

# Turning Vision in to Action

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer's sermon encourages believers to transform their vision for missions into actionable prayer and outreach efforts, particularly towards the Muslim world.*

**Duration:** 1:00:18

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:3

**Topics:** "Vision"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of reaching the billions of people in the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. He highlights the need for prayer and encourages the audience to prioritize their prayer time, even adding an additional 15 minutes. The speaker also addresses the issue of misplaced priorities, urging people to redeem their time and focus on what truly matters. He emphasizes the importance of love and taking action, citing examples such as helping the elderly and reaching out to those who are hurting.

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## Transcript

2 Corinthians chapter 10. You know, if you're somewhat new to an OM conference, you can really have your circuits blown right out of your head with all these visions and ideas, different people challenging you about different nations. And it's good to, you know, just take in what you can and then leave the rest for another day.

We're all different. We all have different capacity. Before I was 19 or 20, I had a specific burden for over 40 nations.

And I was involved meeting missionaries, writing people, starting prayer groups. I'd already gone to Mexico when I was 19. And we're all different.

We all think and operate in different ways. Some can take in more than others. And I hope that you'll not be overwhelmed by these challenges.

Because there are 4.7 billion people, or 4,700 million. And we are way behind in the task of reaching them with the gospel. So sometimes we need conferences like this to sort of catch up in our vision, in our commitment.

Of all the needs that have been shared, there is no greater need than the need for prayer. And if you can go from this conference with motivation to pray and with discipline and the Holy Spirit's help to even put 15 minutes more into your prayer time, I will tell you it would have been more than worth coming here. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 10, for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And when we think of the Muslim world, and OM has been committed to Muslim evangelism from almost its birth in Europe, we had plans for people to go to Turkey before God ever gave us the name Operation Mobilization, which was born out of my fiasco in the Soviet Union, my day of prayer in Germany, where on the top of a tree God gave me those two words, Operation Mobilization. I think you know the story.

And that's what led to mobilizing European youth to reach Europe with the word of God, with the Muslim world. But before that, people like Dale Roton, Roger Malsted, Krista Fischer, now Krista Eicher, were on their way emotionally, in terms of plans, to Turkey. Others were praying for Afghanistan, for Iran, for Iraq, for the Kurds, for the Arabs.

And we believe specifically that one of the major reasons God raised up OM in the first place, there were already many great missions. Was that the Muslim world might be penetrated with the word of God. And he showed us when we got to Europe, there were only a few of us at that time who had worked in Mexico, that it was to be Europeans who are so close to the Muslim world and who soon would be invaded by Muslims.

We didn't know that at that time. Would be God's springboard, so to speak, for workers to go to every part of the Muslim world. Around that time, a young student just going into Oxford University caught this vision.

The age of many of you. Later, worked in Turkey in church planting with OM and then became the director of OM in the Middle East. And there's a hundred other stories we could tell, but not time.

As we go forward in this decade of Muslim emphasis, we don't want to neglect any of the burdens and other visions God has given us. Because OM operates in a way that we respect the vision of each national group within OM. And we don't want to forget Mexico or Israel or Nepal or any other country.

I've just come back from New Zealand and Australia and Singapore and Malaysia and Mexico. And you know, God is doing a unique and special work in each one of these nations. But as a body, we've agreed together that we want to increase this thrust into the Muslim world.

And that means first, mobilizing for prayer. And even those of you who are here as OMers, I wonder how your prayer life really is when it comes to really agonizing, prevailing intercessory prayer for Turkey, for Iraq, for the Kurds, for the Baluch, for the Uyghurs, those Muslims there in China, for the Turkman people over there in the Soviet Union and Central Asia. And you know, if we don't learn more about prayer and the reality we see in 2 Corinthians 10, 4 and 5 and many other passages, then you know it's going to be almost dangerous to send people.

And we will see many returning as casualties. And I hope that you will get involved in these nations where Muslims dominate the national scene completely. It's a great burden that I believe is so much on the heart of God for this decade.

