

To Live to Die

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon challenges Christians to actively engage in world evangelism and to embrace the reality of suffering as part of their faith journey.

Duration: 54:00

Scripture: Luke 18:14, Philippians 2:5

Topics: "Surrender"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of truly living out the teachings of the Bible in our lives. They acknowledge that while it may be easy to say we count all things as dung for the sake of Christ, it is a challenge to actually live it out. The speaker emphasizes the need for repentance and a hunger for truth among young people. They also highlight the importance of unity and serving together as a demonstration of the power of Jesus Christ. The sermon concludes with a call to action, urging believers to be doers of the word and to prioritize spreading the gospel through various means such as prayer, giving, going, publishing, and preaching.

Transcript

Things are tight in Bangladesh. One man tried some open-air meetings recently in Dhaka. After three days he was in prison.

American man. And the national who interpreted for him is still in prison. So things are tight in Bangladesh.

I'd like to mention a word about Nepal. We thought of closing our work in Nepal, such a difficult place. We have to do educational work in order to stay there.

We don't like doing educational work. There's a lot of business involved. We don't have the staff.

We don't have the bookkeepers. A lot of other things. The Lord would not let us close this work.

Mainly because we have such a miraculous opening there. They normally give 15-day visas. They're giving us two-year visas.

We're selling books even into the palace. And every logical reason says they should kick us out of the country. We are distributing Nepali gospel literature all over the place.

They must know about this. And yet they're letting us stay in the country. Also, the Nepali church leaders asked us to stay in the country.

And when the church leaders asked us to stay, and I went around to the church leaders asking them what their thoughts were, we felt we should stay. Well, we've increased the staff a little bit, but we'd ask you to pray for the work in Nepal. I'm amazed at little interest in these places.

You know, if you want to know a place that can depress you spiritually, you travel around the world and then you come back to England. It'll knock you cold. It'll knock you cold.

And the lack of interest in this country, in world evangelism, is appalling. You put in a prayer letter that goes out to thousands of people, a challenge about Nepal. Does anybody want a free piece of literature about Nepal? And almost no one writes it.

Now, I realize most people don't know how to write letters anymore. I realize most people are busy, mainly watching television. I realize a lot of things.

I don't want to be negative, but the fact of the matter is that the lack of vision and burden for world evangelism in the church of Jesus Christ, including those who talk much about the Holy Spirit, is enough to depress any thinking man. I'm not giving up on this country. I'm having the biggest effort yet in August to try to shake the bushes.

And praise God, there is many, many encouragements here, especially among the young people. The older people, I think if most of them died, nothing would be missing, to be quite frank, apart from a few. And of course, they're probably the ones here tonight.

But there's great hope in the younger generation, especially among the university students. We don't have any trouble getting young people to go on the Crusades. The biggest representation in O.M. worldwide, where are they from? They're from the British Isles.

A majority of our key leaders worldwide, the biggest number, from the British Isles. But their churches don't back them up. They don't pray for them.

They don't support them. They don't even write them in many, many cases. And that's just straightforward truth with a capital T. And I would ask you not to go out and say that I said this.

People will misunderstand it out of the context of this meeting. But to get on your knees and ask God to move among His people in this country, which was once the greatest missionary sending country in the world, and in which today a number of the missionary societies cannot keep up with the death rate. That's right.

And we know, because out in the mission field, they want to give us their properties. They have nobody to staff them. Pray that God will move, and that we will get away from being overly introspective, and think that the British Isles is caving in, so everything must be for Britain.

And that we will get this vision for the whole world. And that when these young people go forward, we'll stand with them in prayer, and believe God to do great things through them and with them. Maybe this can be the focus as we just spend a few minutes in prayer right now.

Many other countries I'd like to mention. I was just in Iran, Turkey, Israel, Italy, Germany, all in the past two weeks. My heart is just overwhelmed, overwhelmed with the need.

One in every seven people in the world is a Muslim. Eighty percent of them never had the gospel of Jesus Christ. We're now on to the 30th version of the Bible in the English language.

These people haven't had John 3.16 yet. It isn't fair. I have returned to protest.

Maybe I should try some new tactic, I don't know. But let us go to prayer. Let's have three or four or five people lead in prayer for these countries and for the Church here in Britain, and for ourselves, that we may see the Word of God going out.

As we sit here tonight, half the world is waiting. Half the world is waiting. They've never had the gospel once.

Not once. You know, when this country was almost overrun in World War II, it could have easily happened. There was only one explanation.

The providence of God and prayer. Winston Churchill sent a message to the United States. He said, give us the tools and we'll finish the job.

I believe today there are the men out in these countries. The Church is there. Some of these churches want to move.

