

Things God Has Taught Me This Year 19.2.1972

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon reflects on the lessons learned about selfishness, the power of prayer, and the necessity of love and unity in the Christian life.

Duration: 36:19

Scripture: Genesis 3:6, Isaiah 42:8, Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, Ephesians 4:3, James 3:9-10

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the need for self-reflection and not getting caught up in worldly distractions. They highlight the importance of reaching out to those who are marginalized and in need of hearing the gospel. The speaker also addresses the misconception of evangelizing Afghanistan and emphasizes the long-term commitment required for spiritual growth. They caution against idolizing and praising men, as it hinders the work of the Holy Spirit. The sermon concludes with a reminder to focus on discipleship and prayer, as well as the power to see and address any faults or weaknesses.

Transcript

Firstly, I have continued to see how naturally selfish I am. And all of mankind. On every side, as we look, we see the selfishness of man.

The terrible things that have taken place in Bangladesh and in Vietnam and Burundi, these are only larger demonstrations of man's selfishness that we see continually on a smaller level. And I've again just recommitted my heart to declare daily war against self. And I have repeatedly prayed to God daily to challenge me to war against my own selfishness.

No matter what blessing we may have had yesterday, we can become selfish today unless there is a real act and a walk of faith. It's easy for us even to be involved in religious work with selfish motivation. And I really am searching my own heart.

Why do I do this? Why do I go here? What is my real motivation? You see, selfishness has so many different ways of appearing. It easily comes into the home, American. We demand our own rights.

We want our own way. And self, of course, gets irritated. Self gets offended.

Self feels it's not appreciated enough. And so many ways, so many ways, selfishness just continually comes out. This is why in our own countries, in our own churches, we have everything.

And the man in Bangladesh, in India, he gets so little. We can see always our own need first. We always can get involved with that which has some way in touch with our own ego.

And I've seen in my own life how it's a continual battle. A man who doesn't think he has a battle with selfishness is a man who is spiritually blind in that area at least. Then the second thing that the Lord has been dealing with me now, is the need for more prayer, more intercession.

This is where the battles are won. The greatest work of a saint will be to try to get the saints off their knees. In most of the countries I've been in, very few people come out to the church prayer meeting.

In most of the countries I've been in, very few people come out to the church prayer meeting. And there are many who completely openly, I know even Christian leaders, that they don't have a real prayer life. If you look in your Bibles to 2 Corinthians 10, verses 4 and 5. Here we read that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty unto God to the pulling down of strongholds.

We must never forget this. We know Paul's burden was the whole world. You'll notice this in verse 16.

Where he speaks, read it, about his burden to preach the gospel in the regions beyond, not just building on another man's foundation. And we see how the prayer life and the weapon of prayer is so linked with reaching the regions beyond. Now it's easier to have a prayer life when you're out and about in a team than it is when you're at home like many of you are right now.

In fact, we know it's harder to be a real disciple at home than it is out on a team. Of course, our home churches and the believers at home should be just as alive, or more alive, and more active, and more fellowship with God. It's more everything than an OM team, but generally it isn't so, and that's the problem.

And this is why many seem to grow cold or look warm when they get home. But it's harder to maintain this intensive prayer life, worship, and spirituality. And there's always so much to do.

We all get so busy. One thing that has helped me is at times to just take a whole day and just go off to the mountains, the woods, and be alone with God. This has been a great help.

There's always more work. And we know that by an act of discipline, get away and get with God, we'll never become the men and the women God wants us to be. I feel that I myself have so much to learn from God.

Much of this will only learn through prayer. Now another thing the Lord has been very much showing me is the power of Satan. Especially to try to deceive the believers into some false cult, or some secondary rope.

Something that may look very nice, very attractive, but then as one gets involved and finds it's a sinister, unbiblical act. There are so many side roads. Away from the main road of spiritual revolution and love and Christ-likeness.

And that's why it's so important to get grounded in the whole Word of God. Not just certain favorite verses, but to really see the total picture of Scripture. And to be very wise in discerning the different things that come our way.

And to be very wise in discerning the different things that come our way. And how we need to be wise in discerning. To know where truth is, and where there is a false doctrine.

And to know where truth is, and where there is a false doctrine. And the Lord also gives you wisdom. Now you have to pray for each other.

And another thing the Lord has been impressing on my own heart. Is that we need more love for one another. We talk about this all the time.