As you take your last visit to the various literature tables, try to get some of those leaflets. You won't easily get this opportunity again that speak about Pakistan or Bangladesh. In Pakistan and Bangladesh, together with a minority group of 100 million Muslims in India, we have a quarter of a billion, they say in the States, 250,000 million Muslims, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

And those countries are relatively open. Some of you who have some spiritual preparation already could be there by December of this year. I hope you'll pray about it.

And I'll tell you, I would personally put a lot of other letters aside. I've only got a few hundred right now. We're catching up.

Put a few hundred letters aside and look at your letter about Muslims in the subcontinent. And other people will be happy to correspond with you about Muslims in the Middle East, including the Arab world and Turkey and those lands. Let us right now, because of the time factor, just form little clusters, little groups of four or five people and pray for the Muslim world.

Whenever we're at a conference like this, I think we're just reminded of all the opportunities that we are faced with. And one of the reasons that we are highly motivated people who love our work and love to get on with the job, get into the prayer closet and get out to the ends of the earth, is because God has given us a vision. Someone once said that discipleship without a vision becomes drudgery.

We just go on and on. We don't know why. And of course, soon we run out of steam.

Thank God for the vision He has given many during these days. And all around us, we see opportunities as you pray. And as you go home, you're going to see opportunities.

I've been spending a lot of time just talking to individuals. And two brothers came to me from that great city of York and shared their vision for seeing something happen in that city. And we had prayer about it together.

And I know God is giving different burdens and different visions. But you know, God's work is teamwork. It's not mainly leaders.

It's certainly not mainly loud mouths like me. Forgive me. But it's teamwork.

And if we had the time, I would ask all the full-time workers who are with OM right now, dozens sitting here, to come up and just once again pray as we do in our September conference and commend them to the grace of God. And really, it's only because of the joining of hands and the joining of hearts, Englishmen with Americans, French with Germans, Italians with Indians, Malaysians with Mexicans, that OM has been able to give the Word of God to 350 million people face-to-face. Three hundred and fifty million people plus face-to-face since its birth a couple of decades ago.

Someone passed on to me a little quotation about opportunities that I've been carrying around in my Bible. It says opportunity not only knocks but is playing an anvil chorus on every man's door. The trouble is opportunity looks so much like hard work that oftentimes we fail to recognize it.

A professional is a man who can do his job when he doesn't feel like it. The amateur can't do his job even when he does feel like it. People can be placed into three classes, the few who make things happen, the many who watch things happen, and the overwhelming majority who have no idea of what has happened.

The man who is looking for magic or some mysterious shortcut to success will be disappointed because ability without agility doesn't win. The worst bankrupt in the world is the man or woman who has lost his or her enthusiasm, but many a man never fails because he never tries. And I do pray that we will go from here with a burst of faith and enthusiasm to believe God for great things.

I'm sure many of you are not able to purchase more books and more tapes, and I hope those who are able will share with others because that's what the ministry is about. We also, and I especially wanted to emphasize that when it comes to cassette tapes, our far bigger program is not selling them, but it's a free loan library, and you can get this information sheet about these tapes, one from Arthur Blessing, I was listening to him this morning, available on a free loan basis from our brother Alec Crackett, and these sheets are available in different places. So don't feel, you know, somehow if you don't have the money, and I can tell you many of the people full-time here with OM don't have money to buy all these things, there's a lot of material that's free.

In fact, the free literature tables are just crying out for hands to go down and take some of this material and distribute it to your friends. Let's just pray right now. Father, we've come to the end of this conference, this weekend, which we'll never forget.

Lord, I remember those weekends in North London when this conference took place there. I remember two years ago in Birmingham when you met us in that place, and now you've met us here in Salford, this great area of Greater Manchester. And Lord, we just believe that in this final look into your word for today, you're going to speak, and we, by your grace, are going to obey, for we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. I want you to turn to the book of Timothy, 2 Timothy. I can quote you the verse, but I can't find it.

No wonder. 1 Timothy 4, 12. 1 Timothy 4, 12.

I hope those of you who stood up in the step of faith to be filled or refilled with God's Spirit, to acknowledge again Christ as absolute Lord of every area of your life, that you'll not forget to give that personal feedback on the back of that paper, your response paper. The bottom part you're to keep. The top is to come back.

