

Trends & Roots in Om Devotional Eng - Germ

by George Verwer

George Verwer discusses the essential roots of faith while exploring modern trends and methods in mission work.

Duration: 1:08:52

Scripture: Acts 13:2, Revelation 22:18

Topics: "German"

Description

In the sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of honest communication, particularly in the area of finance. They mention the Love Europe leaflet as an example of their efforts to improve communication. The speaker also discusses the use of cassette tapes and video tapes as trends in communication, highlighting their usefulness in sending messages and sharing testimonies. Additionally, the sermon emphasizes the reliance on God for provision and the importance of trust in Him, referencing Proverbs 3:5-6. The speaker also mentions the use of computers for better organization and encourages the audience to embrace technology.

Transcript

When I think of the whole area of roots, our deep roots, I think of those words that challenge us that we cannot add to the scriptures. Revelation chapter 22. Revelation 22, 18 and 19.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the word of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book. I testify unto every man that heareth the word of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.

This seems to specifically refer to the book of Revelation, but I think it is not unfair to consider in the light of other scriptures that this is true in regard to God's word in general. I think of that verse that says, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. I think of the stories that the Lord Jesus Christ gives, especially the challenge about building on rock rather than on sand.

And I'm sure you know that parable where there is the comparison between building on sand and building on a solid foundation. Now we are not just here to learn the word of God. That is important.

That is one of our purposes all year. But you can also do that in your own church. You can also do that in Bible school.

And that's why, in a sense, I'm sacrificing a more biblical, expository type of message to share something of the vision, something of the burden that God has put on our hearts for this work of Operation Mobilization. I think it is important, I believe it is ethical that we share with you what this work is all about. You still, during this conference, have the freedom to come and say, Look, I didn't realize this is what I was getting into.

I'm very sorry, but if you could arrange for me to go home, I would be very, very grateful. It's not too late for that. Well, that's good news, right, for some of you.

Let me give you the bad news. We would like to have also the privilege of telling you to go home. If we discover, through being with you during these weeks, and through interviewing and discussing, that your situation is just, you know, impossible.

You've got three or four wives back there. They're counting on you. You know, we want the freedom to say, Look, we feel you ought to at least sort that out and come back, you know, maybe later on.

Even as we pray later on this evening, I believe we will be able to pray more intelligently if we have a greater understanding of what we are actually praying for when we pray for OM India or OM Afghanistan. Now, I've got some notes for this message, so I don't take so long. And I've got one column, see my notes, one column I've got mega trends, and next to it I have the mega root that matches that trend.

The first trend that is very, very big in OM right now is communication. We even now have a communication department. Now, we've always been into communication in many, many, many different areas.

Some years ago, especially through the influence of Wycliffe Bible Translators and other groups, we felt we had to improve on our communication, especially about what we are doing, and especially to the churches. President of Wycliffe, David Cummings from Australia, lectured to some of our people for three or four days straight. I listened to the tapes.

Some of you don't even know that only three years ago we changed our policy concerning finance. Before that, you could hardly mention finance. We tried to out Mueller, George Mueller.

We tried to go beyond Hudson Taylor. And we got into a lot of miscommunication. And a decision of this level can only be made by the General Council, which is all the long-term people of the entire movement.

So that was a miracle to make such a change. One of the reasons we did this was for your sake. Because we found out that when people leave OM to join other missions, they found the policy they carried with them from OM was not compatible with most mission societies and caused a lot of tension.

On the free literature table you'll probably find a cassette tape, the worthy, the laborer is worthy of his hire. Very important message in OM's history. Now we believe in honest communication in every area, including finance.

We're trying to improve our video communication and improve slides and improve our leaflets, which was seen with the Love Europe leaflet. There are a few copies of the new Love Europe leaflet over on the free

literature table, or maybe a few left. So that's a trend.

We feel it's good. We know there are problems. I don't believe there is any problem-free road when it comes to these areas of communicating the vision and the burden for world missions that God has given us.

