

Testimony of Om

by George Verwer

George Verwer shares his testimony of faith, the power of prayer, and the importance of love and discipleship in the Christian life.

Duration: 1:02:38

Scripture: Psalm 119:9, Psalm 119:11, Galatians 5:17, Hebrews 13:4, James 1:22

Topics: "Personal Testimony", "Christian Conversion"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses his personal journey of becoming a follower of Jesus Christ. He initially lived a lazy and pleasure-seeking lifestyle, but after reading the gospel of God, he began to understand the message of Jesus Christ. Inspired by evangelist Billy Graham, he decided to attend a sports event where Graham was speaking. It was during this event that he made a commitment to the Lord and experienced a transformation in his life. The speaker also emphasizes the importance of not just believing with the head, but also with the heart and living a life dedicated to following Christ.

Transcript

Me shouting in that other room just a moment ago, I was talking to Bombay, India. And a few minutes before that, I was talking to Manchester, England. Trying to find out if the Lord has brought in some money to pay our bills.

Whenever we sail away from anywhere, we usually leave many bills behind. And one of the most unusual things about this ministry is the way God has brought in finance in answer to prayer alone. And this is not the first time in history that this has happened.

Some of you know the ministry of Hudson Taylor in China, and the money this man saw come in for his work in answer to prayer. Some of you have heard the name of George Muller. At the end of his life, he had 25,000 answers to prayer.

He had his very large orphanages. He prayed in millions and millions of pounds sterling to feed these children, and only God knew his needs. There are many burdens on my heart this afternoon.

Especially in regards to the land of Vietnam. Many of our brothers and sisters in Vietnam are going through suffering right now that is completely beyond words. News has just come on the radio that there is now a totally new government in Saigon.

Last year, the ship had a tremendous time there in the city of Saigon. We had 50,000 visitors. Over 30,000 books went out in Vietnamese, presenting the claims of Jesus Christ.

We had a telegram 10 days ago. From the whole church in Vietnam, please come to Saigon. Also come immediately to Dunang.

As you know, Dunang no longer is free. Now, Dunang has been bombed. The latest news I have is that there are 150 refugees in the air.

I believe these are days when all of us need to be praying definitely for Vietnam, and for God's people in Vietnam, and for the entire situation. There are many other burdens on my heart. I wish this was a three-day conference, not a one-day conference.

And I wish this ship was a little bigger. So we can have more people. But one of the ways we make up for this is through the Christian books.

The Christian book exhibition is not yet open. Next week, there will be over 500 different Christian books on display. And some of them at very, very special prices.

But we're bringing just a few into this meeting. I want to especially mention the writings of H.W. Tozer. These books are very expensive in the United States.

But because these are Indian editions, they are half the price. And I have never read such strong spiritual meat as this man has in his writings. And some of you are from the Methodist Church, I believe.

You will find this man walking in the steps of Wesley. And I've been reading this book this week. But I've read every one of these other books by H.W. Tozer.

There's about seven of them. We will be giving you as a gift my own book, Hunger for Reality. I'm not a very good writer.

The bad part of this book are the quotations from H.W. Tozer's books I put in my book. And I hope you will read some of these books. There's also some very, very interesting books by other writers.

That will be a great blessing to you. Also as an expression of our fellowship with you, we will be giving you a number of outstanding books as gifts, hoping that after you read them, you may give them to someone else. You know, our teams work in some very interesting countries like Turkey.

And if you go out in the streets of Turkey to get out a piece of literature, you will be arrested. So it's very difficult. But some of our teams, they go out just after dark.

They don't give out any literature. They just lose it. We have lost over 100,000 pieces of literature in the land of Turkey.

Some years ago, I was working in a closed country. Where you could not openly evangelize. But unfortunately, I had a hole in my pocket.

I kept putting new testaments into my pocket. And I kept losing those new testaments. In many of these countries, thousands of people have written in after finding literature and enrolled in Bible correspondence courses.

Truly, we have a God who answers prayers. Nothing is too hard for Him. Another burden on my heart is just to share something of what Jesus Christ has done for me.

I was not from a Christian home. My grandfather was from Holland. Many years ago, I believe the Dutch had controlled Malaysia.

I don't know whether that was good or bad. From history, I know that the Dutch once conquered Malaysia. My grandfather was an atheist.

My other grandfather was from Scotland. He was a drunkard. My own father left Holland and went to the United States.

