from Wales. He's driving us around in his old car.

And our other friend, he's from Canada. And when I had a meeting today with another man from Manchester, they went out into the streets of Bolton giving out literature and telling people about the meeting. And you know, they found the people of Bolton very, very friendly.

People not only received the tracts, they were very appreciative. Now, I don't know whether it was the accent, Canadian and Welsh accents. I don't think Wayne was speaking Welsh.

If you give out tracts in the United States, I can tell you not too many people are going to thank you for them. And in London, where I come from now, you'll get quite a few thrown on the pavement. I believe, as I've spoken about in this book, that every Christian can have a ministry of distributing literature.

So, this lady sent me a Gospel of John. And I read this Gospel. Now, I was on an ego trip.

You know what an ego trip is? It means you're living for yourself. And you're getting some kind of satisfaction from your peers through something that you do. Now, I was on a business ego trip at 16.

I owned three businesses. I was involved in some other interesting events. My big thing was rock and roll and dancing, the nightclubs.

And I was involved in a few other things. I won't bore you with the details. But I was on an ego trip.

I was living for myself. And I mixed into my cocktail ego trip a little bit of religion. I went to church.

Because my big thing was girls. I started in the girl trip when I was about four. By the time I was 16, there were about 32 different girls that had blown all my circuits.

And so, you know, every other month, there was some big thing going on sometimes every other week. But this dear woman prayed for me. She was not only praying that people would be saved.

She was praying that they would be saved and sent. And you know, that's my prayer tonight. Not that people will just be saved.

And I know many of you, most of you already are saved. You know Christ personally. But my burden is that people would be saved and sent.

Both to Britain and around the world. Every year I got worse. And she kept praying.

And she put some tracks in the local railway station. And one day I was catching a train and I took one of these tracks out of the track rack. And it was called The Glory of Sickness.

A little track similar to this book, Don't Waste Your Sorrows. And God spoke to me through that track. I only found out later, the same woman who sent me the gospel is the woman who put the tracks in the railway station.

An ordinary housewife. Unknown, though she's 80 years of age today, still praying for me. Just a very ordinary woman.

And then Billy Graham came to New York City. I wonder if any of you have come to Christ through a special meeting, a big meeting. Maybe Billy Graham, Luis Palau, maybe Eric Dolve, maybe a meeting here in Bolton.

How many have come to Christ through that kind of meeting, an evangelistic meeting? Raise your hand so I can see, real quick. Okay, about 15, 20 of you. Well I went to this meeting even though I hardly knew what an evangelist was.

And maybe tonight, maybe you're not sure what this meeting is about. You know I've been trying to learn English for 23 years since I came here. And as you can see, I haven't quite made it.

So some of you are wondering, who in the world is this American? We can get enough Americans on television. We don't need to go to the town hall to get some kind of converted JR. Well, believe me when I was 16, I didn't expect to end up speaking in the town hall at Bolton. I ended up living in the King's Arms in Bolton.

Now, many of you are too young to know about the King's Arms. I know you have another pub I think called the King's Head. But the King's Arms at 8016's Gate was up for rent when I was living in Atherton.

The regions beyond. And I had a report back to me from Bolton that there was a place at fairly low rent, 8016's Gate, an old pub in terrible condition. It looked like something out of an explosive Star Wars sequence that was up for rent.

So I sent some spies to 8016's Gate. I'm going to get back to the meeting in New York City in a minute. Just try to stick with me.

I sent some spies to 8016's Gate. And they came back with a bad report. But I said, I believe God is leading us to open a bookshop in that pub.

And we did. And a bookshop has been there and now in our new location every month ever since. Let's go back.

What happened in between this young 16 year old wild student to this young man settling in Bolton and converting pubs into Christian bookshops? I'll tell you what happened. It's spelled J-E-S-U-S. Jesus.

The Lord Jesus the Bible usually refers to. Came into my life in that meeting. Where I heard Billy Graham give a very simple basic gospel message.