Side one, the official side. The blank side is for me and a small team who will be praying over every request that is written. 1 Timothy 4, 12.

Let no man despise your youth, but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity. What a verse for your generation. I'll tell you was I encouraged here this morning.

I, hardly ever a day passes when I don't phone my wife wherever I am, unless it's some way out of the way place and there's no phones. And yesterday I failed to phone my wife. And so this morning I was a little thinking about that, and I remembered where the phone was from when I was here for God's World Congress, and I had it for the phone.

It's one in that other building, maybe one here as well. And I saw the little sign out of order. Now in Britain, you never let those little signs put you off, or you never get many phone calls.

But I saw a little sign and I called up and I talked to the operator about transfer charge call. And I found out something I haven't learned in 23 years of living here. That if the phone box is out of order, but you can get through on the phone, just the coin section is out of order, get through on the phone, when you make a

transfer charge call under those circumstances, you get a discount.

How many of you knew that? See how ignorant you are about your own country? So I got a discount and discovered my wife wasn't home. She went to sleep last night with a friend, Kathy Rendell, whose husband was up here. So I talked to my daughter and woke her up.

So then I went back to the coach, my little converted coach, where I have my office, a lot of other things, literature, team of us traveling. We're to Paris next weekend. I'm going to have to brush up quick on my French since I don't know any.

So I went back again and I had to ask the man for the number. If you don't give the number of the phone box, you can't get the discount. So I asked the man for the number and he looked at me and he said something like, happy to give you that young, young fellow.

Hallelujah. I thought, Jesus. Then he put his glasses on and gave me the number.

No, he had his glasses on. But this text is not for me any longer. I'm over the hill, but it's for you.

Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of a believer in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity. I guess I memorized that when I was a baby Christian. That's why I said, you know, I can quote it, but I can't find you.

I have a lot of difficulty with the street addresses on these verses. How many of you memorize regularly the word of God? You memorize even one verse a week. I want to be big hearted.

You, you memorize a verse a week or you try to at least try to raise your hand. Oh, you got a few more out of that. You know, the only thing you learned this weekend was to get serious about the scriptures and started memorizing the word of God.

I just was to get into the word of God more and to dig and to meditate and to memorize. We have a little book about memorizing scripture on our little special backstreet, uh, flea market bookstore down there where things after this meeting, the guy will go crazy out there. Just start throwing things in the air like Armstrong.

We will never, never, never, never be outdone by Dave Armstrong. So just go check the bargains on our little book table. Anyway, we're all on the same team, especially when he's going to send the prophets to India.

Let no man despise how you memorize that. Would you take that as the first verse to memorize? If you haven't started memorizing scripture yet, put it on a little card. I remember when I first met Dale Roton, some of you know this story, Dale, who coordinates the ship ministry.

We've been together for 28 years. When I went to a college, a little sleepy Presbyterian college that had semi abandoned the Christian faith about a decade before we got there. And when I got there, I was warned about this character, Dale Roton.

He was a number, what we call a sophomore in the space, second year. And I was warned, I was told that he was a man. I thought this is a man that I must meet.

That very week I met Dale Roton and God put us together as a team. And how much I have learned from this man. We used to pray together regularly.

He and I were with one other brother, the little team that first went to Mexico and those very early roots of this movement were being laid into the ground. And Dale Roton has just been such an example in the word of God. He left that college and went to Wheaton college because he had brains.

I eventually left that college and went to Moody Bible Institute because I had steam. And we got together again about two years later. I think by then he had almost memorized one third of the New Testament.

That was while doing a university degree. I remember years later, someone asking Dale because he's been an example of stability and reality and all the whole history of OM. And someone was asking Dale what his secret was, you know, to his Christian life.

You know, if you can get the idea that these men and women of God, they've got some secret, they've had some, you know, lightning bolt special experience with God on the top of a church steeple or, you know, some crisis experience out in the jungles or somewhere. Dale, in a very calm way, sharing his secret, said, well, I read my Bible. Read his Bible.

Anybody can read their Bible. But you know, that is Dale Roton's secret. That's not a secret.

