

The Revolution of the Love / Die Revolution Der Liebe - Part 3

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the necessity of radical commitment to Christ and the preparation needed for effective missions work.

Duration: 49:42

Scripture: Ephesians 6:10

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Faith Development"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding and following the word of God. He acknowledges the need for missionaries and encourages people to go, but also highlights the significance of knowing what the Bible says. The speaker shares personal experiences and anecdotes to illustrate his points, including a story about a man who asked God for a miracle and the importance of understanding women. He also references Ephesians 6:10-13, which discusses the need to be strong in the Lord and put on the whole armor of God to stand against the strategies of the devil. The speaker concludes by urging listeners to be participants in their Christian walk and to take steps forward in their faith.

Transcript

Thank you. Thank you for your prayers. You're in for a very special treat and privilege to have Bruce Olsen sharing with you tomorrow and the next day.

To have a half an hour with him that I just had was worth coming all the way here to Germany. To be with this unusual man who has lived most of his life in the jungle. And who's ever let his book go out of print in the German language should be just shot.

Don't interpret that. That's an exaggeration. But I'm sorry that his book is out of print in the German language.

It's always more of a challenge when a whole lot of new people arrive that you haven't had the chance of speaking to yet. Fortunately you can get the video or audio tape and catch up on what you've missed. We talked a lot about the challenge of India.

Which is in a moment of phenomenal crisis. I've just been on the phone with them some hours ago. We talked about of course the challenge of Afghanistan.

Some of us have been praying for this country for over 40 years. We have had friends who have died for Jesus Christ in Afghanistan. Both Afghans and foreigners.

Many of which have less than 1% of the witness that we have here in Germany. Places like Tibet and Libya and Turkmenistan. And other places.

But I'm not going to talk so much more tonight about nations. I very much want to speak to you from the word of God. And especially from Ephesians chapter 6. And I must confess as this afternoon we took a survey.

How many people who were here are already trying, they've already made a commitment, they're trying to get to the mission field. And about one third of the people stood up. And that really impressed on me something I've been thinking about.

Which I hope will be a blessing for everyone. And I hope that you will find it such an important teaching that you will share it with many other people through these videos and through these cassettes. Because God's people around the world need what I'm going to attempt with all my weakness to share with you at this moment.

I like to be honest. Even when it gets me in trouble. And in some mission events that I go to.

They have a tremendous emphasis on the need to go. Of course I believe in that. And we're looking for people who will go.

Many of those who stood this afternoon may never go. And others who are still thinking about it may end up the most dynamic missionaries that ever left Germany. But we need to understand what the word of God says.

I want you to turn to Ephesians chapter 6. The question that is in my mind right at this very moment. As I look at it. I look back over 45 years.

And as I've read a lot of statistics. Why do so many start out in this great pilgrimage. And never reach their destination.

One survey showed that only 10% of those who stood up to say I'll go as a missionary. Ever became a missionary. We've had 100,000 people serve on Operation Mobilization.

On the ships, or a summer, or 10, 20 years. Youth with a mission has way more than that. But we discover looking back over these 40 some years.

So many who were coming short term. They wanted to go long term. But it didn't happen.

That's serious. In fact the disappointment of it not happening. Caused some of them to lose their faith in God.

Or to become bitter about the church, or about missions, or become cynical. That's an important word in English. Cynical.

And one of the things that excites me. Many of the people that I have the privilege of working with. Some of them older people now.

I see the joy of the Lord in their lives. I see this grace awakening that Swindle talks about in his book. That the word of God talks about.

And I can testify that Jesus Christ radically changes people. They may only be a small percentage of those Evangelical fish who seem to be swimming down God's river. But they are God's powerful remnant of praying radically committed people.

I'll just tell you about one of them because we don't have the time. I went to a very liberal arts college shortly after my conversion. It's like a university.

20 years ago there were many biblical people there. By the time I got there, Christianity, biblical Christianity was looked upon and people mocked it. They made fun of it.

20 years before I got there. By the time I got there, people looked down on biblical Christianity and mocked it. And I had no idea where I was going.