And preach the gospel of grace. You see religion is all the same. Whether it's Christendom, you know organized Christendom which sometimes doesn't have the reality of Christ.

Or whether it's some other religion. Religion says the same thing. It says you do this, you keep this rule, you do this and maybe you'll get to nirvana or heaven or something similar.

Biblical Christianity says not by works of righteousness which you have done but according to his mercy. The Bible says in the book of Ephesians by grace are you saved. The Bible says that it's not by works of righteousness which we have done.

And I remember reading that gospel of John in preparation for that meeting. And I read words about the blood of Christ. And I read a lot of times the word believe.

Slowly I began to understand. Salvation is by faith. And I discovered later on in the epistle of John that as a Christian it was our privilege to know that we're on the way to heaven.

The leader of Operation Mobilization in those early days here in Bolton. The British leader was a young man named Keith Beckwith. He was in his mid-twenties.

Keith had a great burden for Poland. He lived in a little tiny room in that converted pub. He was from a very wealthy background.

He had given his whole fortune to the sake and the sending forth of missionaries. And he had a burden for Poland. And he would be in his little room there in Deansgate writing letters to people around Poland.

And then God sent young Keith to Poland. He never came back. He never came back.

He was killed in the service of Jesus Christ. A few weeks later I was speaking at his funeral in Carlisle. This made such an impact on his father.

William Beckwith is still alive today. And he actually became one of the early board members of Operation Mobilization. And a great supporter of this work.

Keith went immediately into the presence of God. I wonder how many of those people that were in Mexico City when that earthquake hit last week at this time. I wonder how many of those people were ready to meet God.

More important than that, I wonder how many of us here in this town hall in Bolton tonight are ready to meet God. We know that we have been saved. We know that we're on the way to heaven.

We know that Jesus Christ dwells in us. We have been forgiven because of what Jesus Christ did on Calvary. That should be the experience of every one of us tonight.

And I pray that if you're not sure of your salvation, you're not sure of your eternal destiny, you have something that's somehow standing between you and God tonight, that you'll stay behind after the meeting. There are counselors, there are people that would be happy to pray for you. Or go to one of your own church leaders.

If you feel more comfortable with one of your own church leaders, go there and ask how you can be born again. How you can know that you're on the road to heaven. Jesus said in the book of Matthew, narrow is the way and few there be that find it.

That next verse he said, broad is the road that leads to destruction. You know what concerns me? I find more and more so-called Christian young people, who though they've made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, they are not experiencing the joy of their salvation. David after that great sin said, Oh God, return unto me the joy of my salvation.

And many young people today write to me. I've had about 14,000 write to me as a result of that book. And many of them have said, George or Mr. Verwer, call me whatever you want.

I have read your book and what you have described in that book as spiritual schizophrenia is true in my life. I've got one foot in the world and one foot in the church. And I'm not experiencing joy and fulfillment in either one.

I will tell you, my experience is that there's a lot of unhappy Christian young people. We may go to a meeting, we may clap, we may praise the Lord. And we may look happy, but down in our hearts there's a fog of unbelief.

Down in our hearts there lingers compromise with the world. And with one set of friends we behave one way and another set of church friends we behave another way. And now we have young people even sitting in evangelical churches.

Praising the Lord one minute and going to bed with their boyfriend or their girlfriend the next minute. Some of them even trying to defend it from the Bible. Which is very difficult.

But if you do like the cults, just take a verse here and a word there. You can get anything you want from the Bible. And I have this question tonight.

Not only the question about whether you're saved and whether you know you're going to heaven because of faith in Jesus Christ. But are you living for Christ tonight? Do you know the reality of total commitment? Romans chapter 12 verse 1 says, I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God to present your body as a living sacrifice. In my own experience, and we're all different.

Salvation and commitment hit me on the same night. And from the moment I was converted to Christ in that Billy Graham meeting. To this day, I have known his presence, his power, his grace, his love.

