

# The Greater Priority Than Missions

by George Verwer

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of love and prayer in missions and in life, and encourages listeners to consider getting involved in missions and to demonstrate love and compassion in their relationships.*

**Duration:** 47:32

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:11, John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 13:6-7, 1 Corinthians 15:58, Philippians 3:14, 1 Timothy 4:12

**Topics:** "Missions"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of love in the Christian faith. He shares personal experiences of how love transformed his own behavior as a husband and father. The speaker also highlights the significance of love in comparison to other acts of sacrifice, such as martyrdom. He encourages the audience, especially young people, to be examples of believers and to consider unconventional paths, such as missions or working in crisis situations, where they can demonstrate love in action. The sermon is based on 1 Corinthians 13, which emphasizes the supremacy of love over other spiritual gifts.

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## Transcript

Our guest speaker is Mr. George Verr, and he is no stranger to CFC. I think many of us here at CFC have been so blessed by him in the past. We've had the privilege of hearing from him at past Revival meetings and other occasions.

He's also been used by the Lord over the years to inspire many people at the Urbana missions conferences, even at OIL during the winter retreats. George Verr is the founder and former international director of Operation Mobilization, which is a ministry of evangelism, discipleship training, and church planting. And he led this operation, Operation Mobilization, for over 40 years before stepping down back in 2003.

But he's still going strong, serving the Lord in different ways, and he's still got the same heart that he had at the age of 16 when he said to God, only one thing I want in life, I want to learn to pray, to love you, I want to know you, and commune with you. And it's this same kind of heart and passion that he comes with us today. I know so many of us here today, we are younger than Mr. Verr is, not that he's old, but in a lot of ways I think, you know, we're just a bunch of old farts at heart.

And here's a man who is so young at heart, and I'm sure that his youthful spirit and passion can rub off on us today. So let's warmly welcome Mr. George Verr. Thank you.

Well, when you've preached since you were 17, over 20,000, that's God's mercy and God's grace that all these years in about 75 nations of the world, I've never once preached without sensing something, you know, something of God in it. Though I always feel weak and vulnerable and unworthy. So it's great to be back.

This is now the church I've spoken at in America more than almost any other church, mainly because I live in London. And in an amazing way, I've got linked with Pastor Min and others through oil. And it's just, I can't understand just the emotion that is on me when I come to share here again.

And thank you. Thank you for your prayers. Operation Mobilization started very small.

I took two people with me, had to really twist their arms a bit, to Mexico when I was a university student in a Presbyterian college in Tennessee. And we saw that God could use us, even though I was only 19. We saw that we could win others to Christ, so that we could learn a language, learn Spanish, love Spanish, prefer Spanish over English.

It's more romantic, more emotional. And many of my close friends, two of my sons, are named after Mexicans and Spaniards because I moved from Mexico to Spain. Fifty years ago, more or less last week, I arrived in Spain.

And I've just been reflecting on that because I've just come from Spain on our new ship, Lagos Hope. Some of you who follow our ministry, and we hope you'll pick up some literature about it downstairs. The first service more or less cleaned us out.

But next week, there's going to be a special display of books that are supposed to be here, but they're in a warehouse down the road because of a flunky transport company that talks big but doesn't deliver. And so they said, oh, we'll deliver them on Monday. Yeah, great.

But a separate company brought these from a different location. These are just introductory packs. We don't have so many, but if you're interested in knowing more about OM and the ships, the ships only represent about one-fifth of our ministry.

We're not mainly ships, but the ships have the highest visibility. This is a book I wrote about missions, about grace, a call for more grace, awakened love in working with one another and especially dealing with controversy. Probably not too many of you are missiologists, but even if you're into missions in a small way, you realize there is controversy, especially, for example, what kind of approach to reach Hindus, to reach Muslims, contextualized, hyper-contextualized, non-contextualized.

By the way, the new edition of Operation World, the number one missions book in history, comes out next month. Ten more years of research. How many have the old edition of Operation World? Raise your hand.

That shows that we've got missionary-minded here, people, not just Sunday morning go-to-church. Dear folks, you don't have too many of those, I don't think, at Covenant. So we're excited about that book.

