

The House Group Movement in Uk

by George Verwer

The House Group Movement emphasizes unity, love, and community, but faces challenges such as neo-exclusivism and extremism.

Duration: 41:57

Scripture: Exodus 33:18, Matthew 5:23-24, John 11:40, John 12:27, John 17:3, John 17:17-18

Topics: "Home Church"

Description

In this sermon, Neil Porter discusses the theme of the glory of God. He references verses from the Bible, such as Moses asking to see God's glory and Jesus expressing his troubled soul and desire for the Father's glory. Neil emphasizes the importance of keeping the glory of God in mind in all aspects of life. He also mentions a conversation with a foreman who realizes the significance of being truthful and not trying to counterfeit God's glory. The sermon concludes with a mention of a conference where various meetings and discussions took place, including a focus on the Ethiopian food crisis and a powerful testimony given by Patrick Johnson.

Transcript

Just turn to John chapter 17, just for a scripture, further scripture reading. I'd love to read the whole chapter. I think it's just such a beautiful chapter.

It's one I hope all of you have studied. Speaking about life eternal, verse 3, that this is life eternal, that ye may know that they may, that they might know thee, the only true God. Think of that book we usually have on our book tables, Knowing God.

You ought to read it. And of course this goes beyond books. Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

And then there's this great continuation of this prayer, the intercessory prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. And especially his plea for oneness goes on to say in verse 17, Sanctify them through thy word, thy word is truth. Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

For their sake I sanctify myself, that they might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word. That they may all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee.

That's very close, isn't it? It's one body. That they also may be one in us, and that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect or mature in one. And that the world may know thou has sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. And of course it continues.

I think my greatest goal as we go into this next year, and I'm thinking of the big picture, the whole of OM and the whole of the body of Christ is somehow, somehow there may be more love. I really believe at times the lack of love in the body of Christ is the heartbreak of God, if that is possible. And you know it was one thing for us to love one another when we launched out 10 years ago or 20 years ago.

We hadn't been with each other in the battle. We hadn't seen the rawness of human failure and all the rest. But it's something else for people to really be committed 20, 25, 30, whatever, 10 years later.

But that's not what I want to share on this morning. I just wanted to read that scripture and use it together with those comments to share what happened in this very unusual conference I went to last week. Quite a few people will be listening to this report by cassette tape because a lot of people are interested in the house group movement or what is now being called the new church movement.

It is changing its name partly because research has shown that only 5% of the house group movement actually mainly meet in houses. It has grown so big so fast that of course meeting in houses is quite out of the question. Now they do break up in smaller groups and meet in houses, so do traditional churches do that.

We also do that. We're in a house now. But we're not part, as far as I know, of this particular movement.

And if we are going to work in Britain, and I've been saying this for quite a few years, we need to understand what is happening in this significant movement. We had Peter Brierley, not necessarily part of that movement, with Mark, who I'm hoping to get into one of our meetings in the future, with his acetates, just give us the most incredible presentation and statistics about Britain and missions that I had watched in a long time. And he showed that in Britain there is slight, very, very slight growth in the church.

Now that should be of concern to us. The church is just holding on with a slight 1% or so growth. That's over the death rate, the dropout rate, the agnostic atheist rate, whatever.

And he shows the different churches and what's happened, different denominations. And the primary reason for that growth, tiny growth, and for it even holding its own, is what has happened, at least as far as can be ascertained, through the house group movement. Now I have been watching this movement from its very, very birth.

It can be combined with the growth of the charismatic movement in Great Britain, which is absolutely parallel with the growth of OM in Britain. Started almost the same time. I'm not talking about the Pentecostal church.

That started, of course, long before what's thought of today as a charismatic movement, which back then was known by some as a neo-Pentecostal movement, a term that has been dropped. When we revise extremism, we certainly need to make a number of changes. If there was ever anything out of date, in terms of even vocabulary, it's part of that book, which is part of Revolution of Love and Balance, which is

being rewritten.

But a number of the leaders of this movement were actually on OM in the early days. And there was a man named David Lilly. I'm going to mention names because it will make this all far more interesting because we know people and people's names come to our minds.