And our ways of communication may change from one year to the next. Well, what's the mega root that we put underneath this mega trend? That we believe we must look ultimately to God for the supply of our needs and our, of course, walk with Him. Book of Proverbs.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. Proverbs 3, 5 and 6. Even communicating, for example, about some financial need doesn't mean you're going to get that money. You know that from your own prayer letter.

And how we need to work to improve our communication in our prayer letter and our personal letters or cassette tapes. And this week I'm going to give many of you a free cassette tape. I'm going to put these on the free literature table but I'm not going to tell the long-termers, only tell you.

These are tapes of Bible reading, Bible reading, Word of God reading. But I found them in the STL warehouse just before they were moving north and I grabbed them. I asked permission and I took them.

I noticed on the album, some of them are in albums, rejects, it says rejects. So you can all have one of these reject tapes. And there's a chance there's nothing wrong so you'll have a lovely tape with a reading of the Word of God because the problem was on the next tape, not on your tape.

But if the tape is faulty in terms of the reading of the Bible, it didn't come out, it's blank, you were to use that tape to record your message back to your home church. That's what this communication vision is about. Some of you know I believe in trying to always hit three birds with one stone.

None of this two birds stuff. Three birds with one stone. And I am so excited about cassette tapes.

Just one tape, you could send a message to your parents for the first 20 minutes. Then you could have a message to your boyfriend or girlfriend for the next one or two minutes. And you can ask your boyfriend or your girlfriend if they could take the other side of the message and play it to the youth fellowship or the church.

And the other side, you can have a word of greetings, testimonies from friends and enemies here to your church. Now in one sense, cassette tapes, using cassette tapes, that's a trend, that's a modern trend. Videotapes, that's a trend.

I just think videotape is one of the greatest technical breakthroughs in Indian history. Maybe you want to do a video and send that home. Find someone here that has a video camera.

You can make your own amateur video. You can show your mother where you're sleeping. Think of the donations that this will bring in.

I would pray that during your time on OM, your creative juices, all of you have them, some of you just have little driplets, your creative juices may flow for the glory of God. But never forget that root. We're not going to change that in OM.

If I tried to change it, the general counsel would remove me. Confidence in God. Trust in God.

Standing on God's promises, knowing that He answers, hears and answers prayer. Let's look at the second trend. This one I call better, efficient organization through the use of computerization.

Das würde ich nennen bessere Organisation durch den Gebrauch von Computer. Wir ohne Entschuldigung glauben an den Gebrauch von Computern. War jetzt Computersprache, ich bin da noch nicht so weit.

Wer von euch kennt sich in Computern aus? Nur ein bisschen. Das ist die neue Generation. Computerspiele.

Jetzt bringen wir sogar noch mehr Hände hoch. Vielleicht gibt's in ein paar Jahren hier dann im Hauptzelt einige Computerspiele. Wir warten darauf, dass jemand so ein Spiel zusammensetzt.

Ja, wie komme ich als Missionar in mein Einsatzfeld? Und ich bin darüber begeistert. Um ehrlich zu sein, wir sind uns bewusst, dass wir besser organisiert werden müssen und effektiver arbeiten müssen. Wenn jedes Jahr ein Viertel der Mitarbeiterschaft wechselt und man einen Sommereinsatz mit 7000 Leuten vorbereiten soll, ist das nicht eine einfache Aufgabe.

Wir haben uns verpflichtet, dass wir uns immer wieder mit neuen Leuten beschäftigen und in sie investieren, damit sie ihre Garten zur Entfaltung bringen. Und damit das möglich wird, möchten wir Ihnen auch erlauben, dass Sie Fehler machen können. Wir sind auch davon überzeugt, dass wir großzügig umgehen sollen mit unseren Langzeitmitarbeitern.

Wenn andere Missionen sie gerne haben wollen, dann wollen wir dem Heiligen Geist die Gelegenheit geben, sie aus unserem Werk in andere Werke zu führen. Manchmal sage ich zu anderen Missionsleitern, es wäre nett, wenn du mich wenigstens anrufst und mir sagst, hinter wem du im Moment her bist. Und irgendeiner von dem anderen Werk, der sich Dale Rotten oder Peter Maiden angeln möchte, den würde ich, glaube ich, erschießen.