I was in a worship service with Brother Bakht Singh three Sundays ago. There were 2,000 people in that meeting. 2,000 people.

We started the worship meeting at 10.30 in the morning. It finished at 5 in the afternoon. And then they went out for open air before food, and had no food since breakfast.

And they came back from the open air. They had a snack, and then they had the evening meeting. And these people write to our office in Bombay, and they said, give us tracts.

Give us Bibles. Do you know how many Bibles are left in the Telugu language, a language spoken by 30 million people? There are no Bibles. There are no Bibles in Gujarati.

There are no Bibles in Telugu. There are no Bibles in Hindi. And that's 100 million.

No, that's 200 million souls. This is why we come burdened and concerned. This is why we cannot keep our mouths shut, even if some misunderstand and be offended.

Half the world is waiting. Give us the tools, and some men, and we'll complete the job. And of course, the biggest tool is prayer.

We've got to use, for the Word of God says, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty unto God, till the pulling down of strongholds. Can we have four or five? Leave it in brief, specific prayer. And then we'll have the last part of our meeting.

We refuse to put our eyes on the circumstances. We refuse discouragement, as we would refuse a bottle of poison. And we look unto your Son, the Lord Jesus, and believe that He is going to continue this work.

We praise you and worship you now. God, as we look into your Word, in Jesus' name, Amen. I'd like to just share with you some verses from Philipians that have hit me very, very hard.

Verses that hit me as a young believer, verses that every time I go back into the book of Philipians, several times a year, hit me again and again. And I pray they will speak to you. Now, I believe we could go into any book in the Bible, especially in the New Testament, but in the Old as well, and we could find similar verses.

Verses that are clear, verses that really aren't controversial, and yet verses that we tend not to appropriate and obey. I want to look at these verses. I want us to think.

I want the Word of God to be a mirror. I want the Word of God to be a hammer, and that, I believe, it will be, in my own heart. Do not think, because I speak as straight as I can by the grace of God, and sometimes people feel it's too hard.

Do not think for a minute that I do not come to you in weakness, because I do. And I come to you so broken in many ways by my own failures, that there's been many a time when I thought I will never preach again. Do not come to hit you with a rod.

Most of the people I like to hit aren't even here anyway. But I come as a sinner, saved by grace, living by grace, under the burden of the Spirit. Many times, I get up to preach, and God completely takes away everything I want to say, and gives me something else.

That happened recently in Thailand. Mainly missionaries in the meeting. I wanted to esteem them.

I felt inferior to them. I knew many of them had done a great piece of work, and I thought I will just give a word of encouragement. I know exactly what to say to make missionaries happy.

I've done enough PR work to know what to say and how to say it. And that's probably one of my biggest problems. And so I got up there with a real nice comfort message.

And generally today in the church, the people prefer the comfort messages. 80% of all the hymns we sing are comfort hymns. Do you ever notice that? 80% of all the hymns in our hymn books are comfort hymns.

And so I had this comfort message, this encouragement message, information message. They always like my information messages. I always have a lot of information about things that are happening all over the world that I'm involved in, and they like that.

So I got up with this nice message. God took it all away. He gave me Revelations chapter 3. Repent! I didn't even know, I don't think, what I was saying.

And I called these missionaries and pastors to repent. I spoke to them as hard as I speak to the OMers, and that's pretty hard if you've ever been to an OM conference. And you know, they came up to me one by one after the meeting, and they said that was God's message for us.

That's what we need here. And there was repentance, and there was a touch of God. And these were missionaries.

In our pastors' conferences, over one-third of the pastors have stood at the end of the conference. Pastors, Christian workers, missionaries, have recommitted their lives to Jesus Christ. So oftentimes what

we need is not another comfort message.

We've got the book of Psalms right in front of us. And other books we can get comfort in at any time. But sometimes God wants to speak a firm word to our hearts.

Because unless we're willing to go down, we can't go up. In the Christian life, the way up is down. So I hope you'll understand that as we speak together.

I want to start in the first chapter. And the first verse I would like you to look at is verse 21. We all know it by heart.

It's a short verse, so we can learn that. I'm appalled at the lack of Scripture memory among God's people. It's a separate message.

I won't go into it tonight. Frightened! Muslims memorize the whole Koran. Christians can't get one chapter down.

Amazing! Movie actors memorize on into the night all equal to books. Christians can't get even John 3.16 straight anymore. I pray that you're a memorizer of the Word of God.

I think it's one of the major things to help us in our spiritual life. Well, this is one most people have memorized. For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.

I want to tell you that verse has upset me so many times I can't record it. I'm not sure I can say it. To live is Christ, to die is gain.

Especially the latter part. You may have more trouble with the former part. Because though I've suffered a little, I haven't suffered very much.