And if I end up in court over it, which is unlikely because this is largely positive, we'll just trust the Lord. David Lilly was meeting with Arthur Wallace, who became, in my mind, one of the grandfathers of the House Group movement. His father was a famous Reginald Wallace Plymouth Brethren.

Arthur, after considerable struggle, broke from the Brethren. I remember hearing the echoes from New Zealand where he just shook the Brethren movement, which divided, preceded all the other divisions that eventually were to take place in the Brethren movement, which became the major source of leadership in the minds of some. And I heard this stated at the conference again, one of the major sources of leadership into the new House Group movement.

David Lilly asked me, he was a friend of OM, very keen about OM. Moreland's Bible College was shaking under his ministry at that time and almost coming unglued. He asked me to have a night of prayer with Arthur Wallace and himself because he felt that OM was to be the outreach agency of this new underground, that's what he called it back then, the underground movement of the Holy Spirit.

And you can imagine how skeptical people in Britain were of this at that time and how vicious sometimes the attacks were. One House Group movement perhaps had already been born and was beginning to move under the leadership of a man named Pastor North with a strong emphasis, at least eventually, on the teaching of Wesley. And he had a man named Norman Meaton who was a friend of Peter Conlon.

And Peter had been in their meetings. Their first group was in Liverpool. Very interesting things happening.

And brought Norman Meaton down to the OM conference at Honor Oak and we had him speak. Anyway, we can't get in any sidetracks. We won't get to the real story.

That's a little history. And I went to that night of prayer and somehow it didn't click. We were not on the same wavelength.

Perhaps we didn't have enough time. But it just, with our background, where we were at that time, it didn't click. We didn't feel we could take on a charismatic label.

Though all of that was part of us having a very open view of what God was doing in that movement and many different movements. Of course, when extremism, which grew out of a message I gave at the conference around 63 or 64, when that was written, we had had some trouble in the OM summer campaign. There was serious division.

There was confusion. There were people laying hands on motors and casting out things from the engine. Publicity had hit the press in the Netherlands.

And we felt, you know, OM was going to really divide if we didn't take a stand. And maybe our stand back then was too conservative. But that was our stand.

And that, of course, was misunderstood. Anyway, we have to jump now. We have to jump 30 years or 25 years to this conference.

I've been praying, and I may start weeping during this, so people who know me, you know, that's not the end of the world. I wept so much the last day of this conference. I haven't wept so much in 15 years.

Because there was such a mighty movement of the Spirit of God among these 70 people. They were hand chosen, major leaders of the house group movement and of the church. Men like Michael Harper, who was not of the house group movement.

Charismatics were all together for a while, mainly in their own churches. The house group movement was very small, and the charismatics within their own churches were the most critical. They were meeting together in prayer.

And Michael Harper came, this man who represents, you know, the whole charismatic movement on a worldwide level. The man I had met before and was impressed with, though as having been John Stott's curate and, you know, left that with a big bang years ago. They, since then, have been in dialogue.

You know, there's a whole batch of history there I can't share, but he was there. And I tell you, it costs these people to give this time. Terry Virgo was there, who was considered one of the main apostles of the whole South Coast movement, a huge movement.

A friend of mine who's not in the house group movement was at their conference, 7,000 at Downs this summer. And even though he's not in agreement, he said the ministry of Terry Virgo was, in the evenings, quite outstanding. Terry can remember lining up meetings for me when I first went to the South Coast.

He was linked years ago with Phil Poston, who's gone through a very difficult patch, ex-OMer. I hadn't seen Terry Virgo in so long, I couldn't even remember. And others were there like Ian Farr, ex-OMer from India, who initially was negative about OM when he came back, even wrote an article about it.

Peter Hill, major OM leader in the early days. He was there, moved from Canada recently. Part of the house group structure that comes out of Basingstoke, which is under the guidance of a great leader, Barney Combs.

Barney wasn't there. A number of key men were not there. And we need to pray as they hear the cassette tapes, as they get the feedback, that they will somehow join with what the Holy Spirit is trying to do through this conference.