Aber der Herr kennt unser Herz. Und was ist die Wurzel, die wir daneben stellen können? Unsere Hauptaufgabe und unser Hauptnachdruck liegt immer noch darin, dass wir alles einsetzen, um die unerreichten Völker zu erreichen. Wir möchten in den Büros nicht überladen sein mit Personal.

Wir können nicht jedem mit der Nachfrage nachgehen, wenn die Leute uns sagen müssen, effektiver werden und wenn das eigentlich heißen würde, noch mal fünf weitere Personen ins Büro zu holen. Wir haben darüber nachgedacht, eine VWG-OM-Broschüre als Missionsinformation zu haben. Aber dafür braucht man sehr viele Leute, sehr viel Geld, sehr viele Arbeitsstunden.

Und es gibt sowieso schon so viele Missionsmagazine. Warum können wir uns nicht dafür begeistern, von anderen Werken ihre Zeitschriften zu verteilen? Und Untersuchungen haben auch festgestellt, dass Christen sowieso keine Missionszeitschriften lesen. Und es ist immer ein Kampf, festzustellen, welche neuen Ideen wir aufnehmen sollen und investieren sollen oder bei welchen wir Nein sagen sollen.

Als ich an dieser Botschaft gearbeitet habe, waren wir an einem Punkt, wo wir Leute von außerhalb als Berater in das Werk eingebracht haben. Und es ist immer noch eine Tendenz. Und wir haben Olin Hendricks hier, der sehr bekannt ist in Bezug auf Management-Schulung.

Das ist ein Trend, weil OM sehr schnell gewachsen ist. Wir haben Fehler gemacht. Wir brauchen Hilfe.

Wir wollen uns davon nicht einschüchtern lassen. Und was ist die Wurzel, die ich daneben gestellt habe? Eine kontinuierliche Abhängigkeit durch die Führung des Heiligen Geistes. Wir sehen das in der Apostelgeschichte.

In fact, it might be good just to look quickly at Acts 13. Many, many passages where this is very clear, but Acts 13 is special. I've already got stung by a bee today.

Now I have a giant mosquito attacking me. I'm not very heavy, and some of these mosquitoes might carry me away. Acts 13.

This is the story of the first missionary journey. Are you okay? Five men. I know that can make the ladies a little nervous.

Five men. They had a vision. Notice what it says in verse 2. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work unto which I have called them.

The Holy Spirit is the executive director of all true biblical missionary work. Let's never forget it. Verse 3. When they had fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

Some people say, Well, is it the Holy Spirit or is it the church? Which is it? From this passage we see it is both. Praise God, many of you were sent off by your church in a similar way. How many of you had at least something similar in your life with your local church? They prayed for you and sent you on Love Europe or on Raise Your Hand.

That is phenomenal and higher than we would see in previous years. And it's because God is answering prayer and local churches are getting into the forefront of missionary activity, and that's one of the greatest breakthroughs we are seeing in this day in which we live. Look at verse 3. Verse 4. So they'd been sent forth by who? The Holy Spirit departed onto Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

So that is the root linked with this willingness for advice and counsel and consultants and experts. The root is dependence upon the direction and the guidance of the Holy Spirit based on the Word of God. Now when it comes to evangelism, there are some new trends in OM.

Greater emphasis on music. Praise the Lord. We had that from the earliest days.

Even when we first went to Mexico, we had a little music team. But it never became as significant as it should have within OM. Both in worship, edification, as well as evangelism.

So we are finding this trend. Increase music. Increase drama.

Increase on friendship evangelism. Things coming in like coffee bars and all kinds of different new ideas to reach people with the message. Using videos.

Using the arts in various ways. We had somebody using magic to communicate the gospel. White magic.

And I remember somebody came to me last year. A new recruit said, Do you really believe it's right this person over here in some little seminar is using magic to communicate the gospel? Can you explain it in OM? We're open-minded. We're willing to try different things.

And Donna's used that. I told her to go talk to the magician. And she told me months later that she got some peace in her heart about this which was really disturbing her.

This trend. I'll never forget some years ago discovering in OM that we had a gospel clown. This was something that really shook me when I first found out.