You can get small paperback books now, sometimes \$15. This thick book, that thick, you can also get it on the Internet. I think they're going to keep the price under \$25.

Keep an eye out for Operation World, the new edition. Some of you may be aware that about every 15 years there's this major congress bringing leaders together from throughout the world, organized by Lausanne. And that congress will take place in Cape Town.

4,000 leaders from around the world will be at Lausanne. Pray for that congress. Pray for Operation World.

These are exciting days for missions. More people have come to Jesus on planet Earth. I'm not a very good authority on other planets.

But on planet Earth, more people have come to Jesus in the last 100 years than the previous 2,000 years. Partly because of population explosion. Partly because the Lord of the Harvest, in answer to prayer.

Prayers out of the Welsh Revival. Prayers out of other great movements, like in Korea. Sending forth workers into the harvest field.

So there's about a quarter of a million or more workers around the globe, plus all kinds of spirit-filled laypeople that are on the cutting edge to reach the world with the gospel. And I'm so amazed that God has left me around. A number of my closest friends have died.

I have a friend every week who goes to heaven. And here I am, still here. And I just count it such a privilege to be involved in this harvest.

I know you sometimes meet these people that are just longing to go to heaven. You know, I have to be honest, I'm not in that camp. I'm longing to get more friends and relatives saved before I go to heaven.

I'll go there in due course, since God's in charge of that anyway. But I long to see more people coming to Jesus. Isn't that one of your passions? Isn't that basic? That happened to me from the night of my conversion.

I went back to my high school. I was a bit of a student radical leader in this high school outside New York City. I started prayer meetings and found out this lady had been praying.

The lady who prayed me into heaven had been praying for that high school for about 15 years. And in an amazing way, God began to work in my own high school. I had some small meetings.

A few people came to Jesus. I got a thousand students to promise to read the gospel of John. We did this all in school time.

That was legal back then. Good old 50s, 60s. And then I came back Christmas break from this college I mentioned.

And hundreds, I don't know, three, four hundred came out to hear me speak. And about 125 when I just shared the gospel and shared my testimony. About 125 believed on Jesus in that meeting in my high school, including my own father, the son of an atheist.

God answers prayer. One of the favorite verses whenever I speak to so many young people, I know most of you are college age. And we're glad for a few older ones as well.

So I don't feel, you know, totally Noah's Ark. But one of the verses that's so encouraging is let no man despise your youth. But be now an example of the believer.

Take that verse during these days here in college or your work. Let nobody belittle. No one despise.

Because you're just playing games, because you're living a double life. Because you're talking one thing, walking something else. But be now an example.

And God miraculously did that in my life when I was 17. Before that, it was girls, it was pornography, it was a bit of lying and cheating. Nothing, you know, no big time mafia stuff.

But the Bible says he who commits sin becomes a slave to sin. And at 16, almost 17, I was becoming a slave to sin. When this little old lady put my name on her Holy Ghost hit list and claimed me for Jesus.

She not only prayed that I'd become a Christian. She prayed that I'd become a missionary. Imagine that, without even discussing with me.

I don't know, you need to do a little research. You might have some little aunt you don't know about. Your grandmother secretly praying that you're going to be a missionary.

And you're not planning to do that. So, you know, you're going to have conflict. You may want to call them up, contact and make some kind of compromise deal.

But it's amazing what people can do when they start praying for you. It's quite really quite freaky at times. Watch out for the name it claim it types.

I'm claiming you for North Korea. And so this lady prayed and sent me this gospel of John. And that prepared my heart for this one night meeting in New York City with Billy Graham.

You know, we sometimes read. There's a lot of people have criticized Billy Graham. Oh, this emotionalism.

These kind of converts don't last. What happened to me that night, March 3rd, 1955, has been a reality every single day. In fact, I am more into minutes.

I try to make every minute of every day count. Now, I don't recommend that because you if you're not my kind of temperament. You know, it could really make you nervous.

That's what that's what my wife told me shortly after the wedding. She discovered what she had married and was crying out to God for grace and mercy. And praise God, she stuck with me 50 years.

And we since I was last here with you, we've celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. How many of you are married? Some of you look married. You get a little bit of a tired look there.

You know, marriage is a great institution, but don't get in it unless the Lord gives the go ahead. Let the Lord make the final decision just because it's a pretty face or a nice hair or whatever. And, you know, not me, of course.