Roger Foster, of course, was there. Roger and Ichthys are not a part of the traditional house church stream. In fact, I've heard him say he's not part of that.

But he is certainly, in a sense, part of the new church stream, and one of the main leaders, and a man that's tied in with Evangelical Missionary Alliance. This conference came together because of initiative from the Evangelical Missionary Alliance, Stanley Davis, and of course Clive and Calvin, and people in that grouping, and the house group people. I don't know who took the greatest initiative.

Another key man in this was Ross Patterson, ex-OMR, one of the first to ever go into the Soviet Union with us. Remember, in that Cambridge, we were very closely linked. But he was linked more with David Watson, ended up in that church in York, then for a while with OMF, then he planted a church.

He is one of the strongest voices that the house church, new church movement, is off target, and that they miss God's emphasis on world missions. In fact, he may have been a little disappointed in me that I wasn't stronger in emphasizing that, but I did not feel I was the authority to tell these people where they are off target. I went there, I can honestly tell you, to learn, to see walls broken down, to just see what could be done.

Of course, I have desires for that church movement. I have desires also for OM. So he was one of the speakers.

Jeff Williams was another speaker, one of the first missionaries ever met in India. I haven't seen him in 23 years. I'm a very people-oriented person.

I tell you, when I see these old friends, I start to come unglued, and I came unglued at times, especially praying with individuals. But he gave such an exciting message. He's linked with Ashley in Karachi.

He has a church movement in Sheffield. You can never understand all the various streams of the new church movement. It is growing so fast, it is also dividing.

Part of that is heartbreaking. Part of it is good. Perhaps the reason before this conference I was thought of being negative against the movement, that's the word that's on the grapevine among some of these people, is because years ago I gave a strong warning, even in a prayer letter, about neo-exclusivism.

And that hit some of them between the eyes, and the word got out. Together with perhaps other things I'd said 20 years ago, maybe my booklet Extremism. So there were people there who basically felt that I was negative about them.

And that OM also, you know, was negative about them. And in our small group discussion, especially one of the main leaders, I won't give his particular name, one of the main leaders and I were in the same group. We had the main message and we broke up in groups.

And that's where we could really share. And God, God just knit my heart with this brother. And he stood up on the last day before the most unusual communion service I have ever been in.

And I'm not exaggerating that. I was in an unusual one at Spring Harvest ten, six years ago, but this one went beyond that. And I'm sure some of you would, you know, traditional members might even walk out of the room.

I don't think many. But the way they had this communion service, is they had the bread and the wine up there in the front. There was a move of the Holy Spirit toward reconciliation, toward getting right with one another.

And let me just say, they have enormous amount of problems within the House Fellowship and New Church movement. There's been divisions, there's been tensions, there's been breakings, there's been broken relationships, heavy, heavy stuff. That wasn't discussed openly.

But if you read, if you know what's going on and the letters that get circulated, you realize that. So, you know, this wasn't just reconciliation between people like house group leaders and George Verwer, though that was a factor, but among themselves. So, you know, I never felt anyone was, had an ax to grind.

But the brother, one of the brothers who led this communion gave one of the most significant messages I've ever heard. I tell you, if we could be as honest about our problems within OM and our sins as this brother was about the sins and the problems and the mistakes and the weaknesses of the house group movement, I believe we would go a lot further. Of course, that has to be under the anointing of God.

That can't be just out of bitterness or out of you being upset about something. We all have that. But under the anointing of God, this brother who was one of the main inspirations behind this whole conference, a man named John Noble, I've followed him in print over the years.

He just gave this message, which is just integrity like Neil. So beautiful what Neil said here. It's more integrity, honesty.

You know, let's not talk about all this power and all this miracles taking place when we know it's not to any great degree. And he shared about one area where the house group movement took off with all the signs and all the wonders and all these great things, took off, grew rapidly. And through various problems has actually disintegrated.

And a number of them in the early days of that movement came from a little sleepy Brethren Assembly down the road. And this is the exception, not the rule. And now the house group movement has closed down in that little area.