He was all dressed up like a clown trying to communicate the gospel. I hadn't heard of this. I mean, some older folk in dear traditional churches I mean, if one of these clowns walked into the morning breaking a bread and gave a message I mean, people would freak out.

You know, there's a time and a place for these different experimental methods of communicating the gospel. But this kind of clowning was actually linked with the concept of using drama to communicate the Word of God. So we're warning you.

Some of you may be gospel clowns by this time next year. Some of you won't even have to dress up your face. No, I shouldn't have said that, really.

I was projecting my own struggle, really. What is the mega root when we talk about trends in evangelism? What is the mega root of OM? You'll find it in the Book of Acts. Chapter 20, and verse 20, it's called 20-20 vision.

Paul says, I've kept back nothing that was profitable from you, but have shown you and have taught you publicly and from house to house. The great root, mega root of OM in this area is confrontation, proclamation evangelism. We believe in preaching the gospel, the folly of preaching.

And we believe in preaching the message of salvation through grace in Jesus Christ. Another mega root is personal confrontation evangelism. Before we got many of us in any kind of literature evangelism, we were in personal, what we used to call in the 50s, soul winning, people winning.

I think in Love Europe we've seen a beautiful blending of the old and new. Of course, greatly aware we can improve in both areas. If we lose our emphasis on having a passion for souls, for people, and winning people to Jesus Christ, then we have lost a mega root of this movement.

And we believe another mega root is the use, the distribution of the word of God. How can we say we believe it's God's word and not want to give it to the whole world? That's hypocrisy. Well, let's move on to another trend.

I've written down greater study and preparation for cross-cultural communication. We include some of this in the orientation. Most of our leaders stay on the cutting edge of this through their reading and through sometimes going back for missionary courses at college or seminary.

We read many missionary journals. We want to understand things like contextualization, reincarnational theology, contextualization. We're not going to become either intimidated or antagonistic by new terminology and new trends in theology or missiological thinking.

Some of the men who write this material are men who spent 20, 30 years on the field. We can learn from them. Early in this decade when we launched this decade of Muslim emphasis, we had Dr. Donald McGovern, that great missionary leader, come and lecture to us.

We were meeting in Mosbach at the time. We learned so much from these people. Ralph Winter has had an influence on us.

Dr. Schaefer had a great influence on us some years ago. And we want to stay on the cutting edge of missiological thinking and sharpen the sword to bring in the harvest for the King of Kings. We are aware of the problems.

We don't swallow everything we read or hear. And some of these things are quite controversial. We have leaders in our work talking about a very interesting contextualized approach to Orthodox Hindus that when we get deeper into this is going to bring considerable controversy, I know.

We must be willing for new methods, new approaches if we are going to penetrate some of these groups that have been totally resistant for hundreds of years and thousands of years. Well, what's the mega root we can put next to this? I've written these words. A deep conviction about God's sovereign providence and working.

A deep conviction about God's sovereign providence and working. What do we mean by that? Well, among other things, we believe that God can use the likes of you this year. Most of you don't know what bonding is all about.

You're not fully aware of incarnational theology and you perhaps haven't had a major course in missiological present-day thinking. You may not know the difference between reconstructionism and liberation theology. But God is working through you by his Holy Spirit.

That's big, mega the double big. And if I didn't believe in the sovereign working of God through his people, sometimes even despite our weaknesses and mistakes, I tell you, I'm not going anywhere, especially with Operation Mobilization. And here I am again with one of my controversial T-shirts.

Peter Maiden said to me, what in the world does that T-shirt say? Who's this? This is a res-band T-shirt. And this is Glenn Kaiser's wife. I forgot her name.

Wendy. And the back is even more interesting. What does that say in German? It's not translatable into the German language.

It says between heaven and hell. A few years ago, you would never have seen me with that T-shirt. Rock music.

That's rock music. That's heavy metal. It's good that none of you are over 25.

And some years ago, I wondered, you know, how could God possibly use that great conglomeration of noise? But when I went to Cornerstone and sat out there and listened to res-band communicate their gospel message, when I saw hundreds of people stand and go forward to surrender their lives to Jesus Christ at the end of the music, I began to change some of my thinking. And I know a lot of older people don't even understand the words. I don't always understand all the words.