And strange as it may sound, maybe to some of you, I enjoy life. I enjoy the Christian life. I've learned to live on problems and to laugh at some of them and to ride on some of them and to jump over some of them.

And I have other interests, hobbies like tract distribution and other things. And I enjoy life. And I told my wife the other day, I don't want to die.

Now, probably the Lord will change that. Sometimes, of course, this verse has been more real. For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.

And I think that before we flippantly say, oh yes, we believe this verse, we need to ask ourselves, am I ready to die? Am I ready to die? Have I been faithful with the talents God has given me? Have I put my treasure in heaven? You know, it's amazing. If you want to read a shocking novel, I don't recommend it really for single people. It's got a few sordid sections in it.

But it's a historical novel. I thought it was a history book when I started to read it. I couldn't put it down.

It's a book called The Odessophile. The Odessophile is the book of the SS men, the story of the SS men in Germany and how most of these men, these were the real murderers, the real butchers, to use a strong word, and how most of them escaped Germany with their money before the end of the war. And they are living, many of them, very nicely today, in Argentina, in Egypt, and many other parts of the world.

When I finished reading that book, reassurance came to my heart, there is a hell. Has to be for such men as that. And yet the Bible says that all men outside of Jesus Christ are in that condition.

And we're all potentially that way. And you know, as I read that book, and I realized how when these men saw Germany collapsing, they got their money out. Boy, they got it out quick, into those banks in Zurich.

A lot of it is still there. Most of the gold of the teeth of the Jews was in the banks in Zurich before the end of the war. Don't worry why.

Where will your gold be when that final day comes? Where will your treasure be? And as far as I'm concerned, a vast majority of Christians on that one area are not yet ready to die. They're not yet ready to die. And so this verse becomes very embarrassing.

To live is Christ. To die is gain. It's gain because all your treasure is in heaven.

And when you arrive there, the joy, the blessing, as the Lord Jesus himself echoes out, well done, my good and faithful servant. I've entrusted you with ten talents. You used them.

With five, you used them. With one. Yet I believe we see today the biggest talent-burying contest that's ever existed in the history of the church.

There are many young people that I meet who have qualities. They have talents. They could be used of God.

But they're burying it through fear, through worry, through tension, through pressure, through problems. They've decided to bury their talent. They're going to have a big surprise.

And if you think my words are hard, beloved, I would ask you to study the sayings of the man of Galilee. No man made harder pronouncements on this earth than Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the King of kings. His words are very strong.

And do you know his words to the man who buried his one talent? You look them up for yourself. They are very strong indeed. To live is Christ.

To die is gain. How hard it is to say that when often in our daily life there are so many other things that bring our real joy. And so when we're trying to squeeze joy out of this and joy out of that, pleasure out of this, and we're selfishly pursuing our own interests, how can we say to live is Christ? When we sit on a bus and refuse to open our mouth and talk to the man next to us about Jesus Christ.

When we refuse to respond to the call to pray. When we refuse to get out on the doors with our literature. When we refuse the Lord in so many practical areas, how in the world can we say to live is Christ and to die is gain? Please read and study those beautiful yet powerful lines from the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know one reason I don't get discouraged when I don't see great masses of people moving in this kind of reality and with this kind of spiritual dimension is because the Apostle Paul clearly taught that not many would walk this way. We'll see that later on in the book of Philippians. Don't be worried, don't be upset when the majority of Christians are dilly-dallying around, sitting in the grandstands.

But get on with the job yourself and make sure you're one of those who is in the game, who is on the field. Isn't this the problem today in the church? We go to the game, so to speak, and we sit in the grandstands.

Do you call them the grandstands? And we watch the game and we're excited and we give a few cheers, we call them hymns.

And we've got our team, we've got our different groups, and we're cheering for our team. And we go out of the grandstands and into the local restaurant and we're no different than when we went in. We've never got down in the field.

And I think every Christian has to ask himself, am I in the grandstands, am I a Christian spectator, sitting in the church twice a week, going to my Christian holiday camp, taking part in a few evangelical activities, watching, singing, cooing, or am I on the field in the game? Makes a big difference. My meeting in Germany recently, the attendance was bad because it was the replay of the big football game between Germany and Spain, and they win it in the last two minutes or something. It was the biggest news in this city where I was in Germany.

Of course, people had to stay back and see the rewind. But oh my, to get into the field is the need. Let's go on because I want to call your attention to several other verses.

I'd like to, of course, read the whole book. Verse 29, For unto you it is given on the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him but also to suffer for His sake. Now this is the whole, at least a better picture of the whole gospel.