The Brethren Assembly somehow made some changes, has doubled and tripled, has team leadership and is the greatest impact in that area. And for that man just to share that was just so powerful. Anyway, during this communion service, the other man who had stood up before everybody and apologized his wrong attitude toward me, you know, in front of all these people.

My name and O.M. kept coming up, almost every other speaker, usually positive. And as an affirmation of their desire somehow to be united with us and others. The head of O.M.F., John Wallace was there.

Patrick Johnson was there. The head of the Bible Society was there. The head of Scripture Union was there.

The head of CLC or his deputy was there. This was no, you know, one-sided thing. And they also shared messages.

Patrick Johnson, the first night, gave one of his brilliant, you know, statistic messages, all his acetates. I will tell you, when that man stood in front of that crowd and just openly shared that way, you know, the Lord just took the meeting one step further. And so he then said, you know, if you want to break bread with someone, you come up and take the bread and take the cup, and you go to that person, and you offer them the bread and you offer them the cup.

And, you know, I had never seen anything like this. And of course, it meant, as it teaches in Matthew, you know, if you have something against your brother, you're going to come to him and personally offer him the bread and wine. You'd better be right with him.

Can you imagine us trying to do something like this in certain places? Because brothers and sisters, we know, I tell you, we know in O.M., people that are barely speaking to each other. People can barely look at each other without negative vibrations. We don't have enough of it in O.M. We don't have much of it in O.M., but we have enough of it that if it spreads, it'll kill this work.

And if we don't think we can disintegrate and God just go down and work, you know, on the other end of the block with a group that we may think is dead or sleepy, then we don't know much about history. And I'll tell you, I'll be one of the first to move out and go down the other end of the block and fellowship where the Holy Ghost is working. And, you know, whether they stand on the chairs or they pray on their knees, I want to be where God is working.

Anyway, to make a long story short, as we see the old clock up on the wall, I was just, you know, sitting there, standing there in a state of emotion. And suddenly I had a little queue of people in front of me all wanting to break bread and give me wine. I'm number one.

I can't handle much wine. I'm a teetotaler if there ever was one. But, you know, I won't give the names of the people who came to me.

And it was only ultimately about five or six or seven because the meeting had to end. I'm sure there were others circulating around. And I'm sure while this was happening with me, it was happening all over the room with other people.

You know, it wasn't that I became the dominant person in this. So I probably was the biggest, you know, the biggest mouth. I think they would acknowledge that for a few things that I, through outbursts.

I mean, it's amazing when the group of people are largely charismatic and Pentecostal. I was the only one saying amen and hallelujah during the ministry. It seems they're still very English when it comes to the ministry and the tremendous ministry and everybody's basically quiet.

And one time, you know, I said, hallelujah. And the man speaking said, thank you, George. I was not a main speaker.

People did realize that somehow I was present. I didn't even have a book table. There's no literature allowed except what went in the packets.

The only thing we had in the packet was seven major emphases. Packet that thick. All of them had this flashy, beautiful material.

And we had seven major emphases, which may have had a message in itself because we were not there to promote OM. And certainly, we will not come out thought of in that conference that just been promoting OM. The only book they allowed really was Patrick Johnson's Operation World.

He and I pushed that together and they were going 10 at a time at what Patrick Johnson calls a special price. I had a great talk with him about that. And what a dear saint that man is.

Well, I was weeping during most of that communion services. These different people came to me, a number of them, XOMers. There was nothing ugly.

There was nothing that bad in one sense, but it was beautiful. At the end, I was able to have a personal time of prayer with Terry Virgo, a man who I've appreciated from a distance, but very much from a distance. I've had also some misunderstandings, one of which I was able to talk to him about before that.

I had a very emotional time of prayer with Michael Harper, who really wants to see more of us. All these people, of course, are very controversial. And, you know, I'm not saying there's no problem.

In fact, their leaders are very much pointing out that if the house groups are to work with traditional missions, they're speaking more of groups like OMF. We are somewhere in the middle there. They're trying to figure out actually where we are.

We're still trying to figure out where we are. But the things they talk about that are barriers in traditional missions are often non-existent in OM and YWAM. YWAM was also represented, though Len Green had to leave on that last day, which was just, I guess, inevitable.