He was just a 20th century materialist. He was not against God. Nothing wrong with God.

God very nice to the young people. But when you get older, it must be wrong. Now, I noticed in Singapore, I don't know much about Malaysia.

I've never been here except the Kuala Lumpur airport. But I lived in Thailand for a while and I lived in Singapore a very short time. But I noticed in Singapore, many young people come to the meetings.

Many boys and girls come to the meetings. First, they're looking around to see who else is at the meeting. Many of them find their marriage partner in the church.

But one or two years after the marriage, no longer they found in the church. Because money quickly becomes our God after we get married. Money became the God in my family.

In fact, when I was a young boy, at 11 years of age, I went into business. At 15, I had three businesses. And I thought with money, nothing could stop me.

But somehow, there was not that real satisfaction. I then became very involved in dating. I don't know if you have that interesting system in Malaysia.

In India, when we talk about dating, people are thinking this is some fruit that we're eating. But I think you seem to understand the system better than the Indians. So every week, I was with a different girl, off to the nightclubs, off to the dances, off to the flicks.

The Americans call them movies, the English call them flicks, cinemas. And I thought therefore, next to money, the main thing was to have a good time. And get a lot of pleasure.

But I wasn't satisfied. A dear elderly lady began to pray for me. And then she sent me a Gospel of John.

And I began reading this Gospel of John. I don't know how many times you have read that first book in the Bible. But it's well worth reading.

And as I read this Gospel, I realized something of Jesus. A man named Billy Graham came to New York City. I lived near New York City.

Now I didn't understand anything about this kind of thing. I didn't know what the word evangelism meant. Evangelism, what is this? But I saw that Billy Graham played sports, and I was a sports fanatic, so I thought I would go and listen to this person.

I saw that Billy Graham liked to play sports. So I asked him what good things he had to say So I went. Also, this one girl who I was rather interested in, said to me, I thought she could use some of this religion because she had a rather such a nice wife.

So I said, I have a friend, and she is very interested in this religion. Maybe she had Now I had started to go to church because I discovered there are some really nice girls in the church. So I mean, once a week, looking around the church, no harm in that.

And pretty soon, they made me president of the youth fellowship. And so I thought I was becoming quite a religious fellow. And what a tremendous difference there is between religion and knowing Jesus Christ personally.

All the difference in the world. I began to get some relief. But I didn't know Christ.

Which meant I started to live a double life. I had this Sunday life. But on my 19th birthday, I asked my mother and sister in church such a good boy.

And then I joined the Boy Scouts. I tried to get in the Girl Scouts. And then I joined the YMCA.

And so I thought that, you know, I had enough good work that if I died, my good work would balance my bad work and I would go to heaven. A lot of people think that I began living a double life. I'm thinking about this in my book which I hope you will take time to read.

On Saturday night, on Monday night, I was a different person. But that night in New York City as Billy Graham spoke, and later on in the week we'll have some of his books available. I heard the gospel.

That Jesus Christ died for me. And he pointed out from the Bible the way of salvation. And he called on people to repent, to turn around and to follow Christ.

You see, so many people believe with their heads. So does the devil. But to know God we must believe with our heart, with our life.

And that night I made my commitment And he said, And he began to change my life. And what I want to share with you now, mainly this afternoon, are some of the problems I had as a young Christian of 17 years of age. And at 18 when I went up to university.

I'm sure that many of you already know the Lord Jesus Christ. He has come into your life. He brought that joy and that peace.

You know that your sins are forgiven. That's our privilege. As believers in Jesus.

But I'm sure there are some who may not have yet taken that step. You can do that even today. There are probably others who like me are not finding it easy.

It seems that after I came to Christ I had more problems than before. Notice, if you will, in your Bible. In the book of Galatians these very important words.

The book of Galatians chapter 5 verse 17 For the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh and these are contrary to one to another so that you cannot do the things that ye would. This shows the tremendous conflict of the child of God. I don't know how many of you read Chinese.

But if you read Chinese and you give me your name and address on a piece of paper I will send you one of my books that I've just found out has just been printed in Chinese. They send me a basic pile of these and I think they're in London. It's called Pseudo-Discipleship or Mr. Phony Disciple.

What are some of these battles that we have? Now some of you may not have these problems I don't want to project my problems on you. But you may have some problems that I don't have. But let us not think that when we come to Christ everything becomes easy and all of our problems go.

That is utter nonsense. Down here on this crazy mixed up planet there will always be plenty of problems. God had a very special purpose in creating this planet.