But I can tell you, a lot of the heavy rockers who are following the devil's music, when they hear some of this music, they hear the words, and God uses the words to bring about conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now that's a trend. It may change.

In fact, rock music has already taken a drop in terms of interest among young people in some places. In fact, in many parts of the United States, the big music is country western. There's a free book on the book table about country western singers who are coming to know Jesus Christ.

What are you going to do about that, you anti-country western folks? And some people feel country western music is more spiritual. It sounds more spiritual. It's more of the Jesus loves me, this I know type of song.

These are trends. Things change. People change.

And we are in a movement that's committed to communicating the gospel to this generation. Not those that are out in the cemetery, that's too late. This generation, who are sitting out there, 100,000 strong, listening to the devil's music, and the devil's had too much of the good music long enough.

And yet we know that in all of this, we must honor God. We must obey God's word. We must walk in purity and reality and honesty.

One of the major roots of OM is an emphasis on motivation. If I'm up here playing this instrument for the praise of man, then that is wrong before God. And you can do it with a modern instrument as well as an old trumpet.

What does the bible say? Man looks at the outward appearance, how people dress, whether it's a t-shirt or whether a suit and a tie. Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. Not that we should be foolish.

And it would be foolish for me to walk into a traditional church on Sunday morning dressed with a t-shirt and my old jean jacket. That wouldn't glorify God. And we in OM have to learn to relate to a wide range of churches.

We are not a bunch of angry young radicals. No, no, some of us are angry old radicals. But the word of God says, don't let the sun go down upon your anger.

It gives you a lot of hours for action. Well, I'll let you think about that. What's another trend that's coming down the track? Oh, here's a bunch more on the back page.

I don't know, is there another trend? A trend from the last few years in OM is the emphasis that we need more long-term employees. That wasn't a trend in the traditional mission societies. And OM became known as a short-term missionary program.

But our history will show that when we launched out in the early days, we were not thinking, most of us, short-term. It's amazing how that came in. It was almost by accident.

It was because of our pragmatic approach. It was because of a number of reasons. So, because short-term was so dominating the picture five years ago, this longer-term emphasis came.

Big changes came with this trend. And imagine the changes. Opening the door for pension programs.

The first time someone mentioned this as something we do in OM, I almost vomited on the spot. We had sold our possessions. We had sold everything.

Now what are we going to do? Start saving? Or come old in case, you know, God dies and we need a buck? But to my surprise, I discovered some of my most spiritually minded leaders, who I greatly respected, believed this was a biblical option for God's people. For four years they worked me over on this point. An unusual day when the General Council of Operation Mobilization agreed on allowing various kinds of pension programs.

I'm sure it's of no interest to you young radicals. The majority of people in OM felt this was a good move. And we started to pay more attention to housing.

Because we were having so much problem. Some people changing housing twice a year, even when they had a family. So we allowed some house purchases.

If God provided the money in answer to prayer and inheritance, we let some people get a house. It was a decision they had to make and perhaps pay a mortgage. This actually caused a lot of people to consider OM as a possible long-term missionary option.

Quite amazing the influence these changes had in our work. There's much more I could say. We now have a policy manual where eventually you can read about some of these policies that we have accepted as being from the Lord.

What is the mega root we put next to this trend? We believe we must continue as a short-term attack strike force to supplement existing long-term missionary work. And that a major emphasis should be to train people and send them back to their own church and to other mission societies. Now another big trend that we had from the beginning but became much bigger in recent years is that we should spend more time and effort planting churches.

In a sense, of course, that should be really a root because it's so basic. But it wasn't our major emphasis in the beginning, though we believed in it. So I have it categorized in my trend, a new, very significant, important biblical trend.

We've always felt in our church planting that we should partnership with others, especially leading nationals and missionaries, and after one or two years pull back and let the church stay under their leadership. That trend will continue. It's increasing.

We have written papers on this subject. We have seminars. What is OM's big root? That must go right next to this sort of new root.