But he reads it and has read it fairly intensively. That's been Ralph Shallis's secret, as mentioned powerfully in his book from now on. Of course, Dale read it so hard and so heavy, about a third of it got into his memory.

Would you memorize scripture? You put on the back of your little feedback paper, I'm going to memorize the Word of God. And maybe I'll write to you a little reminder a few months from now. Are you memorizing the Word of God? In fact, I like to motivate people.

And if there's anybody here that memorizes a hundred scriptures this year, 1986, you write to me and I will send you a giant bundle of bombshell Christian books, at least 50 pounds worth at the end of the year. You say that's false motivation. Okay, don't use it.

But I tell you, if you're a sort of a lazy, drifting, naturally backslider, big talking, hard, difficult living character like me, a little false motivation once in a while is helpful. As long as what I'm aiming at is basically good. You know, if you only get your motivation from that which is totally spiritual, you'll probably end up a nutcase.

God uses many things to motivate us. I was motivated when I went, forgot my running shoes, so I just went walking this morning. And I was motivated as I walked down along this lovely river.

Well, I mean, it's a river anyway. I walked down and I just thought about this great city and the great need and the times when I went door to door in the early days of OM, when I lived in Bolton, where the Ship Vision was born. And it was mainly men in the Manchester area that got behind OM in those early days.

And how we thank God for this city. And it was a heartbreaking thing for some of us to move our headquarters from here to the Quinta. It was a move basically to save money for the Lord's work.

How unfortunate that some have criticized saying we've left the needy city of Manchester to live now out in some country estate, the one really beautiful building out in this estate nobody is living in. And it's not even

part of OM's section of the Quinta. It's nice on a postcard.

We're in the little building behind that building. And though we're glad for the fresh air and we believe it's God's provision, in no way are we abandoning Manchester. In fact, I have more meetings booked now in the next months for Manchester than I did when the OM office was here, including the prison.

And I've wanted to speak here in the prison for many, many years. Almost be worth getting arrested to get in there and share with a blessing that's been taking place. And so I hope you'll memorize scripture.

Because if you made a commitment to the Lord last night and God filled you afresh with his Holy Spirit, that doesn't mean now it's going to all be automatic. And that somehow it's all going to be easier if you think that you were not listening to the message. And believe me, the invitation and the response to the invitation without receiving the message that preceded the invitation is dangerous.

Because we made it clear that it's going to be rough and it's going to be tough to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at 2 Timothy chapter 2 to get just a little glimpse of what's involved in this program of following Christ with all of our heart and all of our mind. Paul writes to Timothy and he says in verse 3, He thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

No man that woth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. This was and I pray will continue to be a major emphasis of OM and I hope of the whole work of God. Now I know people can go extreme on this and OM for a while got a little bit heavy on the soldiering aspect and we neglected the friendship because we're friends of God, we're heirs and co-heirs, we're kings, we're priests.

Every description of a Christian in the New Testament is brought into balance by other descriptions. I was heavy on the soldiering, if you've listened to those early tapes on warfare, but I was weak on some of the other aspects. I was strong on Luke 14 33, except you forsake all you can't be my disciple, but I was weak on being stewards of that which God gives to us.

And I don't believe as OM has come into balance in a number of areas that that makes our sword any duller. I believe spiritual balance makes our sword for world evangelism sharper. Too often in OM, in some years, we have been shooting mice instead of shooting elephants.

Forgive the illustration, but you know perhaps what I mean. We have a big job to do. We are called to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are called to love one another. We are called to renewal and personal revival. And to do this with a world of 4,700 million people, I believe we're going to have to determine what our priorities are.

And one of the reasons that many people are not accomplishing much in world evangelism is what I call misplaced priorities. And some of you are going to have to rethink that verse in Ephesians where it says, redeem the time. I can't believe the way people use their time.

I can't believe the number of hours that some people spend watching idle television programs. And I am not against people watching some television. But the Word of God has given us such a challenge that most of these things must be very, very small in our lives.

To recharge our spiritual battery, to meet the needs of the human side of us. And we're all different. But a good segment of our time and our energy and our thrust should go into serving others, into worshiping God, into serving God, into evangelism, into things that are profitable.

