

(The Book of Acts) Session 02

by George Verwer

George Verwer explores the dynamic principles of the Book of Acts, emphasizing the role of the Holy Spirit and the importance of bold witness in the life of believers.

Duration: 23:36

Scripture: Acts 2:42-47, Acts 4:31, Acts 8:1-4, Acts 9:1-19, Acts 13:2, Acts 18:1-4, Acts 19:11-12

Topics: "Acts"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the reality of witness and world vision, emphasizing the importance of missions and evangelism. He highlights the need for more missionaries, both national and international, and criticizes seminaries that treat world missions as a separate issue. The speaker also praises the role of business people in supporting world missions. He mentions the book of Acts as a source of inspiration and encourages listeners to let the story of the early church impact their lives. Additionally, he shares a personal story of transformation and expresses the desire to lead someone to Jesus Christ.

Transcript

It's one of the miracles in my life and Maranatha's because around the world years ago it got spread that I was not a good speaker to bring to people when they're on vacation because I had this gift of making people feel miserable so in the world is going to bring a speaker to a vacation conference and have them all feel miserable. They're trying to come and get a little break and have some fun fortunately, I changed a bit and now I have a little bit of the ministry of encouragement. Thanks to the message of grace I still do make some people feel miserable at times including my wife if you could be in prayer about that but I believe it is a paradox it is a paradox and the Bible is filled with paradox that we can come on a vacation in Britain we call this a holiday and at the same time have God speak to us at the same time pray for the suffering people of Kosovo at the same time get into the Word of God, which is going to expose us with many aspects of truth some of which is not comfortable.

I don't think it was really that comfortable listening to John DeVries for five minutes because just to think about India where my wife and I lived for a number of years is overwhelming to me. It is overwhelming I've just been with the director of our own work in India and India is being plunged into further persecution, I don't know if you've heard that P.P. Job's son was just murdered just a few days ago P.P. Job a great Christian leader was attacked, but he was safe but his son was run over by a car and it looks like murder some of you know about the family the stains family with a husband and two boys were burned to death in

their Jeep last year Which is one of the high points of the persecution which continues And I believe the fruit of the Spirit is love joy peace long-suffering gentleness goodness faithfulness meekness temperance Against such there's no law and so God wants us to have fun at Maranatha Don't ask me to explain that Except it says in the Word of God. We are sorrowful yet always rejoicing People that know me know that despite all my efforts to be spiritual and serious that I am still Somewhat of a clown in my high school when I was elected as to what my Characteristics were in my high school there in New Jersey.

I was voted freshman year class clown I tried to forsake that as I got into the heavy Sort of fundamentalism of Moody Bible Institute as a baby Christian But somehow they never they tried never destroyed the clown factor in George Borer Because no matter how filled we are with the Holy Spirit. We're still incredibly human And this is the beauty of paradox and all this week. You're gonna hear the words paradox You're gonna hear the words mystery some of you are gonna have some of your favorite theories blown apart And maybe I won't get back.

I don't think so because There's a lot of spirit-filled people here that are involved in this movement And they understand that the Spirit of God works in different people in different ways And the last thing I want you is to become like me, but hey, please don't ask me to become like you I I Believe the book of Acts is more exciting than a John Grisham book John Grisham's latest book the testament actually is a story of a missionary, so you really better get into that one I usually wait for the film because I like fast lane operations and reading novels is incredibly slow I'm sure some of you are speed readers now. You can drive down the highway and listen to these books on audio tape I think that's great. I had to drive here from my friend's house and listen to audio tape actually the Word of God the whole way I'm convinced that the book of Acts is actually more exciting than the average novel especially for the believer because the believer has a Holy Spirit living in him or her and when they read the Word of God something happens and So we're going to be going through the book of Acts in preparation.