You know we're always preaching this, always emphasizing. And it is still the greatest need. If it was not for the emphasis and the teaching of love and unity on that shift of project would have been finished a long time ago.

The devil is so subtle at bringing disunity in so many different ways. Christians are so quick to listen to this, and then to gossip, and then the devil brings disunity and confusion in. Many Christians are so quick to criticize, and it's a fruit of the barrenness of their own lives.

Not bad at all. And oh how little fruit of the Holy Spirit we see in some places. We all need to be seeking more of this love that 1 Corinthians 13 talks about.

We desperately need this, if the work of God is going to go on. So many things we can disagree on. So many bad things that we can talk about if we want to.

When we turn the microscope on, as the doctor did to my eye, we can always find something on everybody. You know the speck in our brother's eye can be at times a pretty big thing. And these days I've become very conscious of specks in eyes.

And it was a pretty big thing. But the word of God says, even though that speck in the other brother's eye may seem very big, your first concern should be the big log that's sticking in your own eye. Imagine if I came here with a big log sticking out of my eye.

And the doctor, to get this speck out of my eye, had to put me in a special machine, and had to use a special instrument, a special big microscope, to get this out of my eye. And this is what some Christians seem to specialize in, they get their microscopes, and they're all going around looking for the specks in everybody else's eye. Let me help you, brother, criticizing, backbiting, and gossiping.

And not seeing their own huge faults in their own life. The biggest thing that will teach us the way of humility, is when we see our own selves as we really are, then our mouths will become quieter, and we will become more humble and more Christ-like. That is for sure.

The best way to show their humility is to show our own faults, our own selfishness, and maybe become a little quieter after that, and ask them to give us more, to become more like them. And we will begin the evolution of love. And there is a saying that the Lord has spoken very strongly to me, It's how we quickly get excited about outward things.

This is why, if you want to hear the gospel, the best thing today is to become a long-haired or a drug addict. Or have a chance to hear the gospel in the world today. So much work is now being done.

There's much outward blessing. When a drug addict gets saved, Praise the Lord for it. But you know, the dropout culture only represents less than one-fourth of one percent of the world's population.

But you see, it's something we can see. And there's much outward blessing. So more and more people get this vision.

But I mean, who can save the nine billion people living in Calcutta? Or the fourteen million people living in Afghanistan. Where there are only fourteen believers. And I know many young people now have gone out to Afghanistan to witness.

But they don't witness to the Afghans, they only witness to the tourists. People think they're going to evangelize Afghanistan. So now there's more work, real gospel work, among the tourists and the dropouts and the drug addicts in Afghanistan than there is among all the fourteen million Afghans.

Let us not be deceived just by outward things. Only over a period of years can we tell whether there has been a true revolution of reality. It takes a few minutes to get a decision.

It takes a lifetime to get a disciple. Lately in some places it's become popular to follow Jesus. Especially in certain parts of the states.

Thousands are singing about Jesus. A Christian leader just wrote me, he's been involved in the Jesus movement. There are already great numbers, thousands are going back into the world.

And this is such a great danger. Things in our day always tend to be very superficial. And we're too quick to write books about it all.

For nine years I have refused many publishers to write any books about Operation Mobilization. We have not yet proven that we are really soldiers of Jesus Christ. Now they want us to write a big book about the ship.

Then it will be a bestseller and we'll make hundreds of thousands of dollars. The great curse of modern evangelicalism is we too quickly give honor and praise to men. And this hinders and quenches the work of the Holy Spirit.

We run around praising men. When God's word says he will share his glory with no one. And then the devil moves in.

A young person who may be a film star, he gets saved. Immediately he's giving his testimony, he's preaching. He's playing the gospel tunes in front of the television.

And then the old devil moves in. And makes a mess out of the situation. Praise the Lord for the Jesus movement.

Praise the Lord for every movement. Let us be aware of the wiles of Satan. Let us make our goal the grounding of men in discipleship and spiritual revolution.

That they may live a long life of militant, dedicated service to Christ. The same with Noël. Same thing can happen with Noël.

People come for the summer. They think they're going to become a disciple in the summer. If I go on Noël I'll be cured of all my problems.

They come on Noël and they've finally got more problems. And they discover that our program is a long term program for spiritual growth and spiritual revolution. That may have a crisis, but also must have process.

How sad it is. Many are like the rich young man. When they see the long way of spiritual discipleship.

And what it will cost. They turn back. We should not be surprised when many turn back.