Every single day. And let me tell you, when I was 16, I was living for big kicks. But when I found Jesus Christ, I discovered something better.

A lot of young people sell their soul out to Satan in one way or the other. Because they're afraid of being embarrassed with their friends. Let me tell you something, psychology has proven this, sociology has proven this, history has proven this.

Most of the people who claim to be your friends right now, in five years will have forgotten you completely. History has proven that again and again. We're human beings, we don't maintain friendships.

Life goes fast, life gets complicated. We move, we get married, this thing, that thing. People who may influence you now to take drugs, to get on the fags, to do the wrong things in the area of sex.

Those people are not going to stick with you. I can guarantee you that. In fact, I'd give you a hundred dollar bet on it.

Or pounds, they're worth more if you want. Except I don't gamble. My young friends, Jesus Christ is the friend you need.

He took me in at 16 years of age. I was very popular. I was elected president of this group, president of that group, president of my student body.

Most of those people, of course, have forgotten. We left grammar school, we all went off to different colleges and universities. The wheels of life turn, they get married, they get divorced.

They don't remember the people that went to grammar school, much less primary school. Make your first number one friend Jesus Christ. Give your loyalty to Jesus Christ.

Don't be pushed around by your peers. You let Jesus Christ control your life. And if they reject you because you believe in moral purity, and you believe your body should be kept pure, and you believe in loyalty to Jesus Christ, if they reject you because of that, then bless be God, you'll be better off because of it.

And I believe as you stand for Christ in your high school here in Bolton or a surrounding town, God will honor you. I believe as you begin prayer meetings in your school or outside the school in your homes, and you ask God to break in among your friends, that you will see what we saw. Let me tell you what happened to that ungodly grammar school, where sometimes one third of the students were completely drunk on the weekends.

Booze flowed around our school like water in a river. People were flipping out. People were being stabbed.

Girls were turning up pregnant. People were having, in the school down the road, sex on the chemistry laboratory table. And that's all small potatoes compared to what they're doing in New York City now.

We hear about increased sex with animals. We hear about four or five people all having sex at the same time. We hear of every kind of weird thing going on, and it's unfortunate that many young people are naive about what the world is really like.

And so they nibble around at the world until they get burnt. You know, these things are not new. Nothing I've mentioned to you is new.

The Bible talks about it. Five hundred verses or more in the Bible on the subject of sex. If you think this book is old-fashioned, you obviously haven't read it.

And you read that brilliant book we have on the book table on the subject of sex and moral purity. That one book could save you your life. I don't think that young man, not young anymore, who was just given life imprisonment for starving that little baby to death, I don't think he planned that in grammar school.

Do you? Do you think when he was 16 he sat down and he planned, now how can I grow up and be evil and murder some little baby by starving her to death so I can spend the rest of my life in solitary? That's right. The newspapers today reported that this man, because of the nature of his crime, the complexity of the prison system, will have to spend most of his life in solitary confinement. And I sense in my heart, there are young people here tonight, or there are young people listening to this tape, if you don't get your life sorted out, you may be even some kind of a Christian, but if you don't get your life sorted out, someday sin will choke out anything that's in you.

The Bible says, he that commits sin becomes a slave to sin. When I first got into a little bit of a lust trip, you know, a little fooling around, the magazines, the eyes, a little excess of this and that with my different girlfriends, I thought this is just, you know, this is nothing. Everybody's doing it.

I mean, James Bond is doing it. Clint Eastwood is doing it. All the pop stars are doing it, almost all of them.

But you know, at 16 I was hooked. At 16 I was hooked on pornography. At 16 I was hooked on lying.

At 16 I was hooked on gambling. A few other things that I care not to mention. Exactly what the Bible says.

He who commits sin, whether you're 14 or 40, whether you're 15 or 80, he who commits sin becomes a slave to sin. I thank God it's in that same Gospel of John, where it says, that when Christ sets us free, we are free indeed. When Jesus Christ set me free in that meeting, I went back to my high school.