And you get some kind of a buzz. And I tried to scare when I fell in love with this girl that I met. And I felt, you know, it was for me at love at first sight.

As soon as I opened my mouth for her, it was fright at first sight. She's been with me in the past here. She's in England now where we still live.

But on the first date, I said to her, I tried to scare away because I thought if it's from God, you know, he can bring her back. So on the first date, I said, probably nothing going to happen between you and me. But you need to know I'm going to be a missionary.

And if you marry me, you'll probably be eaten alive by cannibals in Papua, New Guinea. Somebody counseled me after that, that they didn't feel that was the best way to win a woman's heart. It's amazing.

False counselor. Next week, we're going to have a big pile of books, most of them free of charge because they're supposed to be here today. And Pastor Min has agreed to mobilize his troops.

And we got enough books for both services. So even if you don't read or you don't want books, take one anyway. Christmas is coming.

Give it away. But these are these are important books and you'll hear more about it. We do have a few items that we brought.

We just flew in from London last night and we brought a few items in our suitcase, including this fantastic DVD about the Dalit, the untouchable women of India. And that's available just for any donation. This great DVD about the crisis of HIV AIDS.

Some of my own CDs. So that's all on display downstairs. And we hope you'll take some of these items.

Turn with me in your Bible to what I feel is the Mount Everest of Scripture. I've been pretty well studying the Bible every single day since my conversion, even a little bit before that. And I guess if I had to vote on my number one chapter in Scripture, that's the chapter I'm going to share with you.

And I've been here many times and at oil, but I don't think I've ever shared a message just on this chapter. I don't know why. I think if I only had one verse, not a whole chapter, then I'd choose John 3, 16.

For God so loved the world. He gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And there may be a whosoever here this afternoon.

You're here with a friend. You heard some good music. You thought it was, you know, you thought it was a disco.

You drifted in. You're stuck in the middle now and you can't get out. You're crying for mercy.

But this morning, this afternoon could be your moment of destiny. Just as I had that moment of destiny in that meeting in New York City. This could be your moment of destiny.

It doesn't have to be a famous speaker. It doesn't have to be something special. But make sure that you believe on the Lord Jesus.

I don't know if any of you have intellectual problems that may be hinder you from believing this biblical message. But I think intellectual problems are normal for most of us. I still have them to this day.

But somewhere you've got to make a decision. And I believe the evidence, the evidence for our Christian faith, biblical faith, not just Christianity as a religion. The evidence for our Christian faith, John 3, 16, I

believe is very powerful.

And I almost lost my faith at my first year university studying philosophy, psychology, people making fun of me. I was just a baby Christian. And I thank God for other books that came into my life.

I have a book called Show Me God written specifically for Doubting Thomas and the Atheists. I got excited about it and bought 5,000 copies, which is really a bit stupid because it doesn't sell well. So if you want a copy of that book, show me God, especially for any of your atheist friends or because you may have doubts.

And I think doubt is normal. I'd love to send that to you. The chapter I'm talking about, however, is First Corinthians 13.

Turn with me in your Bible and allow me to read this. This is actually a Gideon New Testament, New International Version. How many of you have heard of the Gideons? The Gideons, and I'm not an official Gideon, so I'm not here selling you my thing.

The Gideons, one of the greatest scripture distribution movements in the world. We're talking tens of tens upon tens of millions of Bibles and New Testaments in schools and hotels. Have you ever seen a Bible in a hotel or motel? The Gideons put those there.

They form little Gideon groups and probably one in Urbana. They're usually business guys. They're unsung heroes, and they're all over the world.

Wherever I go, I meet Gideons, and I was with one recently, and he gave me this New Testament. And, of course, First Corinthians 13 is the same in all the New Testaments. And if you want to read it in the message, that'll really give you an extra boost.

How many of you are actually, like, born in America? Born in America. This is so exciting. I've been waiting a long time for the born in America Koreans, Chinese, Indians, all of you wonderful people from all over the globe.

Because when you're born in America, usually you speak English a little better than my average friend from Seoul. And I have many friends from Seoul. I just spoke at a little church in Seoul.