What about the elderly? The one thing I find hard about these conferences is not enough older people, but it is a youth leadership training conference. So that's, of course, what happens. But do not think that OM is just a youth movement.

I refused that terminology 25 years ago, much less now. That is part of what OM is. It is our burden that OM will be a movement of the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God is no respecter of persons.

And I will tell you, I meet people who are 50, who are 60, who are outrunning some of the 20 and 30-year-olds that we have around Operation Mobilization. One of them, a Manchester man, just celebrated his 60th birthday, and he's going into technical semi-retirement. He's 60, and he's sitting over here, and because I would never want to embarrass him, I wouldn't ask him to stand up.

His name happens to be Val Grieve. He's written a book on the Resurrection. He's the chairman of the EBE board, and I'm sure you'll want to meet him after the meeting.

I didn't think he was that old. He doesn't look that old. His wife looks 20 years younger, but anyway, life goes by.

And I want to tell you, there is an untapped resource among elderly people today. I have been speaking about that for years. That's not Val.

He's in middle years. He's like me. I don't know where you have to be to be elderly.

I tell you, if you're feeling old, go to Florida. If you're 60 in Florida, they look on you as a teenager. When the film Cocoon comes to your local flick house, go see it.

Absolutely brilliant. It'll make you feel young. God is using all kinds of people.

Did you know the captain of the Dulles over the last years is a retired man? Do you know that Dr. Homer Payne, who was with us in France for so many years, he must be, does anybody know his age? 75? At least. He left OM. He was going too fast for us and went back and became the president of a Bible college in French-speaking Canada, and he's turning the place upside down.

How old are most of the people who are running the nations of this world? The old president of the USA just had a birthday. 75. What about some of these other nations? And I believe if we are going to evangelize the world, we need that dynamic partnership between men and women like you, with all your creativity, all of your energy, with your whole life out ahead of you.

We need that dynamic partnership of men and women like you with godly people, like Dr. Payne, like our brother Valgrieve, like many others that the Lord has given us the privilege of working with and submitting to all over the world, because I don't think I would even be here today if I had not submitted to older people ever since my conversion. And before I ever went back to Mexico on that, or even the first trip, I shared it with a little group of men who became sort of people that I was responsible to. A year later they became the official board of Operation Mobilization.

I was only in England a few months when God began to put together the official board of directors of Operation Mobilization that I would for the rest of my life be responsible to, as unto the Lord. Let no man despise thy youth. Doesn't mean that God is only going to use you when you're young, but it does mean that now is the time to get started.

And one of the things I thank God for the most is that I got started at 17 years of age. I know that's not usual. To be overseas at 19, especially in those days, was considered fairly way out.

It almost was before the birth of short-term missions. And we had a lot of people right off O.M. in those early days and we've never held it against people. I don't think I've ever gone to sleep on bitterness in my entire life because I've never, never had a heavy desire for poison.

It's just not been my big thing. Now I know different people are tempted in big ways, different ways. And I, you know, if you're heavy into being tempted into drinking poison, I'd like you to write to me and I'd like to pray for you and send you a cure or some advice.

Maybe your big thing is, is, you know, bank robbing. Some of you, maybe you're sitting here and just thinking, you know, how can I break into a bank and get some really quick money? You know, I don't think that's a big thing as far as I know with the average evangelical, but you know, this is an exceptional group. I'll tell you, there's very few temptations I haven't had.

I often feel that I'm in the category of the over-tempted. Do you ever feel that way? The over-tempted. I sometimes say, Lord, can you give me one day? Can I have one free day in the cotton-picking devil? Get off my back.

And I tell you, under the financial pressure of recent years, I've taken several looks at a man. Well, with an associate director like Peter Maiden, I generally can't get unity on this kind of activity. Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, for no man that woth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life.

That he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. Do you know why many of us are spiritual cripples? Do you know why? One of the biggest reasons we're man-pleasers. We live for the praise of men.

Psychologists tell us that's absolutely basic. If a person doesn't get acceptance, if he doesn't get some kind of commendation, if he doesn't get some pats on the back, some encouragement, he probably will end up mentally ill. And it's amazing what people will do to get recognition.