I was a bit scared. But I decided to give out Gospels of John to the high school. We had 1,200 students.

And God's Spirit, in answer to 15 years prayer, began to move on that high school. 1,000 students. Can you imagine that? Promised to read a Gospel of John.

And before God was done with that school, in ungodly metropolitan New York, 200 students had surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ. They were not all true conversions. And from that school, God began to send out workers.

And from that school, God sent me to Mexico. And a movement was born, which initially was called, Send the Light. Actually before that, when we were back in the high school, we had a name called Christian Youth Committee.

Anybody can start a committee. You can start Christian Youth Committee in your own high school. You can get involved with Youth for Christ, as I did when I was a young person, after my conversion.

Praise God for that tremendous work. God heard the prayers of one dear elderly woman. To make a long story short, that reality that I experienced back then as a teenager, has stood with me all my life.

And I just want to recommend to you young people, go all the way with Jesus Christ. Give Him everything you have. Your time, your talent, your money, your life, your education, your future.

And you cannot go wrong. You cannot go wrong. You know, since those days, 37,000 young people have gone through Operation Mobilization.

They tell us today, one out of every three marriages ends in a divorce court. One out of every three marriages. A heartache.

The agony. Did you see Kramer vs. Kramer a few years ago? Would you like to go through that one? Do you know of the 37,000 people who have been trained, and went through this training program, and some of them it was only a short program.

Very few out of 37,000 have ever gone through that experience. And within the people who are within our work, and there's 1,600 of us full time now, almost no one. That's only one example.

Because I like to be specific. Of the big dividends that come to us spiritually, emotionally, in our marriages, when as young people, we give God all. It's not enough to give Him half.

There are many, many Christian marriages that are coming apart. When you analyze it, I don't like to give simplifications. Some of them are complex.

And I'm not interested in putting people into a guilt straight jacket. But a lot of this marital breakup would be avoided if as young people, we learned something about the cross. Jesus said, if any man come after me, let him deny self.

That's the cross. He didn't say, if any man come after me, let him take up his choruses and follow me. I love to sing choruses.

I love to let my feet tap around a little bit to the sound of the music. I'm a musicaholic. I have to watch it.

It goes out of control in my life. I got more music tapes than probably some of you all put together. But I will tell you, Jesus didn't call me, George Verwer, to take up my choruses and follow Him.

He didn't call me to take up my Walkman and follow Him, listening to my Christian music. Even Keith Green. Jesus said, if any man come after me, let him take up a cross.

That means death to self. That means death to lust. That lusting after those pictures.

That lusting in that private little sex cinema you set up in your own little private situation that nobody else knows about it. You know, my mother didn't know I had all that pornography. She thought little Georgie was such a good little boy.

I even belonged to the Boy Scouts. I tried to join the Girl Scouts, but there was some kind of prejudice against men. And my mother, she thought I went to church.

Of course I went to church. You see all the chicks in the church. I mean, the girls in the church.

I was living a double life. I was in church one minute and I was with my magazines and my own little lust cinema the next minute. And it's lucky I didn't get arrested.

I will tell you, when Jesus Christ came into my heart, he also invaded my mind. And you know, as a young Christian, you know what I thought? I thought, there's no hope for me. Any of you ever get that feeling? If any of you belong to the No Hope For Me Club, please write to me.

I'm president. And I thought even as a Christian, I was failing the Lord. I wasn't disciplined.

The Bible seemed dry at times. Christians bored me stiff. The average preacher I wouldn't want to listen to for more than three and a half minutes.

And I thought, I'll never make it. I can't be a Christian. I can't even tie my tie properly.

And I'm the kind of character that I would not only have liked to put my hair into two colors, I would have liked to plant trees on my head and really be way out. I was radical, outspoken, fed up, thought of becoming even a communist. But I found satisfaction in Jesus Christ.