Six services started at 630 in the morning, finished at 5 in the afternoon, 40,000 people. So don't think I'm against those types. But a lot of them, to be missionaries, they have to learn English first, and they get discouraged in the process.

Or they get thrust out to the mission field, and they've got to start on another language, like Arabic. And so often they never do get to really master the English because they're already into Arabic. And you, you're already halfway to the mission field because you've got this Langua Franca.

English is the Langua Franca. I wish it were Spanish. I prefer Spanish.

But English is the language that's being used all over the world. China alone is asking for another thousand English teachers. North Africa is looking for another thousand English teachers.

These are just ways that God has opened the door. And I really hope you will consider the possibility of getting involved in missions at least a couple of years. You can still go on with your other career.

You might be able to even do that main career and missions at the same time. At least think about it. Think out of the box a little bit.

We don't all have to just, you know, get married and settle down to a nice job and a nice salary so we can get a nice car. And we can pay the mortgage. And maybe if we're lucky, we'll even get a swimming pool, real useful in Illinois, of course.

And think out of the box. Maybe God wants you in Afghanistan. Maybe God wants you in working with the AIDS crisis or the water crisis or the sex traffic crisis.

I think I've spoken about those things at oil or at other meetings when I've shared from the book of Luke, chapter 10, the challenge of the Good Samaritan. But right now, it's this chapter. Let's read it.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I'm only a resounding gong or a clanging symbol. Again and again, those words have humbled me. I have so many different kinds of agendas that I get into.

And again and again, God uses these words to humble me, bring me back to the basics, because I don't want to be a sounding gong or a clanging symbol. And I'm sorry to say that as a husband around my house, that's what our times I've been. The toughest place for my kind of person to live for Jesus is not the pulpit.

The toughest place is the kitchen, my wife's kitchen or the house. Really demonstrating love when you're under pressure. Things are going wrong.

The car is broken down. You're short of money. We had three children.

Nobody taught me anything at university or even Bible college about children. You know, one year old babies. What do you do? One night in Spain after my son was born, my wife, for various reasons, was feeding him from this bottle.

And so I wanted to do a good turn. And so I said, honey, you stay in bed tonight. When the baby cries, name is Ben.

I'll get up and give him this bottle. This doesn't look too complicated. I got up at two in the morning.

I'm barely I get the bottle. I think I had to warm it up and I just shoved it in his mouth and started shaking it as fast as I could. The whole bottle was, you know, the whole thing was gone.

My wife, I always wonder. It used to take her so long, but, you know, got down there so fast. And I was just about to go back to bed.

I heard a rumbling in the little baby's tummy. It all came back in my face. The Lord led me to turn that ministry over to my wife.

But I used to try to uphold her in prayer. Friends, I don't want to. I don't want to say things that aren't true.

You're looking at a real failure. You're looking at a real. Well, you say in New Jersey, I don't know if you say this in Illinois is a real jerk.

Because I've done some really dumb things. Always connected with lack of love. The end of the day, lack of some occasions, lack of wisdom.

I got a problem in that area as well. Lack of wisdom. But the bottom line was lack of love.

And I just thank God that this chapter came into my life as a young Christian. It came in through a book called Make Love Your Love. Love is the answer.

Another book by a woman called Make Love Your Aim. Eugenia Price, a great woman writer. Henry Drummond wrote that great book, The Greatest Thing in the World.

And I found other books on this subject of love. And then I traced underlined every single verse in my whole New Testament that spoke about love or spoke about the fruit of the spirit. All the fruit of the spirit.

Love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance, self-control against such. There is no law. That's what it says in Galatians.

All that is tied into what we're reading about here. So let's read on. It's getting exciting, right? We only got into the first verse.

Wow. If I have the gift of prophecy. Whoa, that's pretty important in some places.

Wow. Can fathom all mysteries. Whoa.

When those kind of guys write a book, they're like bestsellers. Even if it's a pile of nonsense sometime, I can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge. And I have faith that can move mountains.

This is my dream. I was extreme on faith. You know, we're going to reach Mexico for Christ.

We're going to we're going to get a ship. We're going to get all kinds of different things that I exercise faith for when I lived in India, lived in Nepal. And yet and I saw a lot of interest of prayer.