People are busy. But, you know, these men are changing. We must understand that.

We are changing. These men and women, there were women there, are changing. And they are saying, now that doesn't mean the whole house new church movement is saying this, but a significant number of them are saying the priority now must be evangelism and world missions.

They don't want to lose their distinctives. We had a lot of talk about that in our small groups. They don't want to lose their distinctives, but they have matured.

They have seen the reality of spiritual warfare and the problems that come and all the rest. And they want to be involved in missions. Now, they already are sending out leaders, sending out workers, and these house groups are involved more in missions than is seen on the surface.

Some of them are incredibly generous and giving quite large sums of money to help in the third world. Now, we will, we, in our work in the third world, we, of course, pick up negatives about some of this. We see even divisiveness.

But what I have been saying all along, and that's what I believe, when many years ago I went to Bradford, the Bradford group and a number of the people in the South now have separated themselves from Bradford. Bradford and Bryn Jones, does not have an overall control over what we're talking about here. They were represented.

Bryn wasn't there. I don't think they were very strongly represented, but they were there. And two men in the South Coast groups that were linked with Bradford share with me how they more or less now operate on their own.

There's a relationship, but they're more or less operating on their own. I shared with one of the main ones from South Hampton. It's one of the strongest.

An experience where someone had one foot in their camp and one foot in the Christian Union five years ago, and because they were anti-Christian Union, he moved out of that fellowship and aligned himself with the Christian Union. He shared how they've changed in their attitude. The young man who's the president of that Christian Union is a member of their fellowship.

This is exciting. We can't afford the divisions that it looked like we had in all of this five years ago. And we have a long way to go.

They openly shared as leaders that some of their people have left because of the changes they're making. There is a drive, by the way, toward the kind of honesty and integrity that Neil referred to this morning. And, you know, not just reporting things that they don't actually have.

And I would just, in closing, any of you who are hearing this tape and this report is only partial and those of us in this room to really pray as certainly it will be a main, main task now for us to maintain what God did in that conference. I believe there's going to be open doors for us to minister in these groups. I've already had open doors.

I don't have many free weekends, but I'm praying that Brother Viv and maybe others in this room will be able to take some of the invitations. They want teaching about missions. They're openly pushing Mission 2000.

I mean, this alone is a breakthrough because these groups in the past, some of them, they wouldn't touch this kind of interdenominational event. They have spoken against the word parachurch and openly one of the main leaders said, look, O-N, Y-W-N, they are the church. They may have even a more stronger interpretation of us being the church than we do.

But they said, look, this is the church. And he gave some explanations that I wasn't fast enough to catch the vocabulary. But it looks like the walls are coming down and it's going to be a long, hard road to maintain these relationships and to try to deal with the misunderstandings which are everywhere.

They now have a book, look at that book, of the addresses of their fellowships. Now, not all new churches in Britain are charismatic. The bigger section is certainly linked with charismatics, strong on the gifts, the signs and wonders.

But there are new churches like the one I was in this weekend that are not necessarily charismatic technically. Wherever the Holy Spirit is working, there is charisma. And someone even acknowledged the possibility of a spirit-filled person being beyond charismatic in this interesting conference.

A body book. One of the fastest growing franchises in Britain, I was with a man who's into franchises this weekend, are the body shops. This has nothing to do with that franchise.

This is the House Fellowship Movement. Probably they'll change the title of the next book. Very strong in the body life.

In fact, I'd love to be able to share, and I may at a future date, the strengths of the House Fellowship and the New Church Movement and what we can learn. We have been learning because we've been watching. We don't want to miss anything.

We've been watching. We've been reading. I might say the conference ended up with the rock star from the Soviet Union, Valerie.

I was staying with Danny Smith. I was commuting and then staying with Danny Smith. By the way, they asked me to lead a night of prayer.

It went from 10 to 2 in the morning. Everybody stayed. And I had free run.

When I opened for worship, of course, a couple of times I thought it was going maybe out of control. But hallelujah. I said, amen, praise the Lord.

And everybody sat down. And we got back. We got back to intercessory prayer.