So many times today we emphasize, you come to Jesus Christ, you'll be saved, you'll go to heaven, you'll get peace, you'll get joy, your sins will be forgiven. God will straighten out your marriage, He'll straighten out your financial problems, He'll bless you. We've got groups in America that teach salvation and prosperity come in the same package.

It's the only country, plus a few other places in Europe, you can teach that in. It doesn't work much in India. All kinds of lopsided presentations of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Raise your hand, accept Christ. Everybody's doing it. Get on, here's a button, here's a badge.

Whoopee, wave the flag and away you go. Where are these people three years later? You know, when you're in my kind of work, you've got to ask where they are three years later because that's generally where we start with. No, we do get a lot at the end of the first year as well.

And we see quite a few saved also. But you see, as we preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and I believe that even in preaching the gospel, we need to include this, that being a follower of Jesus Christ will involve suffering. And I believe that if we preach the message that Jesus Christ preached, and the message we see in the gospels, and we told people clearly that when they come to Christ, they may not find it easy, they may end up suffering because it says all who live godly in Christ Jesus, in Timothy, will suffer persecution.

And here it says it's been given unto you not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer. I believe that if we preach that, we may have less decisions, but more disciples. And in the book of Acts, you can't find one instance of the number of decisions multiplying.

You always find the number of disciples multiplying. We have lowered the message in order to get the crowd. And we are producing a pseudo-saint, and of course that's why we can't get anybody on the mission field among so many of these young people because it's just completely beyond, completely

beyond.

And though we are encouraged with those that we are seeing go, because we believe in being positive, the number going forth compared to the number who know Jesus Christ or claim to know Jesus Christ is incredibly low. The greatest proof of it is in the United States. The United States is an evangelical boom going on second to nothing.

Probably becoming the nation almost leading in history in terms of the number of Bible-believing people. And yet the number of missionaries, according to recent surveys, has hardly increased at all in the past decade. We have ten times the number of Bible schools, ten times the number of Bible school students as ten years ago, and no proportionate increase of missionaries.

Because we're producing a pseudo-saint who has little resemblance to what we read about in the book of Acts. He wants blessing, he wants fun, he wants nice songs, he wants a guitar and a good time, but he doesn't want to suffer for Jesus Christ. This is why at least 75% of the whole Jesus movement in the United States from men who I'm in correspondence with who I believe know about it has been completely wiped out.

Don't judge the Jesus movement. It was as real as many other things in history. But it's the same old story, and we can never be discouraged by it.

It's just like when Jesus fed the 5,000, they say, Man, this is great! Free bread from the cradle to the grave! What more could we want? And Jesus turned around, and he looked at them and he said, If any man come after me, let him deny himself. Take up the cross and follow me. They didn't know what to say, and many of them went away.

These sayings are too hard! Isn't that what they said to Jesus? These sayings are too hard. It has not only given you, on behalf of Christ, to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake. And I want to tell you, if you get in the Christian warfare, you are going to suffer.

You may not suffer in the way you expect. You may expect bombs and bullets. You may expect beatings and lashings.

That still goes on in the world today. But the big method of suffering today, that Satan inflicts, or tries to inflict, on those in the spiritual warfare, is on the mind. I believe we live in the generation in which Satan's main attack is on the mind.

On the mind. As a soldier of Jesus Christ, you may go through torment in your mind, that you never dreamed possible. Sometimes like that, you can go to those wonderful verses.

Hundreds of them in the word of God, that assure you of his comfort, of his presence, of his love, and all that we heard about many times in our churches. Take that verse. Think on it.

Memorize it. Because I believe, it is a neglected verse in the word of God, and needs to be thought upon more. Turn quickly now, to the second chapter, and look at verse 16.

I remember this verse, because it's a key text of the Pocket Testament League, a great work of God, that was born in this country many years ago. Holding forth the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain. Holding forth the word of life.

I'm sure there are many interpretations we can give to this verse. But I think in the Pocket Testament League they've chosen this verse, because their ministry is to give out the Scriptures. It's one of the reasons we work somewhat together with them.

To give out the Scriptures. 80% of the world at least still does not have a Bible. 80%.

The percentage would be a little bit better in terms of those who would have a New Testament, but not much. 50% of the people in the world have never had a gospel tract. That means they've never had their first verse.

I'm not throwing out exaggerated statistics. I'm throwing out things that are giving you a conservative figure after a lot of reading and a lot of study in a lot of countries. In fact, the World Congress of Evangelism, which will be gathering in Lausanne soon, they're talking about the two-thirds of the unreached world.

Of course there's some problems in terms of definition. Why is it we've not held forth the word of life? I believe when we get a vision, of holding forth the word of life, it'll revolutionize our lives. Some people get the idea that discipleship is hard, it's unpleasant.