I saw a lot of amazing things happen. There's a whole book about the history of O.M. But it's this passage that kept it all in balance. It's it's this passage that helped us stay out of the whole thing.

Becoming a Christian ego trip. There are Christian ego trips. There are ministry ego trips.

What a powerful exhortation to those of us. We do want to move mountains. But if we do some of these great things and we don't have that love, that agape love, that reality.

And what is it? It doesn't mean much. Let's read on. Wow.

If I give all I possess to the poor, that was another big thing in our movie. We're fanatic on giving. We many of us sold all of our possessions.

We ate half of what we used to eat and give the money. Students at Wheaton College. Everything they could save during breakfast.

Anything that was nonperishable like the cereal. They put it in their pockets and then they'd eat other things. One guy got so extreme, Dale Roton, that he tried to manufacture his own cereal.

He went out and cut the grass in front of the house and put the grass in a cereal bowl and put a little milk on it. It didn't go over big, even with his fellow extreme brothers. And we gave all our money for the poor.

And I guess, you know, our hearts were sort of right. And yet it says if we give all our money and don't have love, we don't have anything. Whoa.

I surrender my body to the flames, but have not love. I gain nothing. That's that's too much.

Right. That's over the top. That's should we have a vote? I mean, that's over the top.

How could there be anything, anything greater than giving your life in martyrdom? I can't explain it. I just accept it. Love is so important that all these other things in comparison.

Really aren't much at all. This is God's word. This is what broke me and my ugly Americanism when I first went to Spain.

This is what broke me when I saw my own behavior as a as a husband. Later, as a father. Now I'm a grandfather.

I don't think any any grandfathers here is one or two that look like you might be old enough. How many? Let's try something else. How many of you are grandchildren? Raise your hand.

Your grandchildren. Whoa. It's amazing.

Tony Campala. And you heard me say this before. He says grandchildren are wonderful.

It's God's prize to you for not killing your kids. You know, I was in in June near Seoul at a big Methodist church at a night of prayer. Very serious night of prayer.

And I told that story that Tony Campala story about the grand. How many of you have grandkids? There are a lot of old people there. They all raise their hands.

I said, you know, it's our grandchildren. Wonderful. They're God's prize to you for not killing your own kids.

There was not a single laugh in the entire auditorium. Praise God, you're born in America. You're a little looser, right? A little more able to laugh at something even weird.

I know my global jacket. How many have never seen the global jacket before our sister in Jesus back there? Where is it? How many have not seen it yet? Okay, you've all seen it. It's not making the impact like it used to be.

It's my global underwear now that really hits people. Really, but not this afternoon. I'm not in the right mood.

Plus, I made a deal. I made a deal with my wife about that. I think we need to get back to the passage of Scripture.

If I gave all I possessed to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient. Now, I wish it would have ended there.

If the passage could end there, I'd feel a little better. It's sort of mystical. It's sort of general.

Can pray a prayer of repentance and press on. It's the details. I don't like it when the Bible gets into the details.

At least my self-life doesn't like it. Spiritually, I like it because I want to grow in Jesus. So, here's the first detail.

Love is patient. All those of you who have 100% total victory in the area of any form of impatience, please raise your hand. Because you need counseling if you do.

We all struggle, don't we? Patience. But I believe one of the key things is to make this a goal. It's when I made this a goal after offending a couple of my Mexican brothers working with me through my impatience, really hurting them, that I saw that this is an ugly thing in my life.

It also hurt my wife and hurt my own children. And so, I began to put this on a higher level. We often put our gifting on a high level.

I got to be able to preach. I've got to be able to communicate sensitively cross-culture. I've got to learn this Arabic language and get it perfect so that people, when they hear me, they'll just fall over and believe on Jesus.

We put a great emphasis on our skills. And you're here at university developing your skills. There's nothing wrong with that.

But I want to tell you, patience, the fruit of the spirit, is more valuable than any skill or any gifting you can ever have. And when you get that gifting together with the reality of the Holy Spirit, it's unstoppable. And I believe that's the only way you can explain what God has done through Operation Mobilization and other similar agencies over these past 50 years in enabling us to walk the walk with very few casualties among our leaders, a movement of now five and a half thousand people working in 100 nations.