I wish I had time to speak to you about why God has created this planet. Why God has created you. I have many questions about this.

But over the years as I've read God's Word and studied many other books I've received the answers to these questions. We always have a number of books available giving intellectual reasons why we believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that's very important.

We don't believe that Christians commit intellectual suicide. We'd be glad to show you books that present the intellectual reasons why we are followers of Jesus Christ. And in our work all over the world we have people of every type.

People of all different religions. But their sound is transforming power. The ship has been sailing for four years but our work has been going for more than 17 years.

This summer we're expecting over 2,000 young people from all over the world to unite together in a massive campaign. And as I've talked to many of these young people they've also shared that they had some of these problems in their Christian life. My first problem was lack of discipline.

I was a very lazy person. I used to lay on the beach all day. Drinking Coca-Cola and ice cream.

Watching the girls go by. My great capitalistic dream was not to work. And I thought let the other people work.

I will collect the money. And so at 15 I had other people already working for me and I was learning how to be more lazy. Then I read in the Bible if a man not work let him not eat.

I thought this is really revolutionary teaching. Now as you can see I don't eat very much. Our brother here he is also very thin.

I once had an interpreter I had to stand here from his stomach. And then we read in 1 Corinthians chapter 9 the writings of Paul that we should baptize our body and bring it into subjection. And I found this a great challenge.

I found it difficult to get up in the morning. Somebody said you must get up study God's word you must get up and have prayer. The only thing I wanted to get up for was prayer.

I used to love this place. And this was a great struggle in my life. But God began to work.

I took these burdens to God. I thought God can you ever use me? With all my problems and God gave me his promises. Or said I can do all things through Christ he's patient with me.

So many years ago I began getting up early every morning. Now for more than 17 years every morning 6 o'clock 6.30 get up and getting God's word. This has become the greatest habit of my life.

Usually before doing that I go out for a one mile run so I get woken up and my blood starts circulating kicking away. And you can come here tomorrow morning at 5 o'clock 5.30 6 o'clock all different exercise groups getting up some a little later than others to train their body and discipline their body because we believe we're in a spiritual world. We believe we're all on a ship and we're all exercising.

And the word of God as it enters our heart cleanses our heart it gives us strength Notice Psalm 119 verse 9 and verse 11 Psalm 119 verse 9 and verse 11 wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way, by taking heed thereunto according to thy words. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way, by taking heed thereunto according to thy words. Verse 11, By word have I hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against thee.

By word have I hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against thee. Are you memorizing the Word of God? Are you memorizing the Word of God? Hiding verses in your heart and in your mind? That's one of the most important things to cause you to grow and become strong in Jesus. Then I had the problem of my life telling the truth.

As a young man I learned how to lie, especially to my mother. She had so many ideas different from my ideas. She said, you must brush your teeth every day.

There's nothing wrong with my teeth. And I didn't like to brush my teeth. Because I was only a little boy.

So I would just tell her I brush my teeth, even though I didn't. I learned to tell little lies. Then she caught me.

She took the toothbrush and she felt dry. So then before going out to the sports field, I would throw some water on the toothbrush. And then I was young.

And then when I was little she sent me to church. She said, now you take this money. She said, now you take this money and you put it in the collection place.

One dollar. Somebody gave me this this morning. She said, you put this in the collection place.

This place they pass around in the church. I don't know if they do that. So for some Sundays I put money in the collection place.

And I thought, why all the things I could be doing in a church. So when the collection place went around, I just kept the money. And then I just bought what I want.

What a silly thing to do for a young boy. But as I became a teenager, these became habits in my life. Now when I was converted to Christ, some things went quickly.

But other things were a struggle. To tell the absolute truth. To be absolutely honest.

To stop pretending and stop acting. Psychologists say we're all actors. Especially in front of our friends.

And my prayer was, oh God, make me real. Make me real. I don't want to pretend anymore.

I don't want to pretend to be religious. I want to be real. And I saw the way of reality.

That's why I called my book, Hunger for Reality. That's why I called my book, Hunger for Reality. And I saw how God hates sin.

When I saw how God hates sin. Then I wanted to be delivered more from that sin. And God can deliver us.

And when we're free from these things, it's a tremendous joy and freedom in our consciences and in our hearts. Then I had a battle with my cousin. Now, I know very little about the Chinese people.