It's called reaching as many people as possible with the Word of God. Reaching the masses is a major thrust and root and principle of this movement and we hope you'll be involved in that. Another trend is the trend for more freedom.

The old days, you had to be up at 6.30 outside for exercise program. There's never a rule, but you were expected to be there and I was there counting heads. More and more reaction came against this kind of regimented exercise program.

Especially in that huge Bible school in Belgium where there were hardly any showers. The lack of showers was the final blow to my 20-year war of keeping this going. I finally gave up.

So there's a lot more freedom in OM than in perhaps those early days. It includes some of our philosophy about music, some of our philosophy in other areas that people say are worldly or not worldly. But I don't believe we have lost the root.

Commitment to holiness, obedience to God's Word, moral purity. And we constantly preach that Galatians message that we are called unto freedom but we are not to use that freedom as an occasion to the flesh. Sometimes little things are so complicated.

Like what should we do in OM about smoking? I know a church in the United States that I greatly admire. Very close to my thinking on the area of freedom. Though I'm a teetotaler, in that church the elders might occasionally have a glass of beer even in front of maybe a disciple that they were teaching the Word of God to.

Quite controversial in the United States. No problem in Germany. This particular group would allow people, especially young baby Christians, they would not hassle them if they were still smoking after they become a Christian.

Things that traditionally the church has just been, you know, absolutely up in arms about. And I appreciate that ministry. Gets more complicated when we become a spiritual fighting force in a movement like OM that's trying to influence and work with the churches of Jesus Christ.

And we are having a problem at times with people who seem to have a pretty strong smoking habit and yet somehow they're on Operation Mobilization. Especially since a high percentage of unconverted people now believe that you shouldn't smoke. But our burden would not be that this person is not a Christian.

And he could easily be more Christ-like than the non-smoking friend sitting next to him. But I'm sure most of us, in the light of what we are trying to do, in the light of the controversy, would acknowledge that to be set free from that habit would be the most honoring way to go as an evangelistic foot soldier of Jesus Christ. So the trend is for freedom.

Do not think that we are going to throw away all the rules of the game. They're not doing it in cricket, they're not doing it in football, they're not doing it in baseball, and we're not doing it in an OM ball. And a mature person will even be able to keep some of the rules and the policies of a movement even when they don't particularly agree with them for the sake of unity and getting on with the work at hand.

Just two other points. Modern trend in OM, now many years, is to spend a little more money to get the kind of equipment we need to get the job done. We might put a little more money into some of our vehicles.

We might get some computers. We certainly buy a lot of dictation equipment. It costs money to evangelize the world.

Video cassette recorders, projectors, film, bicycles. This isn't actually anything new in OM, but it's increased perhaps because of the size of the work. And sometimes you have to spend money to save money.

Sometimes these days, rather than lugging two suitcases that I can barely lift full of books through the underground to get from Victoria to Euston station in London, I might, especially when I'm late, grab a taxi so I can have those maximum amount of books with me. And it's not going to be cheap to refit the MV Lagos II. And music equipment costs money.

Drama equipment costs money. What's the root next to this trend? We are committed to a moderate and conservative lifestyle and to use maximum of our resources for the poor and for world evangelism. I have not changed my lifestyle very much in 32 years.

I have no bank account. I have no money saved. I don't own anything.

Most of my clothing is from Charlie, as you can see. And that's nothing to boast of. That's just my personal guidance in my life.

We do not have one manipulated lifestyle. Though we get a lot of our clothing out of Charlie, the missionary barrel, there is freedom to buy new clothing and you can be sure most people in OM occasionally buy some new clothing if they don't get it given to them by their wonderful mothers and fathers. This can become a point of great aggravation and tension in a movement like OM.

It was on some of your teams this summer. Those who are committed to a very simple lifestyle easily become judgmental about another brother or sister who may have a little more freedom in the use of money. So let's remember that without 1 Corinthians 13 love, none of it means anything much.

The last trend, which was a trend from almost the earliest days, is to be even broader in terms of our doctrinal acceptance rate. We're interdenominational. We want to be flexible about areas where we don't agree with each other.