Some people say, yeah, that's just a late adolescent religious trip. That's just for frustrated teenagers who can't find a boyfriend. And I will tell you, if it's just a religious trip, I'd like to know why it's lasted so long every day in my life.

And for my wife. And for my three children who've all come to know Jesus Christ as well. Brothers and sisters, my dear friends, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.

Don't miss what God has for you. Don't get caught up with the things of this world and miss what Jesus has. Now let me insert something here that's very, very important.

There's a lot of Christians that more or less list everything that's fun as being worldly. Young people run into this kind of Pharisees and this kind of legalism and it drives them around the bend. And they get confused because they get to think everything they want to do is worldly and it seems that many things they don't want to do are spiritual.

When you're filled with the Holy Spirit and that's the will of God for every person, that doesn't destroy your human factor. How many of you have blue eyes? I have blue eyes. How many blue-eyed people we have? Okay.

How many brown-eyed people we have? How many, honestly, you still don't know what color eyes you've got? I met one lady some time ago and she had one green one and one blue one. But let me tell you, when you're filled with the Spirit, when you're converted to Jesus Christ, the color of your eyes doesn't change. You're still a human.

One of the messages I preach all over the world, I almost wrote a book on it, except old Graham Green stole my title. It's called The Human Factor. And one of the mistakes I almost made when I was a young Christian with my frustrations and my failures was I denied the human factor.

The Bible teaches this treasure is in an earthen vessel. And we're human beings. And I hope you understand that as a Christian, there are many things that you can do that are fun, that are fun.

I enjoy tennis myself, especially when I win. Is that sinful? This morning I went jogging. I like to jog.

I hate... It's a love-hate relationship. Running. I ran along one of your railway tracks this morning in a river.

I'm not sure if it was a river or a sewer, but it was along the railway track. And of course, if I tell people when I run, I'm listening to the Word of God, that sounds really spiritual. Wow! George Boer running around Bolton, listening to the Word of God.

What a spiritual giant. But sometimes I run listening to the local radio station to see what the pop people are saying. Or listen to Christian music, which is better.

And I enjoy it. Do not think everything you enjoy is sinful. Do not even think everything your conscience tells you is wrong is sinful, because some of us have been brainwashed into a very legalistic form in which almost everything is sinful.

And I want to tell you, Operation Mobilization has been picking up the pieces of poor parenthood for 28 years. Young people with serious damaged emotions because they were constantly made to feel guilty. If they did the dishes and one dish was left with one stain, they were judged as not being committed.

Praise God for the reality of spiritual balance. I've written a book on this subject. It also is one of the more slower selling books in the world.

It's got a funny title that doesn't seem to appeal to people. Revolution of Love and Balance. What in the world is that about? But listen, if you don't find balance in your Christian life, there's a good chance you'll end up on the shelf spiritually.

I know because I almost did. I was so extreme in evangelism, prayer, world missions, discipling everybody, redeeming the time. That was the big thing for me.

Redeem the time. I read that verse and I thought, this is the greatest verse in the Bible. And I became a redeem the time neurotic.

I not only used to do two things at the same time, I used to do three, four and five things at the same time and almost got killed. Especially in the New York subway tube giving out tracks and not looking where I was going. Praise God that Jesus called the disciples apart and said, hey disciples, stop the evangelistic campaign, come apart and rest a while.

And years ago, George Verwer heard the voice of God, come apart and rest a while and I took up a few sports and I learned to just walk more in the woods and get alone and enjoy music whether it's Beethoven or Keith Green and just slow down a bit. Someone asked Billy Graham, what would you do if you could start all over again? And Billy Graham said, I would pace myself more. Young person, God is calling you to total commitment but He's not calling you to be a neurotic.

God is calling you to be filled with the Holy Spirit but He's not calling you into foolishness. And if you read the Scriptures carefully and we need to spend much time in the Word of God, letting one great biblical truth bring another biblical truth into balance. Balance isn't compromise.