And I was there in the first year. And someone came to me and talked about a man called Dale Rotan. He was in the second year.

And I thought, you know, gun-ho for Jesus, that maybe they should say something to me about this guy Dale Rotan. So they warned me about him. They said he was a fanatic.

And he was baptizing people in the showers. When I heard this, he was definitely someone I wanted to meet. The amazing thing is a couple years later, he did baptize me, but it was not in the shower.

Dale was the first person I went to. God gave me a burden to go to Mexico. I very highly esteemed him because I saw his life, I saw his commitment.

I was a lot more active in evangelism. He was more intellectual in theology. When I went out in my different evangelistic things, he didn't actually go with me very much.

He thought that was great, you go ahead. But he was involved in some evangelism as well. He was in the process of memorizing one third of the word of God.

One third of the New Testament. So when I went to Dale and said, hey, would you like to go to Mexico with me? I didn't think he'd say yes. He was going to transfer to Wheaton College, a very evangelical college where Billy Graham had studied.

He had to go there that summer, the beginning, the early part of the summer, when I wanted to go to Mexico. Somehow he agreed to go with me. We've been of one heart and of one mind for 44 years.

He eventually pioneered the work in Turkey. He speaks fluent Turkish. He then took over all the Bible smuggling in the whole of Eastern Europe.

Hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of Bibles and New Testaments over a period of 20 some years. He's a much more quiet person, much more laid back, much more intellectual type of person. But God's hand was on him for the Muslim world.

When he turned that leadership over to someone else, he became for 15 years the director of the ship ministry and lived here in Germany where, of course, he learned fluent German. We always walked in the light with each other. In other words, we shared our problems and our failures and our struggle.

We had a totally open relationship. But I can say, Dale Roton, for me, he's like an onion. The more you peel and look inside, the more realistic the whole experience becomes.

And I thank God for what Jesus Christ has done in his life. I could tell you of 500 people similar to him. Latin Americans, Africans, Indians, Chinese, I know people from over 100 nations.

They're my personal friends. We pray together, we weep together, we confess our faults to one another. Jesus Christ, by the power of his Holy Spirit, can change people.

Why am I emphasizing that? Because a lot of people tell me that when they meet a lot of Christians, they don't really see where they're that different than anybody else. In fact, in the United States, one of the big survey companies that take these surveys, you pay a big money to get these surveys. They took a survey comparing Christians with non-Christians.

It's the most discouraging, depressing survey I have ever read about. Statistics showed, in this survey, there was basically very little difference in practical life between the Christian and the non-Christian in the United States. Now remember, it's impossible for a big survey to come up with what I call a remnant factor.

To find a radical group, a small number of percentage of people who are different, that's hard to find in a survey like that. The latest statistic is they've examined the marriages of the non-Christians and the Christians in the United States. The divorce rate among Christians is the same as non-Christians.

A more recent survey showed that among more legalistic, Bible-punching Christians, the divorce rate is higher than among the non-Christians. Legalism is the power of legalism. So it is my conviction.

You either become a radical disciple of Jesus Christ, or you are not going to amount to much in the kingdom of God. You may get in by just getting a key. So I pray that you will not be a spectator here tonight.

What is a spectator? Someone who just wants to check it out. Let's see what this guy has to say. I pray that you will be a participant.

Allowing the Holy Spirit to do something in you, to help you take steps forward in your Christian walk. Why don't more of these people who start in the race, become missionaries or even radical disciples in their own hometown? Let's look at Ephesians 6. Starting at verse 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, the strategies of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, having done all to stand.

Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, have on the breastplate of righteousness. Fifteen, your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. And above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye can stop all evil, or quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. This is such an important passage of Scripture for a missions conference.

Do you really want to become a missionary? Were you really serious when you raised your hand a few hours ago? Then you need to get into the word of God. Sometimes we have a great emphasis in our meetings. On experiencing the power of God.

And we need to experience the power of God. And even as we have been worshiping, we are experiencing something of the power and the grace of God. But that is not enough.

Together with that power we experience, we need tremendous wisdom. The Bible emphasizes wisdom. Most of our songs, a lot of our songs, are based on the book of Psalms.