I've been going through John Stott's commentary on the book of Acts I'm sorry that I don't have any of those with me. That's another failure But at the end of the week I might make a special offer about John Stott's brilliant book probably the greatest commentary in the book of Acts that has ever been written When I read the introduction to John Stott's commentary just the books that he studied to prepare that just blew me away I felt totally inadequate to say anything else about the book of Acts But we must approach the book of Acts as ordinary people and it's not going to be primarily an academic study though We are going to learn a lot But it's going to be an exciting tour as we look through the windows and a great commentator Another commentator described the book of Acts as as windows into the New Testament Church it's going to be exciting and To prepare for this has been very exciting for me For me to be the Bible teacher is a tougher challenge than be the missionary speaker since I'm taking 400 messages a year and they're often just one off or two off messages I've just come from Sweden right near where that ship just caught fire and all those people had to evacuate 1,500 people evacuated that ship off the coast of Gothenburg a couple of days ago. Not one person injured amazing Absolutely amazing engine room fire one lady had a heart attack and died in the hospital but right near there's a little island where renewal came years ago and 25% of the people on that island off the coast of Gothenburg are Followers of Jesus Christ that's in Sweden And one of the things you're going to hear about this week is just the amazing ways that God is working all over the world It is not going to be boring if at the end of this week You can say this has been a boring week You can write me a note and we'll receive 50 free books CDs and music tapes as an apology for giving you a boring week We hope that not only you will come but that you may phone a few other friends to come not everybody can be free in the morning but in the evenings to be with

us and this evening when I also share my testimony I'd encourage you perhaps if you know some non-christians and non church people to maybe invite them along for this one evening When I'm going to give a more seeker sensitive type of testimony and sharing and a little in the book of Acts as well By coincidence I had in my Bible.

I seldom use this Bible anymore. It's 30 years of age It's my old original Bible, but I wanted it for this book of Acts teaching week throw it in my suitcase and found it this morning and I'll find another Bible here maybe in my own book table. That's way by the way in the back corner there But I found in my Bible one of the most amazing letters that I have ever written mainly because it's very old and Because I wrote it when I first went as a missionary in September 1960 to Europe to Spain and I went on the Queen Elizabeth The one that ended up laying outside Hong Kong.

It was used in a James Bond film I'm sure you know, that's your big thing, but I Wrote this to a business person in New Jersey. Mr. Henry Reid Ike is with the Lord and I wanted to just read this to you Because to me the book of Acts continues I Was in a church some time ago And I wanted to preach on a book of Acts and I said I'd like you to turn with me to Acts chapter 29 It was quite funny to see the pastor as well turning in his Bible to Acts 29 There are 28 chapters in the book of Acts You all knew that and you and I are Acts 29 or 2029 Dear mr. Mrs. Reid Ike it is now 10 to 3. I just finished eating one of the largest meals of my life It's all paid for so this week will be one of stockpiling for the future. By the way, that doesn't work There are a good group of Christians on board and we hope to have services every night in the week plus prayer meetings praise the Lord I was by the way 22 years old.

I believe I'm writing this letter to thank you for all your kindness and interest in these past weeks By the way, this is the man that put the money into the first vehicle that ever went to Mexico when OM was being born a 1948 Dodge van that we bought for a few hundred dollars I think he's the man that paid for it and helped me repair it It blew up in Harrisburg, and this is a man that helped send out a rebuilt engine or the money for it I Trust that God will bless you as you continue to serve him both and send the life That was the original name of OM and other branches of service Your check for \$200 was a wonderful surprise to us as you had just given a good donation a few weeks before And then in big bold caps, I was a my own typist those days I rejoice in the fact that God has given you the love to make such gifts Now we must pray that the word which is purchased with the money will reach many millions with the gospel Please say hello to Jim. That's his son who I'm still in touch with for me. Tell him to keep pushing on He has an abundant life ahead of him If he keeps taking those steps of faith as he's done recently praise the Lord By the way, this is shortly after the meeting in my own high school where they brought me back from University and 600 people attended and 125 including my own father stood up to believe on Jesus.

This is a high school that was prayed for by mrs Dorothy a clap now in glory a Missionary visionary sender for over 15 years before that mini renewal broke out say hello also to Jill. That was his daughter I know that God is going to use her in a wonderful way and Then spike that was a nickname for his son That's the sad part of the story that I may touch on later in the week Praise God for him. He has been a blessing to me You certainly have a precious family and I praise God for it as the ship left, New York I went to my room to pray I realized in a great way the need for finding my all-sufficiency in Christ Jesus the all-sufficient one, please pray that each day I will not so much be active in his service But more that I will be in love with him and All the loving of the powerful one.

Oh to just rest in him daily Casting all your care upon him for he cares for me praise him That's all for now trusting him for great things in the years and days to come. I Saw a film on the airplane about the rocket

boys Red sky in October and I have to confess Toward the end of the film. I cried and cried and cried What a story of an American son of a coal miner.