But really, I wish you could have all been in that unusual prayer meeting. You know, when you get in a prayer meeting with these people and we let them share. I didn't do a lot of sharing.

We let, you know, we just let them share. And Patrick Johnson had his overheads and all kinds of things. But I went back that night and stayed with Danny Smith.

And Danny Smith's main involvement, he's an ex-OMer who's the founder of Jubilee Ministry, has been with Valerie Baranoff, who's just come out of the Soviet Union. Margie Thatcher was involved with that. Members of Parliament.

It's big. It's been on TV, national news. I haven't seen it to the surprise of Danny.

And we had him come at the very end. And of course, I mean, when I met him, I've been praying for him three years, listening to his music, introducing him to the rock festival in Chicago. So when I saw him, I was already, you know, really coming apart.

And I just wept the entire time with him in my arms. The guy must have thought he really met somebody his way out. Then he went up to the front and he gave a brief, brief testimony and sang.

And that's how, after the communion service, this unusual conference finished. Probably more was happening behind the scenes than we could even see. Meeting with people, it was a large chunk of time given.

We had a little meeting of ex-OMers out in the hallway. During that, Peter Hill was deeply burdened for the Ethiopian food crisis. Len Green was there.

And we immediately made a phone call. I think they all had kicks out of my cell phone. I was the only one with a cell phone.

But we immediately made, I tried to keep it out of the way. I didn't until the end. But we made this very strategic call to a man in Germany who's linked with the rebels in Ethiopia.

We didn't get through. And then we prayed, all of us united, that a miracle would take place to let the food get through. If the food doesn't get through, there is food there now.

They always need more. But there is food. The problem is they cannot get through the rebels.

The rebels are destroying the trucks. This has come over national news. Others have stated the same thing.

And I hope we can be praying about that this week. Because thousands and thousands and thousands will die. I believe God wants to give this team a very significant input into the worldwide relief situation.

We have unbelievable contacts. We have, how can you say, we have a degree, because of what God has done, we have a degree of authority that if we called up certain people or we worked through other people, just like I worked together with Len Green who made the phone call to his contact, that could possibly do something. We need peacemakers.

We need spiritual Terry Waits to go down and break these barriers down. And we want to be involved. I don't think the Lord is calling OM into main actual involvement in relief.

We've always felt we should be training relief workers and helping in every possible way. And I'm really wrestling with this. Actually, one of Roger Malsted's mandates when he took on his job years ago was responsible for relief within OM, which was a linking type of thing, a catalyst type of thing.

And some things did happen. But that was just one of the exciting little subgroups that took place during that conference and may something come from it. So let's bring this to a close in Thanksgiving.

Let's pray for this movement with all their struggles just like us. We were born at the same time. We're running parallel.

We're in dialogue. There is overlapping. And above all else, we need wisdom from above.

We're not going to leave our roots in order to do these things. In fact, these are people, some of their leaders were telling us, you know, don't leave your roots. And even as I tried to apologize for areas where we felt we made mistakes, one or two of them said, look, you don't need to apologize.

One of them said, look, he thought we weren't paying much attention to them 20 years ago. This particular leader that we actually were, maybe more than he knows, he said, I'm glad you didn't pay attention to us. You got on with what needed to be done.

Some of these people actually admire OM. And I'm sure that's after knowing our weaknesses. But let's pray that the Lord will do a mighty work, especially as they go back and share this with their congregations.

Because just like the brethren were 25 years ago, there's hardliners in every congregation. And the message of the cross, which strongly came out, the message of enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ came out. The example of Hudson Taylor was one of the most widely used examples by the speakers.

That this kind of stick-to-it-ness forward driving message and lifestyle is needed today. And that is very much, you know, very much comes through groups like Ithys who have a wider range, a wider model of all that they would like to see done. Let's pray.

Lord, we just never have enough time to share all the things that are on our hearts. But we believe we have shared enough. And we thank you for these men and women.

We thank you for the way you have worked through them. We thank you for their desire to grow in wisdom and knowledge and maturity, to take truth in from different quarters, for their willingness to acknowledge their own mistakes, their own extremes. And Lord, we have had to acknowledge our mistakes and our extremes.