I don't know anything about you. But when I lived in the Chinese section of Bangkok. I thought these are the most calm, quiet, loving, gentle people in the whole world.

I have always felt just the opposite. So easily I lose my temper. Since little boy always getting in fights with my aunt.

And then Jesus now tells me I must love everybody. 80% of the people I met before I was a believer in Christ, I did not like. Only certain kinds of girls would I ever take out on a date.

90% of the girls in the United States, yes. Could you do that again? And I read in the word of God. How God hates the sin of anger.

My father was also a very angry man. Kissing her around the house. He was not a Christian.

Later, he came to Christ. And he said Jesus Christ has saved our home from total annihilation. My mother also would explode in anger.

And I used to bother my mother. One day she took my fishing worm. She used worms to go fishing.

And I said to my mother. Don't you know what you're doing? Where are my worms? And she got angry. She grabbed a big knife.

And tried to put it right into my face. You know, it was a wonderful day. By the way, she was a Methodist.

It was a wonderful day. When she came to know the Lord Jesus. And it was God who calmed our happiness.

And God brought peace to our home. God created peace. And I remember in Bangkok.

Finally, after some weeks. The quiet Chinese people. Very angry with some Thai people.

In Bangkok, we had this Chinese people. And one of these very calm, dear men. He took a big knife.

And he came charging down the street. And he got some blood. In fact, the Thai man ran into my house.

And they ran all around the house. You see, all people are the same. Some people just explode quicker than others.

But the slower you explode. The bigger the explosion at the end. You know, I've now traveled in about 50 countries.

And I believe with all my heart. Oh, of course, there are differences. Tremendous differences.

But basically, our hearts are the same. We're selfless. We're proud.

We want our own land. We get upset. And the only hope for the world today is God.

Well, I found this a great struggle as a young Christian. So many things used to upset me. But God began to move it.

Began to change my life. And soon, I was hardly ever losing my temper. I could always cast my burden upon the Lord.

The greatest miracle of all. In these past many years. I have never met a man I could not love.

I have never met a man I could not love. I cannot explain. But something has happened in my life.

That has given me love and interest. All people, you know. And that would be the same.

In John chapter 13. In this, they will know you are my disciples. Because you love one another.

Maybe you can just look at that. Verse 35. Chapter 13.

13, 35. By this, you'll all men know that you are my disciples. If you have love one to another.

And I hope you understand this. We have not come to Malaysia as great missionaries. We are not missionaries.

This ship is a training ship. We have different programs in different countries. Here, our program has to be very educated.

Most of the people on this ship are only here for two years. Or one year. But our burden is training.

That they may become strong, loving disciples of Jesus Christ. Whether they go out eventually as a missionary. Or return to work in Russia.

And we praise God. That's from Operation Mobilization. The name of our work worldwide.

People are now serving Christ all over the world. It's a revolution of love. But there was another thing that was a great struggle in my life.

I hesitate to speak about this. In some countries, they say to me. I say, I want to speak about sex.

No, no, no, no, no. None here in our church. We don't speak about that in our church.

They're all very young people. They must not hear. They're 20 years, they think.

But you know the... But there was another thing that was a great struggle in my life. I hesitate to speak about this. In some countries, they say to me.

I say, I want to speak about sex. No, no, no, no, no, no. None here in our church.

We don't speak about that in our church. They're all very young people. They must not hear.

They're 20 years, they think. But you know the Bible. Has over 300 verses on the subject of death.

Now I don't know about your Bible. The Chinese Bible. Or whatever English Bible you have.

It does not say in my Bible. This to be only read by people over 21 years of age. This section not to be read when girls are present.

This section for ladies only. Every subject about sex is discussed in this book. Many times I'm speaking in universities.

Often they write to me. They say, please speak to us on the subject of sex and the Bible. And I find more Christians confused on this subject than any other subject I've spoken of.

Something that sex is doing. And the Bible teaches just the opposite. Just look at one verse.

One of the 300 verses. In the book of Hebrews. I think it's chapter 13.

Book of Hebrews. 13. Verse 4. Marriage is honorable in all.

And the bed is undefiled. But fornicators and adulterers God will judge. In other words, sex.

And everything that goes with sex. Within marriage. Is a beautiful, wonderful God.

God given thing. But outside of marriage. Or with any other woman other than our wife.

It is fornication. It is adultery. It shall be judged by God.

It's very important. Now, as a young man. I didn't get involved in deep sex affairs.