That's not what I'm talking about. That's somebody else's kind of balance. Balance is one biblical truth bringing another biblical truth into the right perspective in your life.

And you know one of my favorite words in the Bible? Moderation. There's a lot of books that you can read that may not be Christian books. Some you shouldn't read but there are others that are acceptable in moderation.

There's certainly some television that's profitable for young people in moderation. Music is good in moderation. Films can be good.

Some of them are outstanding like Chariots of Fire that we mentioned last night in moderation. And the Word of God is clear. What does it say? Let your moderation, your self-control be known to all men.

Not your extremism which leads to Phariseeism and judgmentalism and more divisions in the body of Christ but your moderation. And years ago I learned I learned something about compassionately disagreeing. Have you got a theology of compassionately disagreeing? Very important when you have meetings of different churches coming together.

I sat in the back of the meeting. I like to just notice the scenery. And I noticed some are jumping and praising the Lord.

I noticed others are sitting there very somber very quiet. Obviously we come from different fellowships. We have different concepts about worship and about how to worship.

That's perfectly normal. That's not unusual. If you think that's unusual I would challenge you how much you know about church history my dear friend.

It was my major at Bible College. The church isn't 20 years old. You know the church wasn't born when the latest house fellowship group was born in Britain.

The church is 2,000 years of age. Some people give the idea that the Holy Spirit has been sleeping for 1,900 years. And now and of course in Britain the Holy Spirit has woken up.

You know we do tend to get a little nationalistic in this country. We do somehow think that the British Empire is still functioning. It died nationally.

But spiritually we're trying to export British brands of Christianity to pagan lands at a very rapid rate. And some of the pagan lands are sending them back. So may we just humble ourselves and know that God has been doing tremendous things in Korea and tremendous things in Brazil and tremendous things in many other countries and we can learn from these things.

And I know great living powerful fellowships where the people are relatively quiet. I know other tremendous fellowships where the people are jumping around and relatively noisy. I'm a bit of both myself and sometimes just wonder what I am.

Do you ever feel that you don't quite fit in this group up the road or this group down the road? Let me tell you something. We're all human. There's no perfect church, no perfect fellowship, no perfect fit without love and Bill Hyman in his book calls it love that covers.

And with that we incorporate my little doctrine and I get it from the Bible of compassionately disagree. You may disagree with a brother. You may say, well I don't agree with your theology on that point.

I don't agree with your practice on that point. But you disagree compassionately respecting him. Searching the scriptures that these things be so.

And that's the only way we're going to make an impact on a basically humanistic secular society. And if they see us as Christians judging each other and fighting with each other and always pointing out our weaknesses and that doesn't take any brilliance whatsoever then they are not going to believe. Because the Word of God says in this, they will know that you are my disciples because you love one another.

And we find, I find, too many people today in the world even bearing the name Christian who are always tearing things down. Tearing things down. Anybody can tear things down.

You give me a little bit of dynamite and some petrol and I'll destroy this town whole with very little expertise. But I will tell you, it takes an architect to build. Will you be an architect for Jesus Christ in Bolton? Would you learn how to be more positive as you see the problems and the difficulties and the heartaches? We are in a spiritual warfare.

Satan is going to try to destroy us. He'll divide one church from the other and when he's got that neatly set up then he's going to then he'll move into the individual churches and he'll divide them right in two. And that's already happening.

So wouldn't it be better to have a little more love from the very, very beginning? We're all different. The human factor, spiritual balance, compassionate disagreeing. Have you ever heard of any of these things?

They're all in the Bible.

1 Corinthians 13, Ephesians 5, Ephesians 4, Colossians 3, how many of you have not yet read the Bible through even once? Let's be honest, it only takes 60 hours but maybe you haven't been able to find 60 hours in the last five years. Of course, if you're a new Christian, I don't expect you've read the Bible through. But let's have a little honesty survey.