That's a false concept. First of all, discipleship does not mean you cannot enjoy the good things that God gives. Every disciple is supposed to eat.

Every disciple is supposed to sleep. Those two things alone, to me, are enough to cause all of us to sing a hallelujah chorus. I enjoy both sleeping and eating immensely.

And God doesn't tell me I can't do it. I enjoy nature. Nature is free.

You don't have to pay to look at the creation. Many, many things that we can enjoy on this earth without spending much money. And I'm sure God doesn't mind when some small amounts of money are also spent.

His call is not to asceticism, but He has given us a job to do. And those few who seem to get this vision for the job should be willing to lay aside the good to get on with the best. It's not that it's wrong to do many things that we do.

I would never say to someone, it's wrong to sit and watch your television. Many programs are good. I'm sure.

But you may want to ask yourself, the next time you sit down to watch one of your good programs, is there something better you could be doing at that moment? And I believe that that better thing is holding forth the Word of God, getting the Scriptures out, getting the Word of God out through prayer, through giving, through going, through publishing, through printing, through preaching, and every other method. People talk about a closed world or closed country. I want to tell you that OM has never been faced with so many open doors.

I am torn apart. There's over 20 countries that want us to come and start permanent work. We've turned them down.

We aren't even beginning to do the job in the countries we're in. And that's because we're in India, and India is equivalent to at least 20 other countries. We've got 570 million people.

We've got 15 to 16 states. We have one-seventh of the world's population. And this coming year, in October, we're going to move every team we have in India, 30 teams, into one state.

Do you know how many people are in that one state? The state of Uttar Pradesh. 90 million. One state.

90 million souls, 70% at least of whom have never had the Gospel. We have so many open doors that we just can't even begin to meet the opportunities. And I believe that we can move into many more of these open doors, and many more different dimensions, if God's people have this vision, holding forth the Word of Life.

Holding forth the Word of Life. You talk about Bibles and New Testaments. Maybe your heart is pricked when you hear me say that people can't get Bibles, and believe me, it's true.

Even in open countries, they can't get New Testaments. I want to tell you, our battle is on a lower level than that. We can't get enough tracts.

Even tracts. You just can't get enough. You can't get enough.

We're writing letters all the time. We're sorry, brother. These are people in poor churches.

These are Christian workers in India who are living on less than 20 pence a day. And though there are tracts they can get with money, they don't hand the money in many cases. Some cases they do, and I've seen these believers sacrificially send in money to cover the freight, the freight charges, which are expensive.

But we write letter after letter, we're sorry, there are no more tracts this month. Try again next month. Incredible thing when we read verses like this.

Holding forth the word of life. That I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain. It's important.

Please think of that verse. Turn over with me now to chapter 3. There's so many other verses in between I'd like to speak about, but we don't have the time. Over in chapter 3. Verses that have perplexed me a long time.

Starting with verse 7. But what things were gain to me, those I count in loss for Christ? Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dumb. What an unpleasant phrase in the middle of a beautiful book. Count them but dumb.

That I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His suffering being made confirmable unto His death. What do we do with these kind of verses? Relegated to the Keswick Convention once a year? This is powerful truth that we must act upon, beloved. Said of men of God in years gone by, they study the word of God with pen and pencil.

We 20th century evangelicals study the word of God with a pair of scissors and we cut out dozens of verses that we have no intention of acting upon. And instead of following a dynamic New Testament form of Christianity, we've created our own cultural carbon copy, manufactured from our own minds. In the first

century, a few hundreds gathered in Jerusalem were filled with the Holy Spirit and moved out in that immediate area and spoke the word of God with boldness.

1974, over 3,000 Christians, mainly from America, spent quarter of a million dollars or who knows how much money to fly to Israel to discuss the Holy Spirit for seven days. And we know not of one who has a burden to return to Israel and reach lost, dying Arabs and Jews for Jesus Christ. Beloved, something has gone wrong.

The first century will have been known as the age of the walk of the Spirit. The 20th century will be known as the age of the talk of the Spirit as we've produced over a hundred books about the Holy Spirit in the past three years. The devil has deceived us and is making a fool out of us from California to Thailand.

Oh, beloved, may God open our hearts and our eyes. I'm not saying that he's not blessing. I'm not saying people are not experiencing blessing here and there.

Of course, God is always blessing. But what are we doing with the blessing? Are we willing to go the second mile? Or are we like the nine lepers who got the blessing? But that's all. These words in Philippians, I have not the power to expound.

I've been studying them for 19 years. The depth of them has not yet penetrated my soul. Can I say I count all things as done? I'm not sure.

I'm not sure. Easy to say it. But I want to know this in my life.

Do not think of O.M. as a group of young people who have found these things. Beloved, we have not. We have proven otherwise since the day we were founded.