You ever see some of the things people get recognized for? And what it does to their lives. This is why often, not always, people are so fanatically committed to sports. The radio this morning, it says in this century, 1,000 have been killed through boxing.

1,000 dead through the sport of boxing in this century. One last week. But these men are committed.

And in the area of sports, people are committed, and it isn't all the love of sport, that's a factor, but it's the tremendous praise of men factor. Rewards and honors and all that goes with it. And our whole society is just loaded with it.

Some of it is perhaps quite harmless. But as we come into the Christian life, there is the danger that we are living our Christian life with an awful lot of the motivation coming from what people think, what people

say, whether we're appreciated or not appreciated, determines our attitude in our church and toward other people, often. And Jesus said, how can you believe, how can you believe who seek honor from one another? And oh, how we've got into this in OM sometimes.

No one is free from this, or so you. Jesus said, how can you believe who seek honor one from another, instead of the honor that comes from God alone? Brothers and sisters, as we go from here, let's seek the face of God. Let's spend extra time with God.

When did you last have a half day, even a half day of prayer? Maybe you should go to one of these beautiful woods. We live in one of the most beautiful, sane, organized nations in all of the world. You may not think so.

I find a lot of English people are down on their own country. Really gets me upset as a little lonely immigrant trying to get my stakes in the ground. But you know why they're mumbling and groaning about British rail and the telephone and this thing wrong and that thing wrong, the taxes are too much, blah, blah, blah.

You know what? They never lived anywhere else. They never traveled on some of the trains like I have from Turkey to Tehran. Only 35 hours.

Late. That's right. And I tell you, I am a British rail fan.

And when I hear people speaking negative about British rail on the trains, sometimes I just, I just go right up and I sit next to him. And I said, you know, you really don't know what you're talking about. This is a problem with me.

You know, I opened my mouth. In fact, I was dictating a letter on the train sometime ago. And I said, greetings in the name of Jesus Christ.

And I think the guy must've been an atheist just sitting behind me. He just started to curse and mumble. And I said, excuse me.

God somehow in his mercy, in his sovereignty has allowed this country to be fairly well organized, to be fairly peaceful with tremendous freedom, with tremendous opportunities to travel. London must be the travel hub of the entire universe, much less the world. Manchester doesn't agree with that.

And I want to tell you, if Britain cannot continue to play a major role in world missions, with all the resources, with the location, with the fact that it's relatively easy to just live your life here, so you can use a lot of your time in serving others. In many other countries, all of your effort is just survival. It's just survival.

In many countries you have to have two jobs just to live. And you send your wife out to work. And at the end of the day, you don't have much time free.

I'm thinking of countries that are economically in difficulty. They're the countries often I visit. But God has blessed this country.

I know that's a cliché. I know that it's something we don't understand because there's so many things wrong as well. And there's so much evil and so much sin and hate and abortion and corruption and lies.

That has always been true of every nation in the world. Injustice and lying. You think it's only South Africa who everybody seems to want to pick on these days, where injustice is? Many of these people who speak of these things are naive.

Injustice is everywhere. Racism is everywhere. Hatred is everywhere.

And though I believe very strongly, of course, that things that are happening in these countries are wrong, I myself want to be careful of just throwing out simplistic little answers. I want to search the scriptures. I want to know what's on the heart of Jesus Christ for South Africa.

I want to know what's on the heart of Jesus Christ for Kerala, South India, where I've seen racism that can match anything I saw in South Africa. I want to know what's on the heart of Jesus Christ concerning people and nations. And that's why my commitment, though I have interest in many things and I'm involved in many things, my priority commitment is to preach Christ and Christ crucified.

And I tell you, this is becoming less and less popular today. We are living in a day of many Gospels, many Gospels. People speak of the Social Gospel.

People speak of the Revolutionary Gospel. And today, it seems to me, if we get into the New Testament without just pulling things out of context, we are going to go back to what the Apostle Paul said, I choose to know nothing among you but Christ and Christ crucified. All these other things can have a place.