Absolute nobody Opposed viciously by his father caught in an unbelievable Situation in West Virginia who became a great rocket scientist You if you missed that film need to get the video and be sure to show it to your kids My story probably will never be published or made in a film like that But it's a similar story though. My father instead of opposing me was always a blessing to me, but it's a story of just a New Jersey nobody on the road to hell hooked on pornography at 16 that got saved in a Billy Graham meeting and Decided to be a spiritual Rocket Scientists only instead of rockets we got into ships people have told me that I should get a jumbo jet but I've avoided that and God brought into being 30 some years ago a ministry of two ships that has given the Word of God to over 100 million people more about that this evening I've never been back to the United States in a proper way since sailing on that ship in 1960 I've never even been on a furlough, but I have the privilege of jumping on an airplane and flying over for a week I have to be back there next Monday night And speaking at places like Maranatha. I accept one out of ten of the invitations I have to be in the United States not because I mean I don't know what the reason is I guess after 40 years a few people figure out something is happening and decide they'd like you to come To their church or their their event, there's a famous Christian Conference Center in Southern, California Forest home have you ever heard of that very very famous, and I'm there next summer Why is it I have to wait to be a grandfather before I can get into these places Thank You Maranatha for inviting a fool for Christ to come and taking the risk of bringing me here many years ago and Handling, I'm sure the criticism you got through doing it.

God bless you And may God bless every one of us as we're together this week He wants to do tremendous things as we get in to the book of Acts the acts of the Holy Spirit Years ago in the last page after the book of Acts in this old Bible. I wrote these words 10 New Testament realities in the book of Acts Some of you cannot be with us the rest of the week and so my encouragement More than come and hear me And these tapes will also be available Eventually all over the world is to get into the book of Acts where you are Maybe you're a business person with zero time this week Even in the evenings you'll discover this week that many of my heroes are not missionaries or pastors They are business people and I've had fellowship just in the last few months with committed business people and the stories of their lives are quite Mind-bending and it's often business people even sometimes more than churches That help keep the great work of world missions going So if you have no more free time this week to be with us Take the book of Acts or audio of the book of Acts. You can go through it in your own vehicle and let this exciting true story of the early church Penetrate your heart change your life and enable you to be a more spirit-filled dynamic disciple of Jesus Christ.

I Wrote down here on this particular page 14 Dynamic realities in the book of Acts. What are those 14 realities? First of all the reality of witness and world vision that's already been touched upon The Lord Jesus said ye shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem Judea Samaria and the uttermost part of the earth One of the reasons we don't have more missionaries in this world where we need at least 200,000 more missionaries that would include national missionaries like Indians working in their own country cross-culturally as well as Americans going to some place like Afghanistan like my nephew where there are almost no missionaries at all and One of the reasons is that in our seminaries some of which have become cemeteries They keep world missions as a separate issue and it's considered only important for those that are interested It's the third door down to the right and it says missions department and Everybody else thinks that's not really their business Maranatha has done a great tribute to the body of

Christ by marrying great biblical teaching With great challenge for world missions. My main message this week will not Primarily be world missions, but I don't believe you can teach the Word of God Without touching on the challenge of world missions, but look at all these other principles in the book of Acts Secondly prayer and the prayer meeting And one of my highlights at Maranatha is always the prayer meeting Mondays the one morning I may not get there because I don't get here until later in the morning But to go to that prayer tower even for that brief time I've tried to be there every time has been one of the highlights and other prayer meetings and personal prayer time this morning I had such a wonderful time listening to the Word of God walking along the beach of Lake, Michigan near where I'm staying The third principle and all of these principles have many verses, but we don't have time now to read them boldness and the reality of suffering Think of Acts 4 31 when they prayed they were filled with the Holy Spirit and they went forth and spoke the Word of God with boldness I Personally need more boldness in my witness.

I'm finding it harder to do personal evangelism today than 35 years ago People especially in Europe. I tell you they often if you even mention the name of Jesus they You know, they're reacting there are ways to evangelize Our generation and we're going to be giving some practical ideas on how you can witness in a post-christian nation in a Unique society in which we find ourselves Missions is not just across the sea missions is across the street One of my greatest passions this week would be the privilege to lead someone personally to Jesus Christ I was just reading a report about our ship to loss headed for Papua New Guinea And they said one of the leading men in that port helping us organize things Was led to Jesus Christ by someone on the ship when it visited there many years ago. I'd love to hear that And one of the greatest things I'm sure John will share with us is a story of people not just raising their hand But being dynamically converted to Jesus Christ in the land of India The fourth principle is the principle of the importance in the reality of the local church And for some of you I know on Vacation this is your local church.