We thank you for these great parachurch agencies, which we don't really want to call that anymore, like OMF and CLC and WAC and many others that were involved in this conference. We thank you that this represents answer to the prayers of, I believe, hundreds of thousands of people. That this whole movement may not become more extreme, but may be welded in to the main flow of biblical, evangelical, charismatic, whatever people call it, Christianity.

Lord, we know it's not going to be easy as we move forward together. There are things that different groups do that turn other people off and frighten them and make them feel uneasy. There's controversy

about the gifts and the use of the gifts and how far to go here and there.

There's a lot of hurt people out there who have discovered there's no total answer in any assembly, any church. And we just pray there'll be great healing, a great breaking down of barriers. And we pray that within OM there'll be great healing, great breaking down of barriers.

Leaders who have perhaps not had a deep union with one another, have not openly talked with one another and confessed and prayed together and really broken bread together in unity and reality, in humility, might find that the next time they're breaking bread and taking of the cup, that pride would be crucified and that you, Lord Jesus, would be magnified and there might be a few tears around this movement. That we may know what it is to be the fulfillment, spiritually and practically, of what your son, the Lord Jesus, prayed for in John chapter 17, that we may be one. Oh Lord, put a watchman on our mouths, especially mine, oh God.

Give us strength to speak the truth with love, to flee gossip as we would run from an AIDS epidemic and to engage in Holy Ghost intercession. Lord, even as we on this team make transition and go through change and there's evidence that we don't have complete unity on many different issues, that somehow your Holy Spirit would restrain and control and move through us to touch many, many lives. As some of these leaders come to visit us in Forest Hill and in Bromley, that we may be able to welcome them and pray with them and learn from them.

As maybe we have some of them sharing in our meetings. And as we share in their meetings and as we attempt to have ongoing dialogue to look for solutions in some of the real tough, nitty-gritty problems, we believe you're going to raise up other mission societies. We believe some of these movements will have their own mission societies.

They already do. Their own sending agents. We're happy for the pluralization.

We believe unity is in the midst of diversity. But Lord, if there's a greater part that we are to play as a fellowship, then we want to be open and willing. We see Love Europe as part of that.

We see the Exo-Emers reunion as an ongoing part of that. As many people are praying about coming there and being reunited with friends they haven't seen for 10, 20 years. Grant these things, we pray, in humility, with a great sense of need and yet a great security in yourself.

We thank you for our roots. But we want the tree to grow strong and we want more fruit on every branch. In Jesus' name, Amen.

During his talk, George mentioned remarks that Neil Porter had made earlier in the meeting. So to fill the rest of the tape, here is what Neil had to say. But through these verses, I've noticed the theme has been running is the glory of God.

You know, like Moses says, show me now thy glory. Jesus, when he's in a state of kind of depression in the garden, says, now is my soul troubled. And then he says, Father, glorify thy name.

And in the situation of Lazarus, he says, did not I say that if you would believe, you would see the glory of God? And it's just that sort of thought I want to leave before, you know, to keep the glory of God in your mind in all that you're doing. I feel at times we kind of try to counterfeit the glory of God or try to concoct it. I, being a cynic by nature, I sometimes question the prayer letters I see or little things that are said about

what God did.

Sometimes you hear how it actually was worked out by men all the way through. In a sense, God didn't have anything to do with it, you might say. But the glory of God is supposed to be the business of the servants of God.

And we should be seeing how God is glorified in our own lives and also in our praying and in his special promises to us as individuals that we wait upon him to allow himself to glorify himself. He doesn't need anybody to work it out for him. In a sense, that he can do without us.

And I suppose in that line I think very much of Abraham having just been reading that story how God promised to make him the father of many nations and how he tried to work it out. He got impatient, didn't want to wait on God and so he tried to work it out with Hagar and blew it. And you know, the Arab-Israeli conflict really starts way back then.

But I guess we won't all have that effect if we disobey God on human history. But that's how, by not waiting on God, not waiting, allowing God to work and not praying with an expectant spirit, you know, God's glory doesn't come out or he doesn't give that opportunity so we can blow it. So that has been very much on my mind and gives me a kind of sense of expectation for the future.