Praise the Lord! In England we got a new chorus every day. No one knows all the choruses anymore. Nobody is alive that knows all the choruses.

And I love many of these choruses. People like Graham Kendrick are close. Dear friends who we work together with.

And many other worship leaders like Noel Richards and Bill Drake. God's hand upon these great musicians and worship leaders. Hallelujah! But what happens a week from now when you are feeling lonely or rejected and there is no band around, there is no special music.

You are there in your room feeling lonely and maybe not seeing much happen. Brothers and sisters we have to be in God's race with or without the music. I love music.

I have my Walkman, I have my Discman. I don't know how the Apostle Paul, I don't know how he functioned without a Walkman. He must have been a real miracle worker.

And I'm in a lot of meetings. I do a lot of singing. I learn as a baby Christian.

With or without the music I'm following Jesus. With or without the music I want to deny self. Every day take up a cross and follow Christ whatever the cost, wherever it leads even if that be my final day.

And the Bible is very, very clear. It speaks about the strategies of Satan. He talks in verse 11, put on the whole armor of God you can stand against the wiles of the devil.

It's a very heavy language. A lot of sort of liberal minded Christians who don't believe the Bible they do not like this kind of language. You have quite a few people here in Germany who do not like any references to war whatsoever in the church.

They get quite upset with the war. We have some of those in England. I preached in a church.

I think it was quite a good church. I maybe mentioned one verse that was tied in with spiritual warfare. A lady wrote me a letter that she really felt it was not very wise to mention warfare in the church.

Christians actually can be more naive than the children of the devil. We're in a war. The world is in a war right now.

Every news broadcast the main thing they're talking about is the war. And some of our people like President Bush are trying to make it very clear this is not a war with Islam. This is a war with terrorists.

But surely he knows by now that a percentage of the entire Muslim world has declared war against Western society and the United States. I just read a brilliant email memo from an outstanding Indian scholar just before I walked in here. He has been able to brilliantly point out the stupidity of our Western thinking.

I wonder if you remember Indira Gandhi. Considered one of the greatest prime ministers in India. She was assassinated.

Why was she assassinated? Humanly speaking. Because she did something really stupid. She became more and more Western in her thinking.

And she did not understand the Sikh people, the Sikhs who were at war in the Punjab. Though she was trying. To show her love for the Sikhs she had two Sikhs as her personal guards.

There was a very important temple in Punjab. And there was a fanatic among the Sikhs similar to Bin Laden. This fanatic we have who is a Muslim.

And she was very upset with this fanatic and claimed that he was distorting, he was twisting true Sikhism. Now to Sikhs that holy temple was more holy than we in the Western world can understand. But Indira Gandhi made the mistake of sending soldiers into the temple desecrating the temple and killing and capturing.

And almost all the Sikhs moderate and extreme turned against her. And there was just more death and more destruction in India. And one of her faithful Sikh guards assassinated Indira Gandhi.

In God's work we don't want just power. We don't want just enthusiasm. We want wisdom.

Because hard decisions are going to face us. Some of you, if you don't get a little wiser in the coming months, guess what's going to happen to you. You're going to do the old German thing.

The old German champion thing. Guess what you're going to do. You're going to wise up a little bit.

You're not going to go to war. Forget it. That's not even on my mind.

You're going to marry the wrong guy. That's what you're going to do because you ain't got enough common sense and wisdom to know who you should marry. And you're going to marry a real jerk and there are plenty of them everywhere.

It's the truth. And once you do that it doesn't matter what little praise song you're singing. A huge percentage of all the Christian musicians have ended in the divorce court right across the whole world.

Don't want to disappoint any of you guys. I'm sure you're the exception. Of course, don't get any wrong ideas because you men can of course make a big mistake and marry the wrong girl.

It works both ways. Now I must admit as a young man I was really scared in this area because before I was 16 I had 32 different girlfriends and I was mighty confused. And after I got saved I knew that I shouldn't commit sex.