We're going to be looking at acts 13 There's a little leaflet about that on the literature table and the vision not for OM But for the whole body of Christ to see more workers sent out into the harvest field we're going to see the reality of church life in some of the great passages like the last five verses of chapter 2 and Then there's the principle of teamwork. I listed right above this About ten passages just pointing out teamwork in the book of Acts And I believe if in your local church, you're going to be more effective in your own ministry You're going to be more effective there needs to be more teamwork Then there's the principle of handling problems We're going to see in the book of Acts how these early Christians handled problems and they had plenty of them That carries on into Corinthians as we get into the book of Acts We're going to be looking at the life of the Apostle Paul And so we're going to jump out of Acts some mornings and evenings into Corinthians where we have these phenomenal descriptions of the Apostle Paul the most influential person in my life next to Jesus Christ himself and then there's the principle number seven of Preaching and preaching the resurrection. We're going to notice the great emphasis in the book of Acts on the resurrection and the reality of proclamation of the gospel and Proclaiming the blood of Christ and the resurrection of Jesus Christ and we're going to begin to see as we'll go off on different tangents I'm known for my tangents about the all-sufficiency of Christ about God's grace to weak struggling needy people like me And I believe many of you are going to experience the grace of God in a powerful way this week And you're going to be one of those persons and I've had 25,000 letters just from one of my books alone Telling me that God is changing your life.

I had another one from Michigan not long ago and Then the eighth principle is the principle of flexibility and adaptability We're gonna see the Macedonian call how Paul was going in one direction. The Holy

Spirit stopped him He went in another direction. The Holy Spirit stopped him again.

Finally plan C. He got it together And we're going to be talking about failure Because you're facing a failure where you're sitting this morning those of you who are looking up here and We're going to discover God's grace for failures We're going to discover that God uses all kinds of people That's what Philippians is brilliant book is about probably one of the greatest Christian books in Modern history in the United States by probably the most gifted writer in our nation of those who love Jesus and are committed to God's Word There's a lot more about flexibility adaptability and mobility in the book of Acts than most people realize And then the ninth principle is the principle of the Holy Spirit mentioned 40 times in the first 20 chapters And we're going to be talking about the fullness and the reality and the anointing of the Holy Spirit of God Because he is the third person of the Trinity and the tenth principle is about leadership, which we're going to look into as well Realizing that many of you are leaders in your local churches and any nuggets of truth that you can get to help you in that Leadership, which I believe is becoming more difficult in the body of Christ as we go into new millennium Then I believe the happier you will be The eleventh principle is unity The twelfth principle is growth church growth and John will be touching about that and what God's doing in church growth in India The thirteenth is the miraculous and the supernatural and we're going to get into some controversial Areas does God still perform miracles in 1999 and I will tell you if he doesn't I'm finished and our movement is going to fold up Our God our Lord.

Jesus is the same yesterday today and forevermore at the same time It's not an easy subject because many times for everyone say miraculous healing of someone with cancer There seem to be 20 others who go to glory we're going to deal with that and we're going to try to understand what the Bible is saying about suffering and healing and the Supernatural and the 14th principle though there are many more is the principle of baptism because in the book of Acts when people were saved they baptized them and They became disciples and followers of Jesus Christ now I hope if this is the only opportunity I have to speak to you that what I've shared from this book is Going to get you into God's Word the reason we have one of the reasons we have so many lukewarm Christians so many baby Christians so many backslidden Christians so many superficial Christians in America It's because we are not involved in serious Bible study And because we don't know the fullness of the Holy Spirit the crucified life and the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ Vance Abner one of the greatest preachers God ever gave us in America said in the average church You had to backslide to get into fellowship God forbid may this be a week of taking us seriously into God's Word May this be a week of marrying the challenge of missions with a challenge of being a father or a mother or a grandfather Whoa, that's my new position Five grandchildren. I can't believe it.

Hey, it's great. I wish I could bring him to Maranatha little young yet Since they live in England a few other complexities. You know what Tony Campala said about grandchildren I always love to speak with Tony because when when I finished speak after him, I just seemed so mellow but Tony Campala said Grandchildren.

Yeah, that's God's gift to you for not killing your kids God bless you. Amen

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