But I believe we are a movement of young people who to a large degree are hungry for this and want this. And though they may be crippled and though they may be lame and though they may not be finding it easy, there are many, praise God, who are pressing and who want this truth in their life and who are willing to repent when God shows them that it's not becoming a reality. Study those verses as you have opportunity.

And then chapter 4, and I believe the Bible is so balanced, I'd like to send you my booklet, Revolution of Balance. You write me and I'll send you a copy or ask Graham Scott. I don't know if we have any in England, but they have a supply in Belgium.

We can get them over here. I think some are on the way. But I want to make sure that we get some of the balance tonight.

Because, you know, if we don't get balance, we can really go off the deep end. And A.W. Tozer once said this, it's written in one of his books, he said, the keen, more zealous young person, and that's oftentimes somebody in OM, more easily goes astray. And I've seen that's true.

This is why we have tried to emphasize over these years, in OM, in ministry of teaching. And from the day and moment, the moment a young person gets in contact with us, he is being taught through tape, through books, through conferences. And if he gets sort of the OM vision, without the teaching, he's dangerous.

He's immense. We've got them in the movement. I try to chase them out each year.

It's not easy. Sometimes I wonder, maybe I was the one who was the menace. But believe me, when we get to verses, like verse 6 in chapter 4, we see the balance.

Be careful for nothing. Good English, don't worry about anything. But in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

God does not want to manufacture a group of evangelical neurotics who can't spend ten pence on an ice cream cone without developing a slight pain in the side. God wants us to be balanced. God wants us to take these burdens and these cares and to cast them upon Him.

I cannot go around with a burden of world evangelism on my shoulders. Can't do it. I'll go down.

I can't go around with a burden of the lukewarm, lackadaisical, evangelical church on my shoulders. I can barely take it in short terms of thought. Short periods of thought.

And so I praise God. He says, Cast in Peter all your care upon me, for I care for you. There's the balance.

Don't worry about anything but in prayer and supplication. That's why, you know, our burdens, our concerns have not led us to write all kinds of appealing letters and in all kinds of publicity stunts to try to get the saints moving. But it has led us to pray.

We'd rather have 20 praying, interceding people than thousands weighing the O.M. banner. May God show us the truth of that. Of course, this is all tied in with the word joy.

And you know the main theme of the epistle of the Philippians? You know what it is? You've all had Bible teaching from this epistle? Joy! You know where he was writing it from? Prison. See, that's the glorious paradox of the Christian life. You can be in the most difficult, strenuous circumstances with fear and worry and everything hitting you from every side and yet, there can be the joy.

You know, in many of our modern, high-flying, evangelical leaders, I don't want to be too specific, especially from certain countries arrived, you know, they check out which is the best hotel. When the Apostle Paul came into town, he used to check out the jail because that's where he generally spent the night. Things have changed, haven't they? Things have changed.

Rejoice, verse 4, in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice from a prison cell. You know, one of the greatest problems that cripples our spiritual life, I've seen it everywhere I've gone, is rebellion. You know in your heart right now whether you are rebelling against these verses.

But it is not me. Maybe my personality, my voice may tune a few people off, I'm very conscious of that, but this is the Word of God. This is the Word of God.

You take Philippians, you forget about me. You take Philippians and you go through this and you go through it on your knees praying that God will reveal the truth of this and I will tell you it will come out stronger than I could ever give it to you. Just two or three more verses and we'll close in prayer.

I want to take verse 8. I feel it's very important to keep this balance. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. If you want to go anywhere for God, if you want to be a disciple and a soldier of Jesus Christ, you've got to become a positive thinker.

It's the only way. I have never met a man dwelling on the negative continually who amounted to anything for God. You can't do it.

A.W. Tozer, who spoke more negative things than you could ever imagine because he was speaking under the anointing of the Spirit and therefore you must speak the truth and therefore there will be negatives. He was basically an optimist. He would have died years before.

And if you read his writings carefully, you'll see the optimism this man maintained in the midst of giving prophetic utterances of what the true evangelical situation really was. And I believe optimism, positive thinking, dwelling on the best. You have to think about the evil.

Of course, you've got to be realistic. If you go out right now and you discover somebody's stolen your car, you'd better do a little thinking about it. But you don't want to dwell on it and meditate on it.

And you'll begin to think on the positive blessings you'll get through your car being stolen. And there probably aren't many. But I believe that we need to go into the Word of God and take these verses literally and begin thinking more and meditating more on the true and the pure and the lovely and the honest.