Because I was afraid. And I didn't have the opportunity. But I did everything in my mind.

Cinema scope. Technicolor. High fidelity.

And in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus said this is a sin against God. And then I started to get involved with magazines.

Very destructive magazines. As you may know. We have a much greater problem with this in the western world.

Than most parts of the east. But now, out of Japan. And out of other countries.

Are coming this landslide of pornographic. And mind destroying literature. And the greater problem.

Is doing these things. Brought tremendous guilt. Which brought other psychological problems.

And believe me. Many Christians are having emotional and psychological problems. Because they don't know how to handle guilt in their lives.

Then I saw in God's Word. There is victory. In Jesus Christ.

He can give us the strength over temptation. And just as thrilling as that. When we do fall.

Flat on our face. So to speak. God still loves us.

He doesn't leave us. And he picks us up. You know God has been picking me up for many many years.
And I'm only here. This afternoon. I'm going to close now.
Because of God's love. Many people have a very legalistic Christianity. Don't do this.
Don't do that. Don't go here. Don't say this.
Don't. Don't. Don't.
Stop. And we all do these things. And this guilt within us.
Causes all kinds of insecurity problems. And other struggles. All the devil.
Very happy when he gets us that way. And I would ask. To breathe in the mercy of God.
To breathe in the forgiveness of God. If there's any sin in your heart. Confess it to God.
Turn from it. And it will be cleansed. And then it's gone.
If it happens again. As far as God is concerned. That's the first time in history it ever happened.
You say how can that be? That's the grace of God. The forgiveness of God. That's what the Bible is all about.
We can't live the Christian life. The harder we try. The more we fail.
I used to try to be good. I want to be a good boy. I used to swear all the time.
I had so many filthy words out of my mouth. And I said I'm not going to swear anymore. And I'm going to put some money in this bank.
Every time I swear. I'm going to put some money in this bank. Discipline.
I couldn't do it. Every day I put money in this bank. And as soon as I needed the money.
Broke the bank. In our own power. We cannot clean our minds.
We cannot clean our eyes. We cannot clean our tongue. There are many other sins of the tongue.
We even find them in the church. The sin of gossip. The sin of criticism.
The sin of negativism. Sometimes before we were religious. The sin of gossip.
But now in the church. We're just sharing prayer requests. But the word of God says speak evil of no one.
My dear friends. I propose a revolution. A revolution of life.
Become a true disciple of Jesus. In the book of James. It says be not hearers of the word only.
But doers. We have heard many messages today. But as we go from here.
What will it be? Another message. A nice meal. You can make comments on the speaker.

Big old giant from India. And this little skinny peanut from the United States. These interesting fellows.

Or will we go from here? Lord, what will you have me do? What will I do with my life? Will I be among those many? Who in their teenage years. Carries a little Jesus banner down the street. But when they get married.

And the problems come. And the pressures come. They will hide the Jesus banner.

And take out their little dollars. Big decisions lie ahead for everyone of you. You will have to make a decision.

God or money. God or self. God or pride.

Others or yourself. I believe Jesus Christ is coming back soon. I have been in Israel recently.

We have a team working. There are many signs. Jesus is coming soon.

What will our money be? What will our buildings be? When he returns. I believe the only foundation. Is Jesus Christ.

It won't be easy. And one of the reasons we have come here. Is to carry news from your country.

To many other countries. That they can pray for you. You may think.

Oh there is not many other Christians here. But in the land of church. Among 37 million.

There are not enough Christians among the church. To fill this room. And we believe here in Malaysia.

There is great potential. Not only from Malaysia. But other places.

But first of all. Your life. It is a problem.

There will be problems. But he gives the victory. He gives the forgiveness.

So we can say it's Paul. I can do all things. Through Christ Jesus.

Can you say that? Amen. I'd like us to have a few moments of silent prayer. I believe that some of you want to make.

Commitments and decisions in your own heart. Maybe there are some that have never. Had that initial step.

Of really knowing Christ. There may be others who. In your Christian life.

The problems have been bogging you down. Weighing you down. And you have not been.

Living the life of a soldier. Christian life. In a new way.

On a deeper level. A new frame of prayer. O living God you know each one of us.

Cleanse our hearts. cause us to go from here as doers of the Word, not hearers only, that we may be men and women of action, that even as young people we may live completely for you. We don't expect it to be easy, but in Christ it will not be difficult.

We will not trust our feelings. We will see the truth. Amen.

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