We want to be open to what the Holy Spirit is doing in different ways, in different people, in different churches. We want to be open to different ways of worshiping the Lord. We know the kind of worship we have here isn't everybody's thing.

Some people have expressed to me they're tired of worshiping the Lord in this particular way. How have I urged you to worship the Lord? I've urged you to get up early and go out into these beautiful fields and worship the Lord. That's my way.

Because I'm under doctor's orders that I'm not supposed to use my voice and singing is the worst thing for my vocal cords. That's a problem. I've had two major surgeries on my vocal cords and I don't really fancy going back to the doctor's scalpel again.

When I come into these worship meetings, it's very difficult to keep my mouth shut. That's difficult generally anyway. In a lot of areas, OM is quite flexible, more open in some things than perhaps we used to be.

But what is the root? We are absolutely committed to basic biblical, evangelical, orthodox doctrine that we find in the Word of God and that is written on our doctrinal statement that I hope you've seen, it's there on the free literature table. In fact, I have a whole message just based on this one subject. What areas of doctrine are we flexible, we don't all agree and what areas of doctrine are we immovable in OM and there are quite a few.

So there's some mega trends, there's some mega roots. If you can relate very highly to what I have just shared, that may be a sign that your God not only fit in short term, you might fit in longer term to this little movement. If you're not happy about this approach, I still don't believe you'll probably have much problem on a year program if you have Calvary love in your heart.

We're not going to force you to do things against your conscience. And I hope that you'll just make an effort to understand what's behind some of the things that sometimes we ask you to do. We could talk about trends in our prayer meetings.

Some things change, some things don't change. We're constantly seeking the face of God. Some of our prayer meetings are not as long as they used to be as we face the reality that the length of the prayer meeting is not the key factor.

And so some feel the prayer meetings now, especially in the year program, are too short and others feel they're perhaps still too long and the debate will go on until we meet Jesus. And I just pray that somehow through all that happens this year, you in your own life will be able to discern between the trends and the roots. Some of the things you're into right now, even being on OM, they're trends for this particular time in your life.

And five years from now, some of you are married with four children, living in Minneapolis, some of these trends will not be too relevant. But the roots will be. Develop deep roots during your time on OM.

And they will help you whatever you decide to do in the future. You can write in your Bible something for me, if you feel you can write in your Bible. Ten years from now, 1999, just before we lunge into the year 2000, I want you to write me a letter and say, I was sitting in the tent the night you spoke on the mega-roots and the mega-trends with your res-band t-shirt.

And I want to tell you that I've got roots in my life and I'm still growing in grace and in Jesus Christ. That's the greatest news you can tell me before we go into the year 2000. Now maybe you'll be in Pakistan in contextualized incarnational bonding with an unreached people's group in the mountains.

Glory to God! Maybe you'll be into the latest Christian, whole new brand of up-tempo gazoopoxy-sack-sack music for Jesus. Fine! You can mention that in the letter as well. Send a cassette.

It'll be a compact disc, probably made out of some new metal that they brought in from Mars. But the main thing in the letter is just tell me that you've found some roots deep in God and you're going on for God. And even if you're right from the most over-evangelized 1,000 churches town in Southern California, I'll still praise the Lord.

Especially if you enclose a good gift with the letter. And of course after 1992 we are accepting Euro currency. Let's pray.

Lord, we thank you for what you've been teaching us through the years. Even when we've had to learn from our mistakes. Lord, I think of the trouble I've got in at times with my mega-mouth.

Lord, I think of some of the trouble I've got in with my big eyes. And with my impatience. And my anger problem.

And I thank you for cleansing me and forgiving me and helping me to develop roots in yourself and your word. We know many thought 25 years ago OM was just a trendy, zany little fly-by-night teenage ragabon band that soon would be gone. But somehow in your mercy you helped us find the right roots.

To be your people. To find unity in the midst of diversity. To grow stronger and stronger in grace and a knowledge of you.

So we thank you for these 30 years of deep roots. As we go into a new decade and as we go into a new century we are going with a spirit of faith and expectation. Strengthen us, O God, in the battle, even in the battle of prayer tonight.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/29/SID29377.mp3>

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