I've met some people who, in one way, agree with me on many things I say, but then dive into a pool of introspection, negativism, the church is hopeless, everything's impossible, and so they sort of go into the ground. Whereas personally, I believe that though these things that I've been saying are true, there's tremendous hope tonight because Jesus is alive, because the Holy Spirit is moving, because God is real, because God answers prayer. And wherever God is, there's enormous hope.

Enormous hope! In the darkest, dullest hour, there's tremendous hope for the man who has his eyes on Jesus Christ. And I believe God can bring revival to the church. I believe God can thrust out these labors.

I believe God can bring in the tools. And with hope and expectancy, we go forward. For six years, every dream was smashed about this ship.

Graham and I, as we talked together for six years or five about this project, it seemed so impossible. People thought we were crazy. At times, we thought maybe we were crazy.

On and on, we prayed the same prayers. We prayed for crew. No crew came, except very few.

And yet, we had this hope. We had this belief God is God. Nothing is too impossible for Him.

And He gave us this ship. And in port after port, this ship has shaken hundreds of believers. You know, when this ship comes in, the main thing is not what we do in that one month.

No, that's a lot. The main thing is the catalyst. The ship comes in.

These Christians hear the story of it. Group of young people, no money, praying in a ship. And here they've been wrestling with some ridiculous little thing.

Praying whether they could buy a new pulpit for their broken down church and they still didn't have the money after three years of prayer. Praying about having a campaign to reach 40 people for Christ. And this ship has come in with these young people from 20 nations living together.

Most of these countries, the church is divided. The Penties against the brethren. The Baptists against the Methodists.

The Charismatics against the Anti-Charismatics. The Tall against the Short. The Long Nosed against the Short Nosed.

There's a million divisions in the church of Jesus Christ. And the ship comes in and they see young people working together, serving together. They don't see any fights.

They don't see any arguments. There are some arguments on the ship, but generally they don't see them. And they can't believe it.

A government leader in Sudan, a Muslim, said I want to take this ship and park it outside of the United Nations to demonstrate to these characters how it's done. Because the United Nations has failed the whole world knows. They couldn't keep two seven year olds from shooting a BB gun and a bird.

And here's a group of people who believe in Jesus Christ and who believe the Gospel and they are a demonstration with their weaknesses, with their failures because that's part of it. And Jesus Christ is real. There's tremendous hope.

That's why I want to take you to this next verse. Just two more verses. Verse 13.

I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. I made that one of my life verses. You know people have life verses.

I have a hundred. I have a hundred life verses. I keep changing.

But that's one of them. And that verse is helping me so many times when I felt I was such a failure, when I felt I couldn't go on. And we all get to that stage sometime or other.

And I've turned to Philippians. I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. Do you believe that? Somebody gives you the challenge to go out door to door and witness for Jesus Christ.

What do you do with that verse? I can do all things except go door to door through Jesus Christ who strengthens me. God tells you to witness to the lady on the bus sitting next to you. You're scared to death.

You're frightened. You're shy. You're afraid she might, I don't know, maybe think she'll eat you up or something.

What do you do with that verse? That verse should be the anchor of our personal evangelism. There will be failures. But we keep going back.

We claim that as a promise of God. It doesn't all happen overnight. I'm still wrestling with fears in my life, enormous fears.

People think this prayer is big, bold, dynamic, fearless. I can't walk up an airplane gangway without my hands sweating. When I was in Vietnam, the curfew went off at midnight and I almost went three inches out of the bed.

I'm a child of fear. I am weak. My loudness of mouth means nothing.

It's the most deceptive factor of my whole nature. But I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. He is in me.

His treasure is in earth and vessels. Some of our vessels have cracks, holes. Sometimes we think the whole thing is going into the ground back where it came.

And it will someday. But that treasure is in you and some of the people that I've seen making an impact on the mission field are some of the weakest characters I've ever met. One of the first missionaries I ever met went to France.

I was with him one day and I thought the guy was never going to make it. I've never seen such an impossible case. He was a former alcoholic.

He couldn't speak the language. He couldn't even speak English. And he was from the States.

Of course, I know none of the Americans speak English properly. But I mean, he couldn't even speak American. And that man has been in France 13 or 14 years.

He has won souls. He's planted two or three assemblies. With his broken French he gets up and people are getting saved.

Reminds me of Deal Moody when he stood before this Presbyterian congregation in New York City and he began to preach and the people were laughing and snickering. He was breaking the English language into pieces. And then the anointing came and the conviction of sin and the Spirit of God moved.

God's treasure is in earth and vessels and it's in you and God wants to use you more than you have ever yet imagined. Start believing. Trust.

Hanging on to these verses. And lastly, verse 19. My God shall supply all your need according to His riches and glory by Christ Jesus.