Because from the day one in our movement, this was our goal more than our gifting, more than world evangelism, more than what we can do. It's. Jesus, the life of Jesus manifests through us.

I'm not saying it's easy, but I'm saying it should be. Really, our greatest passion, and it still is today as an older person to know the reality of this passage. Love is patient.

I want it to be able to be said. George Verwer is patient. Put your name in there.

See how it sounds. Just give it a try. Mine didn't sound very good until God really broke me and overhauled me.

Love is kind. Think of the times that I haven't been kind to think of the times when just just a sentence, an unkind sentence with me. Sometimes it was my humor.

Humor is good, but humor is dangerous. If your humor is belittling someone, if it's hurting someone, then it's not. It's not from Jesus kindness.

A revolution of kindness is the kind of revolution we need today. Does not envy. You know, it's amazing.

Some people, they don't struggle much with that, but they struggle with other things. But if you have any struggle with envy, Billy Graham called it one of the seven deadly sins. And that amazing books by that

title, which really brought me to my knees in 1962, when I first arrived in Britain, first from Spain, where I'd been living before that.

Love is patient. Love is kind. It's not envy.

Does not boast. I hope you'll not pick up this particular part of American culture. We're known.

I've lived in Europe, remember, 15 years and the rest of the world, 50 years. I'm sorry. You do hear what people say about Americans and some of it is unfair and there are all kinds of Americans.

But if you listen carefully, we do come across as a nation of boasters. And it's not acceptable for God's people. Of course, some unconverted cowboy who's a politician and running to be the governor of Bogota land south of Texas.

I mean, he's going to get up and boast. And we all sort of chuckle and say, poor soul. I wonder what his wife's like.

But we're God's people. We're God's people. We shouldn't be boasting.

Doesn't mean we don't speak out. Doesn't mean we don't give our testimony. Doesn't mean we don't proclaim boldly the gospel.

But we know the reality of humility. Beware of thinking of yourself more highly than you ought to think. Even if you're the number one honors graduate from this university.

And you walk off eventually with your doctor's degree and a double doctor's degree and whatever else they can pile upon you. Praise God for spirit filled people in the academic world. We need them.

And if you know any godly professors in this university, give him my greetings. Tell him to email me. I'll send him 25 free books or one for every student in their class.

A whole truck will have to come to Urbana with the books I'd love to give. You know, Urbana is one of the most important places in my life. Because God brought me here when I was in my 20s to speak at the Urbana convention the night that Billy Graham, my spiritual father, canceled out.

And I poured my heart out and didn't just talk about missions. But I shared my struggle with sex and pornography and gave an invitation. Was there any other people there that this was the biggest struggle in their life? Would they join me and repent? Because if you don't have this nailed down in your life, how can you go out and be a missionary? And I'll never forget at that great auditorium not far from here, when I finished that message back in 68 or 67 or 68, 4,000 students stood up.

Not just praying a prayer about missions, but repenting of the lust of the eyes, repenting of the pornography they were into. One of the first guys that came up to me had been almost caught by the police in his hometown for peeping Tom on this girl that he was infatuated with, telling a lie about his car, saying it was stolen because the police had seen his car. And he ended up at Urbana and prayed that prayer and came up to share that with me personally.

Three more times I had the joy of coming here in the freezing January weather to preach at Urbana. Now it's gone to St. Louis, but God is still using it. And that student movement, and I hope some of you are part of that here at Urbana, is one of the most powerful missionary forces in the world.

For 25 years, it was led by an exoemer, Lindsay Brown. He and I would go to Nigeria and speak to the great student Urbana convention in Nigeria. Today, Lindsay Brown is an older brother, is the international director of the Lausanne movement, and a dynamic African leads.

I fees or inner varsity, as it's known here. Praise God for the reality of his word. Love is patient.

Love is kind. Does not envy, does not boast. It's not proud.

It's not rude. New Jersey. I'm from New Jersey.

We're known as the rudest state in the whole country. I don't know anybody here from New Jersey. You know, may the Lord forgive you.

And you're probably not as rude as me. And we know the New Yorkers, the only ones that are more rude just across the river. We don't actually talk to them.