I knew I shouldn't have sex with these girls. But I was wrestling with whether I could kiss them because I was big into kissing girls from the age of six. So I went through the whole New Testament looking for the command thou shalt not neck, thou shalt not kiss.

And I never found a verse. And so I just kept kissing them. I witnessed about Jesus.

Then I danced around a little bit. And then we'd go look for a private little corner. And that's what we did.

But somehow after I did this I felt that something was wrong here. Because often this kind of premature romance involves words, important words like I love you that we don't really mean. And as a baby Christian God gave me a wonderful experience.

I was with one of my girlfriends parked in the woods in my car. And we were starting to really get heated up. And a policeman pulled up.

That policeman, he must have been spiritual. He pulled up and banged on the window. Don't you know you're not allowed to have your car parked here? And I was young.

And I was nervous. And instead of backing out I went forward into a deep hole. And we could not get the car out.

Her father who was an alcoholic said you'd be home at a certain time. I think maybe 11 o'clock. You'd be home, he didn't trust me.

I can remember running down the street toward her house. She said her problem was five miles away. So we phoned him.

We have a little car trouble. Could you come pick up your daughter? So we ran out to a street where we could meet him. He had been drinking.

He also had an interesting life. And he said, well what happened to your car? Well it's just stuck. I'll take care of that.

Here's your daughter. He insisted on seeing the car. I want to see the car.

And when he saw the car and he saw where the car was he accused me of some pretty heavy things with his daughter and that was the end of that relationship. Then I had another girl that I helped her come to Jesus. I really liked this girl.

She was a little heavy, but she was good. And I'll never forget my stupidity. We were in Washington DC the city with these famous memorial stones Washington Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, the White House.

And she knew that Jesus was doing something in my life. So she believed on Jesus that night. And then we spent about an hour in front of the Washington Memorial kissing on the lawn.

And God just broke me. I knew if I didn't get this part of my life sorted out, that I would not amount to much in the kingdom of God. And so I started to discipline myself by the power of God's grace.

And I went extreme. I'm not saying other people have to do this. Two years, no girlfriend.

Two years, no girlfriend, no date. Let them be kissed by the crummy old pillow. But during those two years I went to Mexico.

I got my problem with pornography sorted out. There was another whole problem. And before I was 20 years of age the basic principles of biblical discipleship were functioning in my life.

I had learned Ephesians 6. How to hold the shield of faith. And that's one of the reasons my wife and I have been missionaries overseas for 42 years. We have got to develop wisdom.

We have got to develop a biblical spirit-controlled discipline. And for many of us some people have much more problem in the area of pride than sex. Other people have much more difficulty in the area of inferiority and emotional rejection.

They have more problem with that than sex. We're all different and I'm wanting to project my struggles onto you. We're all different.

But we all have to be disciples. Some people I talk to, their biggest problem is worry. I am stunned by the increase of suicide among young people.

The Christian college I go to in three or four days time, they just told me on the phone, we've had another suicide on campus. What a situation to have to go into and hold a missions conference. When I read articles about different countries, I sometimes don't know if they're true.

I read this article about German young people. It said that they take incredibly serious their examinations to enter into universities. Some very important examinations and quite a few, according to this article, when they fail this exam, they commit suicide.

Obviously nobody got to them with the message of grace. If you should study as hard as you can, if you do fail your exam, and you know your parents are going to say some heavy stuff, as a Christian, I suggest you just sneak into the woods and have a real dance. Because failure is the back door to success.

We already saw that this afternoon. We don't have to go over that again. We are different.

We will not be sucked into these same subtle traps that non-Christians are sucked into. We have different goals. I remember this American brother.

He wanted to go to West Point and be one of the great American generals of the army. He was actually in the regular army and he wanted to come out and go to West Point and become an officer. But he had something wrong with his feet.

He met one other health problem. So he was rejected. This dream of his life, gone.

And he came on Operation Mobilization later on. College first, then the OM. One of the most outstanding men we've ever had in our ministry.

He met his wife on OM like about 1,000 other people. She was a born again Jewish woman. She just went back to her village in East Germany.

She lived in her childhood village in East Germany and what the Holy Spirit just did there, there's not time to tell. But it's a miracle. So my friend missed West Point.