After most O.M. meetings someone always comes to me usually a dear elderly lady and she said, Oh, why didn't you take an offering? You could have got so much money here tonight if you'd taken an offering. Now, I'm not against the church taking an offering. I believe local churches should take the offering.

That's what the Bible teaches. Nor do I want to judge other groups. But as long as I have promises like this in the Word of God I don't need to take any offering.

Of course, someone always misunderstands. They think, Oh, some big organization Andrew Carnegie must be behind it. Some multi-millionaire must have bought the ship.

All kinds of rumors. Of course, that makes the prayer even more challenging. That's like Elijah.

Now, how did Elijah get the fire on the altar? He did the most ridiculous stupid thing a man could ever do. He put water. I would have put benzene.

Elijah put water on the altar and he prayed and God moved. And so though some of the things and the practices of O.M. make it perhaps harder and some people misunderstand that little bit of water on the fire will not stop the flame of God when we have broken through in prayer. By God, she'll supply all my needs.

And I believe that's emotional. I believe that's physical. Though it may not mean perfect health.

I believe that's our only hope in O.M. We cannot trust in men. We cannot trust in a pound that devaluates too quickly. The dollar is even worse.

We trust in the living God. He can finance it with rubles or whatever he wants to use. And we have seen God work miraculously in so many areas.

One example and we'll come to a close. We were in Persia. First of all, the ship was ordered out of Persia.

We made a big blunder and put Arab Gulf in our pamphlet. That's like hitting the shore on the head with a two by four. We agreed.

The Christians in Persia said, you've blown it. Don't worry, the U.S. Navy did the same thing. Airline carriers have done the same thing.

Just go. No hope. The ship will never come back.

We got on our knees. God worked a series of miracles that I can't tell you about. And the top admiral of the Iranian Navy ordered Lagos back into Iranian waters.

Can't tell you all the complications that we would have had if that didn't happen. All our people already down in the Persian Gulf sitting there waiting including women who are about to have children and babies and every other kind of complication. God did it.

We got on the ship. We needed fuel. This was in the middle of a fuel crisis.

We heard that fuel was about 30 pounds a ton. That was bad, but we didn't have much choice. We scraped together what money we could from all over the place.

We got this money into Tehran. The next day they telephoned us back. They say fuel has gone to 60 pounds per ton today.

I couldn't believe it. At that moment I thought there was only one answer for this ship. Sell it.

Flog it. Well, there's still any hope. I do get these depressing thoughts once in a while.

We had to pray. What to do? Should we get this fuel at about 60 pounds a ton or should we sail over to Saudi Arabia? Everybody seemed to think Saudi Arabia, the prices also go up. Iran has fuel.

Saudi Arabia has fuel. There won't be any difference. We decided to risk it to go to Saudi Arabia.

We sailed to Saudi Arabia. There were ships in the Persian Gulf not sailing. They were ships loaded with crude oil that could not sail for the lack of marine diesel in their own tanks.

We sailed into Saudi Arabia Rashtanura. We made the turnaround in 15 hours with 150 tons of fuel. We got the bill three months later because of the confusion in the fuel crisis and it was less than 22 pounds per ton.

We've hardly taken any fuel since. Just took it last week. You know, I don't believe I believe not only can God supply fuel to us and reduce prices in answer to prayer.

I believe we could find an oil well in Danzig Street if that was God's will. Nothing is too hard for our God. Let's stop cutting off His legs and cutting off His arms and making Him into a little mini Englishman or a mini American.

He is the all-powerful God who will supply our needs. Let us step out by faith. Let's climb out on the end of the limb and cut off the branch and watch God hold the branch in the air.

Until we go into this kind of supernatural living of course we'll never reach the world for Christ. May God grip us with these verses from the book of Philippians. And if it takes us twenty years to get it into our spiritual bloodstream it's worth it.

It's taken me almost that long. I'm nineteen years in Christ. But this is my desire and I thank God that when I fall He picks me up and keeps me going.

Let us pray. Our God and Father we thank You for Your Word. It's like a two-edged sword cuts into our innermost being, into our subconscious.

Do not let us, God, tonight just be hearers of the Word but doers. Men and women of action in prayer and going, giving, being, witnessing, loving in all the areas that we know about all too well. We praise You Lord for the balance of Your Word.

We praise You Lord for the reality. We thank You God for the practicality of all these things and that it can become a dynamic reality in our lives. We thank You now Lord as we go our ways that we can appropriate these truths by Your grace and we believe that as impossible as this coming summer crusade is it shall be done.

Nothing is too hard for You. We commit all the details to You. The transportation problems, the fuel problems, the literature problems, the training problems, the orientation, the processing of the applicants, everything.

Put it in Your hands and we say that all things can be done through Jesus Christ who strengthened us, whose name we pray. Amen.

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