Another thing which isn't related to any verses, there are very, very few verses on the subject, but the other thing which in a sense is related to the glory of God is personal integrity. And this is in our speech. Our speech obviously is the way most people analyze what kind of person we are.

That's the best way. One of the main ways is how we communicate, what we say, is how people judge us. And we've got to remember getting back to our prayer letters and reports and so on, whether we report in the prayer meeting or otherwise.

People receiving them in the world outside are people who are cynics by nature, a lot of them, a lot like myself. And there are people out there who are income tax inspectors and customs inspectors, you know, they don't take anything at face value. And they question what we say and they question what we do.

And I also at times question what people say to me. And I'm in an interesting situation a few weeks ago when somebody told me what he'd been doing so many hours of work. I wasn't even asking, wanting to know.

A few hours later, I didn't even ask a question, I just accepted. Somebody else told me that he'd spent so many time, hours with that person the day before and you think, well, somebody had a 36-hour day or God stopped the sun for the third time in history or something like that. And so I also question but this whole thing of personal integrity comes to me and being honest in our reports, not padding them or embellishing them or not trying to do it, you know, if something goes wrong that we just honestly say, well, I made a mistake or I did it the wrong way instead of sort of trying to place the blame onto the situation and so it helps our image doesn't get tarnished.

It was interesting to me last week, I'm doing a nurture course at the Chapadal Church and I was a little bit concerned, has this guy really come to salvation? Is God really working his life? And so I asked him, I said, he works in the building trade, I said to him, Wally, that's his name, I said, Wally, what do you think the Lord has changed in your life since you made this commitment to Christ? And you know, his first thing was in the area of one's speech but he said, it wasn't bad language, it was the way he reports things now. He's

a foreman, they have a deadline to finish this new Barclays Bank in Surbiton by the 29th of this month. So he said, any time there's a hold up or stoppage, the directors are on to him or the management, they want to know why, why, why.

And he says, I'll no longer give them a whole story, I'll tell them exactly what happened. And I thought, well that's, you know, obviously God is doing something and I was just reading yesterday, Colossians 3, 9, it says, do not lie to one another, put off the old nature. So that's part of the process.

I asked him about language, when it comes to bad language, he says, well actually that's getting even worse. I said, you're sure it's not your conscience is becoming more alive to that problem but he said, no I didn't think so. But at least I felt, well God is doing something in his life, that he's not trying to cover his reports, not trying to protect his reputation, he's just telling the boss how it was and that's what I, subject to personal integrity.

Just taking from Psalm 18, it's been a favourite with mine, I preached on it interestingly last Sunday before we joined the Lobos just over 10 years ago and it's often come back to me and been encouragement but David is writing this sort of towards the end of his life when most of his victories are all over and he's, you know, he's really on top of the world. But he says, the cords of death encompassed me, the torrents of perdition assailed me, the cords of Sheol entangled me, the snares of death confronted me, that's how his situation was. In my distress, I called upon the Lord to my God, I cried for help.

From his temple he heard my voice and my cry to him reached his ears. That's the situation is, he calls on God in an expectant way and then we read later on, in verse 20, the Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands, he recompensed me. For I've kept the ways of the Lord and have not wickedly departed from my God.

For all his ordinances were before me and his statutes I did not put away from me. I was blameless before him and I kept myself from guilt. Therefore the Lord has recompensed me according to my righteousness.

He had a real image of his own personal integrity that, and you think of David's life, we know his sins, it's interesting, but how at the end he could claim that kind of righteousness to where that he wasn't guilty and yet somehow he had maintained that kind of personal integrity before God and that's why God responded to him. And so when I talk about the glory of God, I say on one hand, I say it's not dependent on us at all, on the other hand, it is in the sense for God to respond to us that the kind of lives we're living, that we're open and honest in all that we do. We don't try and, you know, mislead people or even try to deceive them in the way we talk and how we report things.

So those are just two thoughts have been very much on my mind in the last few months. Thank you very much, George.

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