But rudeness, rudeness is a discredit to the name of Jesus if you are his child. And God is from those early days through this passage and other books and messages. I've been privileged to have spiritual food from hundreds of different men and women.

And I especially thank God for women who often have greater insight into these things than men. And I'd love to send you Debbie Meroff's book, True Grit, about what women are doing around the world and what women are suffering. I've given hundreds of those away here in the past and also at oil.

But if you didn't get true grit by Debbie Meroff, be sure to email me. I'm only going to shake hands after the meeting. I love doing that.

If somehow a few of those hands I shake, they're going to be willing to send me an email. It's hard to get even this computer generation with their modern phones to actually do something, to send an old. In London, they call me an old geezer, not a geyser, a geezer.

And I would just love to get an email from you. I read every email personally. I do Facebook as well, but that's full.

I got five thousand in my Facebook, so you can't get in there now. But why am I saying that? I take these meetings, but I really at times wonder what is going on. If I can just hear anything of what's going on in your heart and life, it's an encouragement to me.

I sometimes give four or five, six hours in a day praying for individuals. So I'm going to shake your hand. I'm all excited about shaking your hand.

And I washed my hand just for the purpose. But I'd love even more to hear from some of you. How are you managing in this this university? How are you managing in mixing together strong academic challenges with spiritual challenges? I'd love to know.

Praise God for this passage, for the reality of what we read here. Wow. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth.

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Immediately, that verse comes to my mind, which has helped me to run the race every day since my conversion. Be steadfast, unmovable,

always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Isn't that a great verse? Do you memorize Scripture? Would you like to grow stronger in God? Scripture memory is one of the ways that can help make that happen. Especially characters like me.

I'd so much struggle with lust and all that kind of thing. And I found that memorizing scriptures, hundreds of scriptures. My friend Dale wrote on memorized thousands helped clean up my mind.

By the way, am I am I speaking too loud? Is this coming across too loud? I know you like the loud music, but I always feel a little that I'm a little loud. Ever since I was in this Anglican church in Cambridge and I was speaking loud, he should have turned the volume down. But the guy, maybe he was dyslexic.

He was turning it up and it got very loud. And so when I finished the service, a lady came up to me. I never forget it.

She gave me a little note and she walked away and I read the note. She said, oh, thank you very much for visiting our church. But there is no need to shout.

We Anglicans, we Anglicans are not deaf. I've been ministering with the Anglicans for 46 years. I can assure you many of them actually are deaf, spiritually deaf.

But there is revival going on at the same time. People have asked. The pope was just in Great Britain.

Huge news. And many have left the Anglican church, all of them Anglo Catholics, including Tony Blair, who is his wife's Catholic. They've left and have become Catholics.

People are asking about why is this? But, of course, the Anglo Catholic movement in Britain is one of the deadest, most sleepy, wayward Christian movements in the entire world. They're completely different planet from godly Anglicans like John Stott, Dick Lucas and many other Anglicans, some of whom have spoken at Urbana many times. And so for them to leave the Anglo Catholic thing and actually go to the Catholic church with us, a little more buzz, a little more zip.

I fully understand. We hope that Tony Blair will now decide like to live the Christian life. That would be helpful.

I don't know if you've seen his memoirs in which he's attacked and spoke hard, ungracious things about so many other people. Why is the world getting so good at this? Writing books and articles, attacking. And saying things about other people, which later on sometimes proven actually is not the truth.

Not easy is it as students to find out what the truth is. Any of you studying history? That was my subject at university. I'm still studying history.

Very hard to actually know sometimes what really happened. But that's separate from this issue. Let's finish the passage for I know in part.

Now let's pick it up at verse three. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease where their tongues.

They will be still where there's knowledge. It will pass away for we know in part. We prophesy in part.

But when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child. I thought like a child.

I reasoned like a child. When I became a man. I put away.

Childish ways. Think of David Seaman's brilliant book that hit me so hard. Giving up your childish ways.

A follow up book on his first book, Healing for Damaged Emotions. And most of us do have some damaged emotions. Sometimes even through our own parents.

My own wife wounded by her stepfather. First father killed in the war. I go directly from here to be with the only living relative she has of her real father who was killed in the war.

And I appreciate your prayers. I meet with her uncle Ted over there in normal a few hours from now and we go for supper. What a challenge.