The preaching of the Gospel, seeing people saved, having their lives turned around, will have powerful social implications. You know, if we never preach the Gospel, if we don't obey Jesus Christ and the Great Commission, if we're not able to convert what we hear in a weekend like this into dynamic action in our own lives, then it's not going to happen. It's not going to happen.

I wanted to put a little plug in for reaching the elderly with the Word of God because they are becoming a bigger, bigger segment of our community and they are forgotten and they are neglected. How many of you have shared Jesus Christ with one elderly senior citizen person in the last month? You've shared the Gospel, or even just the love of Christ. You didn't tell them the Gospel, but you did something for them.

You shared some love with some elderly person in the last month. Raise your hand. Encourage my heart.

I need encouragement. You've just depressed me anyway. We'll try again next year.

You know, if some of you are students, you know the sin of many of our university towns, don't you? University snobbery. In university town after town that I've been going to for 23 years in this nation, I found that the people in the town can't stand the people in the college and university. And I found that there's almost a wall between them.

There are beautiful exceptions, and praise God, it's often in the churches and among the Christians. But it's way, way, way, way too good. And if you're going back to a university town, how many of you are university and college students? Raise your hands.

That's about 80 percent. As you go back to that town, how many of you are from my big town, London? We need more from London next year. Next year we need to bring coaches up from London.

But as you go back to that university town, why don't you covenant with God to relate and to love a few elderly people? My next door neighbors are elderly people, and they've become close friends. I don't think

they know Jesus, but I'll tell you, we've got a meaningful relationship with those people. And God wants to give you meaningful relationships.

Evangelism is not some mechanical thing that you grind up at weekend conferences or Easter evangelism and then somehow you run out of steam a few weeks later when it gets rough and tough and you get misunderstood, or your church doesn't want you to give out tracts at the supermarket in front of the church building. Evangelism must involve relationship. It must involve commitment.

It must involve 1 Corinthians 13 love. It's not only that. You know, and we believe in almost every kind of evangelism you can think of, and even some you've never thought of.

Beware. But the bottom line is love. Deeds.

Deeds. Action. Stopping to help elderly people.

Taking time for that little crippled girl at the end of the street. I remember going door-to-door many years ago in a town in southern England along the coast where we have so many lovely churches. The man didn't feel I should go door-to-door on Sunday afternoon.

He wanted me to rest, but anyway I'm not easily intimidated, so I told him to get lost and went out the door. And I went down that street, and I found that most of the people on that street were willing to talk to me. Most of them took some literature.

Most of them had hurts of some kind, and most of them had no relationship with any kind of believer or Christian and did not understand what they were doing in the little chapel at the end of the road. They didn't understand what that was about. Others were just downright bitter.

One lady had a heart attack. It may have been a man. I think it was a man.

Had a heart attack, and no one seemed to care, and the only person that meant anything to him in the world was the man who gave him heart surgery a doctor. Brothers and sisters, as we go away from this conference, we've got a job to do. We have got to put into practice.

Now, I know the danger is for the idealistic type that you will attempt to do too much, and that always worries me. I was speaking at a college in London University. It was a college where there were a lot of nurses.

I think one connected with a hospital, and the chaplain was sitting in the meeting. I don't think he was an evangelical Christian, but he sat in the meeting and I spoke on the subject of love within limits. Have you ever heard a message on that? Love within limits, and I pointed out how I learned the hard way, because love was a whole passion of my life, putting it in practice, and I discovered the hard way that I had a lot of limitations, that I could only have an in-depth relationship with so many people and maintain those relationships, that I could only reach out to so many drunkards, I worked among drunkards for a couple of years, that I could only handle so many homosexuals, and I worked with homosexuals, and so many poor people, and I was working among the poor, and so many people in prison because I was working in the prison.