When many fall by the wayside. Because it has always been so. Only a few seem to be willing to live a life of daily denying yourself, taking up the cross and following Christ as he clearly taught.

Because there seem to be so few who really want to live a life of denying yourself, taking up the cross and following Christ as he clearly taught. And then we get pulled by a few hundred and then we can spread Jesus' word. If it happens in Noël or wherever it happens.

But let us carefully through prayer and the word seek the road of the sanctuary. Let us continue with all of our energy to disseminate these books about the sanctuary. And let us make sure our lives are demonstrated in this way.

More than that, let us make sure our lives are demonstrated in this way. I feel in many ways that I am just a beginner. I feel in many ways that I am just a beginner.

There is so much more to learn through Jesus. Through the word. Through prayer.

Through others. Through everything that comes my way. Oh, we always like the blessing.

I was so rejoicing there in Spain. I was so rejoicing there in Spain. All day out in the streets giving out the word of God, a great blessing.

Oh, wonderful. Then this little thing came. It wasn't so easy to rejoice.

But I've seen through this experience that this little speck, all the pain that came with it, was a great blessing in disguise from the Lord. And it's renewed my belief in what Brother Watchman needs. He says in his book, *Release of the Spirit*, that you should all read three times.

That everything that comes into the life of a believer, in one way or the other, the hand of God is behind it. Oh, if we learn that, it would revolutionize our lives. Not just the pleasant things.

The blessings. The souls saved. Great answers to prayer.

The difficult things. The trials. The sicknesses.

And the weaknesses of the flesh. The battles. God's hand is working through those things in ways we cannot understand.

And may we learn that. God can deliver. We have seen that.

We praise his name. But also God can take us through the trials. As he did, the apostle Paul.

Again and again. He didn't deliver Paul. Many times.

From the hardness. But he gave him the grace to go through. That is spiritual maturity.

I'm sure all of us have some particular battle at the present time. May we remember that his grace is sufficient. Some people have asked me, why? Why do you keep going? People are always coming.

When are you going to please take a holiday? I keep telling you, I'm not on a holiday. This is a holiday from sin, Satan, self and hell. But the way I keep going is that his grace is sufficient.

His strength is made perfect in weakness. And I just walk and live one day at a time. I wonder if there's any that are making that mistake.

You're trying to live too many days at a time. Oh, what am I going to do next week? Oh, how am I going to live for one whole year as a disciple? Oh, how am I going to last this long? That's a great mistake. Just one day at a time.

That's all you have to live. And he gave me grace for that. Praise God.

Thank you for this opportunity to share in the burden of my heart. I believe it has proved enough over the past 10 to 17 years. With all the leaders of OM and many, many others all over the world who have continued on in the battle.

Very few, very few who have fallen by the wayside. I believe it's a proof that these principles, these revolutionary principles that you have heard at the OM conference in the past they do work. And they are the principles on which we can reach the world for Christ.

I believe that more than ever before. Love. Unity.

Prayer. Feeding on the Word of God. Forsaking all to follow Christ.

Esteeming others better than ourselves. Living in brokenness at the foot of the cross. Giving everything to spread the gospel.

On these principles. Alone we can build a solid, long-enduring tradition. Let us continue praying for one another.

Some of you have written, I've been very grateful for your letters. Give me a call sometimes I have an answer. Most times I still read all my own letters and answer them.

No, sometimes it's impossible when people don't put their address, don't sign their name. Other things. Or I can't read their handwriting.

Let's pray. Dear God, we thank you for this time again. Dear God, we thank you for this time again.

We give you all the glory and all the praise for what you've done. We thank you over these past ten years we have been able to give the gospel to 160 million souls. We thank you for the last ten years we have been able to give the gospel to 160 million souls.

Thousands have come to Jesus. We praise you for this. We know it's only the beginning.

We know you want to do a deeper work. We know you want to fill us again and again and again with your Holy Spirit. And teach us the way of spiritual soldiering and discipleship.

That we may be true revolutionaries for Christ. Not just playing evangelical game for a summer or for a year, but that our lives may be given over to you. That we may not be sidetracked by the many subtle temptations that come from Satan.

Lord, I rededicate my life to you again this morning. Cleanse my deceitful, selfish heart. Fill me with your Spirit even for this day's work.

Give me greater love for the brethren. That pride and ego may be crucified and that Christ may live in me. Lord, I believe there are many others who want to pray the same prayer.

Give you all the praise. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21656.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-verwer/things-god-has-taught-me-this-year-1921972/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net