What a huge challenge to know this kind of reality in our lives. But in the process, you may discover you've got some serious emotional wounds. Don't be afraid to get help.

Don't be afraid to maybe read a book like Healing for Damaged Emotions or other Christian books that can help you understand yourself. Understanding ourselves is incredibly important. We sometimes do bizarre things or wrong things.

And we try to deal with that. But sometimes you can deal with that better if you know why are you actually behaving that way. And when I discovered in my own life the reasons at times why I was doing certain things and feeling certain emotions.

And feeling is very important. One of my former helpers, you can meet my new helper, just been with me three weeks. Daniel, he's downstairs by the books.

He's from Germany. He's never been in America in his life. So say hello to him.

And with him is another guy who was my helper 15 years ago. Fifty-five men have had this job of traveling with me, helping with me, blowing up the globe, deflating the globe, getting the books, driving. Of course, they've got to be computer wise.

Daniel downstairs has been the IT guy on our ship, Doolas, for two years. So it's a bit coming down now to be a servant for George Verwer and set up book tables and other interesting things, which he's just experienced the last three weeks. Let me tell you something just as a testimony.

Every one of these 55 men are going on for Jesus. Some of them get in trouble. One was just put in jail in Turkey for preaching in the streets.

I mean, you know, there are problems. And I would encourage you to be involved in mentoring or being mentored at one on one, that small group. I think you have small groups in your church getting to really know people.

I've always had people I could share with. You know, when I was really hurting, I want to quit. I can't even believe that God exists, much less pray to him.

I've always had someone that I could pray with. Sometimes in my kind of emotion, I would just break down and weep. And I just thank Jesus for his people.

I thank Jesus for the fellowship of the saints. I thank Jesus for godly men and women that were patient with me as a young Christian with my big mouth and way too much energy. My wife one day looked at me and says, looking at you makes me feel really tired.

Oh, my own wife. God is merciful. He wants to use you.

One of the biggest reasons I believe he's brought me to our banner right now to this meeting and I'm finishing in a few minutes is just to reaffirm. God wants to use you. Don't miss God's plan.

Saturate yourself with first Corinthians 13. Learn how to have balance between all the different challenges and agendas that are coming at you. And the greatest way to find balance is to major on the majors.

And this is the major. And don't worry about a lot of the other things that people are telling you are so important. Major on the majors.

Dynamic preacher came to one of the first OM conferences in history in Spain. Wow. Forty nine years ago.

And he could see that we had too many agendas. We were into all moving so many different directions. And he said something that impacted me.

Make your main focus the Lord Jesus Christ. And I would close with that. Jesus Christ is a summary of all that we read in first Corinthians 13.

And it's through Christ, his indwelling in us, walking in reality with him in repentance and brokenness that will enable us to manifest this kind of life in the midst of all the pressures of this world. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror. Then we will see face to face.

Now I know in part. Then I shall know even as I am fully known. And now these three remain faith, hope and love.

The greatest of these is love. I'm not going to end with a great spiritual challenge or invitation that's already there. I'm going to end with a practical.

Practical requests. Would you memorize? Would you memorize first Corinthians 13 in any in any translation? Would you maybe after some months send me an email? Say thanks for encouraging me to memorize the scripture. And if you could say even in a small way, by God's grace, this is becoming a reality in my life.

I see the changes. My friends see the changes. My wife, my husband, my girlfriend.

They see the changes. They're seeing more of Jesus and less of self, more of the fruit of the spirit and less of the works of the flesh. And I tell you, when I get an email like that, I'm dancing.

I'm praising Jesus because I know every one of you is so incredibly important. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, I thank you for this passage, which has molded my life.

For 55 years since I first discovered it. And Lord, here I am still working on it. Sometimes failing, sometimes coming short.

But I thank you, Lord, that when I come short, I can immediately seek your face. Your love for me is so great. You know everything about me and you love me still.

Those dark moments, those doubting moments, those foolish moments, those unkind words. Lord Jesus, we thank you for grace. We thank you for forgiveness.

And we're going to go from here somehow with the Holy Ghost springing our step. And a greater reality through the power of the Holy Spirit. For we ask in Jesus' glorious and wonderful name.

Amen.

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