Though you love the Word of God and you believe it, somehow you haven't made it through once yet. Now just raise your hand. You haven't read the Bible through once.

Well, a lot of the young people but a few of the older ones. Why don't you write in your Bible tonight when you get home. I did this years ago.

By God's grace, I'm going to read you through in the next year. That's only a little over an hour and a half a week Bible reading. You go right through.

You say, oh, there's some things there in the Bible that bother me. I got bogged down in Leviticus. I choked on Chronicles and I got trapped when I read about people doing funny things on the wall.

Let me tell you something. It's not the things in the Bible I don't understand that bother me. I'm only a human being.

I expect in God's divine book it may take me some time. It's what I do understand in the Bible that bothers me and that brings me to repentance. And that's the only reason I'm still here because I've learned how to repent.

I've learned how to bounce back when I fail. I've learned how to claim the cleansing precious blood of Christ when I've sinned. And I wish I had time to share with you some of my areas of struggle and failure and sin.

It's called The Confessions of a Weak Missionary. I heard that some missionaries in Europe picked up this tape some time ago and it's gone all over Europe because it seems that many missionaries have the same struggles and the same failures. Young people, don't be deceived.

I think that characters like me who start movements and who preach and who write books that somehow we've got it all together and we're some kind of super spiritual characters moving along like some kind of combination of E.T., Gandhi and a Concord plane. We are weak, feeble, struggling human beings. We fail.

We have struggles with hostility. Any of you have difficulty with hostility or don't you know what that is? You know, this thing that somehow brews up in you and once in a while you just feel like boom, punching someone. How many ever get that feeling just a little bit? Any of you young people? Oh, even adults.

I get it sometimes when I'm driving. One of my prayers is oh God, make me a more spiritual driver. There's many a man who's an angel in a pulpit and a devil behind the wheel.

And I find in Bromley, Kent where I live that we've got a lot of poor drivers. They cut in front of you and they park in the wrong place and they pull out of the railway station without looking. And when people do this kind of thing and when you're driving, how do you handle that? I know you're all just so much more spiritual here in the north.

You just roll down the window of your car and God bless you. I will tell you some of the greatest failures in my life as a Christian leader had been behind the wheel of the car. Especially when my lovely little wife who doesn't drive keeps telling me how to drive.

But I don't let Satan condemn me because he is the accuser of the brethren. I don't stop driving. I don't throw the Christian faith because I haven't got total victory yet.

But I ask God to forgive me. If we confess our sin, He's faithful and just to forgive us. Maybe a little thing, maybe a big thing.

And guess what He does? He forgives us. And He cleanses us. And He puts us back in the battle.

And I'm sure that tonight there's some of you if you're honest, you're not really walking with Jesus. You're not really filled with God's Spirit. You're not really living with Christ as Lord of your life.

You've got into a mess again. Maybe with your mouth like me. Maybe in some other area.

And God is saying to you tonight as He always says through His Son Jesus Christ. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy labor and I will give you rest. You may be a believer but are you walking with Him in reality, honesty, joy, peace, fruit of the Spirit? That's the will of God.

And it should be your daily portion every day of your Christian life. Don't miss God's way. Search the Scriptures.

Read some of these books. Get some of these tapes. Get counseling tonight or whenever you can.

And be a hundred percent for Jesus Christ. Not that you ever arrive at a hundred percent but that's your goal. Because God's program is a program of growth.

There can be the crisis but the crisis without the process becomes an absence. There's a lot of young people today. They've been to Spring Harvest.

They've been to this meeting. They've been to that meeting. They've been forward.

They've prayed. But they're drifting because they were willing for the crisis but not the process. The word.

The cross. Confession. Prayer.

Relationship. Spiritual balance. Get both.

The crisis of conversion. Crisis of total commitment. Filling of the Spirit.

God works in different people in different ways but also the process.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19931.mp3>

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