What a heartbreak and got this wonderful red hot Holy Ghost The Holy Spirit built a Jewish follower of the Messiah. God has the right wife for you. So relax.

Some of you look very tense. God has the right husband for you. Let me share the story of my own wife.

Two years after my fast. I leave college. I go to Moody Bible Institute.

I'm a little bit vulnerable because they think all these girls are born again. There won't be any problem with these girls. They're all dedicated to Jesus.

Probably if I try to kiss one, I'll get whacked across the face. I was immediately attracted to six different girls. I was crying out to God for mercy.

Then I went to rent a Moody Science film because I wanted to evangelize the YMCA where I was living. It was an amazing story. I didn't have to do that.

I already had plenty of evangelistic things I was doing. I was living among these people. I wanted to reach them for Jesus.

I was living in their hotel. So I thought I was going the extra mile. I'm going to rent a film.

It was up on the seventh floor of the Moody Bible Institute. I had left college and gone to Moody after going to Mexico. I stepped out the elevator.

I'll never forget. I looked to the right. There was a secretary in charge of films.

I saw her face. I had 15 short circuits in my brain. I broke my fast.

This is it, Jesus. It's the truth. I was in love.

The problem was, she was in love with me. She was not. But she was interested in the sort of spiritual ethos I was carrying around.

Mexico, prayer meetings. So she was willing to talk to me. So I took her for, some people would call it a date.

It was sort of like a negotiation. I was afraid I might fall in love with the wrong woman. I got to really, really try to scare her away.

If it's from the Lord, He'll do a miracle. So the first time I met with her, I said, probably nothing's going to happen between you and me. Why would I say that? I'm an aggressive New Jersey loud son of a Dutch immigrant.

She was a quiet Iowa country girl. And here, our first time we're talking, she said, probably nothing's going to happen between you and me, but let's get the cards on the table. Do you have an expression like that in German? I said, I'm going to be a missionary.

If you marry me, you'll probably end up being eaten by cannibals in New Guinea. That's what I said. She was just, you know, stunned.

What manner of man is this? But she agreed to see me again. And this time I thought, I'll try something more difficult. You won't believe this, but this is true.

I actually don't wash as regularly as I should. That's why when I saw what a beautiful audience you were, I went back to the hotel and just had a shower. I try to have one every week whether I need it or not.

Back when I was just a student, I was worse. I used to sleep in my clothes. That's how I brought a bag with my dirty and smelly mouthwash.

To this girl I had just met. And I said, would you wash this as unto the Lord? I try not to tell these stories too much, but it's absolute truth. And somehow in God's timing, we got married.

She just... I don't know. I had a lot of people praying for me. But unfortunately she had a lot of emotional problems.

Her father had been killed in the war. Her stepfather threw her out of the home. That's why I even met her, because her stepfather threw her out of the house.

And she ended up in Chicago. And we met. She had four different emotionally related illnesses.

Headaches, back problems, other things that were clearly tied in with emotion. And I really did not know how to meet her emotional needs even when we were engaged. I had a lot of people praying for me.

And I really did not know how to meet her emotional needs even when we were engaged. And we went to Mexico. That was one of the first short-term missions before we even had the name OM.

And she cried every night because of her emotional situation and my lack of sensitivity and love as I was doing about five different things. God was using me. All kinds of people were coming to Christ through my ministry.

I knew something of the power of God. I lacked wisdom. How to understand a woman.

This is not a strong point with the average man. You all know the story of the guy that had this great experience with God in California. You know this story? This guy did some great things for God.

And God said, I am very pleased with what you are doing. I want to grant you a miracle. Anything you ask, I will do it.

So he prayed, he said, God, I want to see a four-lane freeway between California and Hawaii. God said, you know, that's a lot of cement. That's a lot of steel.

That's a couple thousand miles. You're asking too much. Give me another request.

He said, God, okay, my second request. I want to understand my wife. I want to understand how women work, how women think.

There was a moment of silence. There was a voice from heaven. How many lanes on the freeway do you walk? That is not a true story.

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