Before I was ever born, or I ever went overseas, I was involved in all of that kind of thing in my own college context, in my own hometown, where I was also going door to door selling Christian books, and I learned

the hard way that I have severe limitations, and one of the ways that I learned is because with my vision, and my idealism, and my love, and my desire to be literally obeying the Sermon on the Mount, I developed continual guilt and neurosis, and I was living in a state at times, though I was enjoying the Lord, I was experiencing His grace, there was the continual nagging of, you're never doing enough, you're always failing people, you're always hurting, you're not reaching out, and the pressure that this brought upon my wife is just staggering to the imagination. When we first arrived in Mexico, I almost immediately went out, fished someone in off the street. She had just become accustomed to living in this little, we were living in the back of a bookshop, and there was no room, so we were living in a closet, and in a large, what do you call that over here, it's a word I've never got straight, where you keep your clothes, wardrobe, we're living in a large wardrobe, and there was a lot of tears, and she was just getting used to this wardrobe, it was quite large, and you know, at least it was a little longer than we were, so we could lie down.

Then I brought in someone off the street, because you know what I believe from the Sermon on the Mount, they didn't have any place to stay, helped them out financially, brought them in, and I said to my wife, darling, God's leading us to move out. You know, where are we going? We're moving out. We're giving our room to these people.

Who are they? I met them in the street. The one, the guy's already accepted Christ as his Savior. Back in those days, I gave her Ephesians 5 almost every day.

Ephesians 5, Ephesians 5, Ephesians 5. It's obviously, you're really heavy students of the Word, but uh, anyway, we moved across the other side of the bookshop, where there was a smaller room. I don't know what this room was for. It wasn't long enough, but by squeezing up a little bit when we slept, and having a little table over the bed, and put our things on top of the table, we slept under the table with part of my head out the door.

We couldn't close the door. All in the name of Jesus. All because I was determined to be the totally committed disciple of Jesus Christ, obeying every single verse in the New Testament, whatever the cost.

And it almost cost me my wife, my sanity, who knows what else, certainly friends. And I thank God for that book that came out some years ago, Love Within Limits. We are limited, weak, struggling people.

The Christian life is a long road, and if you try to go out this weekend and put into practice everything you learn here, next week or next month, you're going to start. And I want to give this plea, Love Within Limits. Reach out to the elderly.

Reach out to the poor. Reach out to the needy people around you, but accept the fact that you're going to fail. You're going to witness to some people and turn them off, instead of winning them to Christ.

You're going to make a great, glorious effort to touch your family for God. How many have that as a priority burden? You want to touch your own family for God. Raise your hand.

Right? And yet history will show you that that is the toughest, biggest challenge you can ever take. And to get discouraged because your parents are not believers yet, or to be discouraged because you've hurt your parents after you became a Christian, is to make a big mistake. And if there's any area where you must be patient, you must be balanced, it's in family affairs.

Because it's just a lot more involved than is seen on the surface. And it's not just a matter of praying a prayer. Prayer is not some kind of Aladdin lamp type of operation.

Prayer is waiting on God. It's worship. It's growing in faith.

It's coming into a experience of God on a day-by-day basis, where His will is amalgamated with our will, and we can pray in the Spirit. And one thing we know, no matter how powerful prayer is, that God doesn't, in a sense, answer your prayer by manipulating and running roughshod over other people's wills. And so we pray, and God hears that prayer, and He speaks to a person, but they may reject it, or they may throw it aside.

And so we pray again, and God in His mercy, He touches that person again. He may bring someone into their life, or a book, or something. We have to learn what it is to persevere in prayer.

We have to learn what it is to maintain our joy when that prayer is not being answered. My own experience, and oh, I'm known all over the world in some circles as a man of faith who has seen thousands of answers to prayer, which of course is true. But sometimes in my messages in early years, I deceived people because I didn't talk enough about my unanswered prayers.

And I will tell you, you may not think this, but you are looking at a broken person, a wounded, broken person that will never be what he was in the 20s. So there's no sense turning the pages back. Many of my deepest prayers in which I have fasted, sometimes up to three days when I couldn't even walk, have never been answered.

This was such an agony upon my soul as a young student that I almost abandoned the Christian faith, because I'm just that kind. My kind of character were categorized by some psychiatrists as dangerous. We go very, very heavy with everything we got, and when we leave it, we go down like a rocket.

Somehow because of other people, because of people's prayers, at those moments of desperation when some of my prayers were not being answered, and when it seemed at times when I prayed for certain situations, have you ever had this? It actually got worse. If you have ever had that, maybe I can relate to you. I don't relate well to people who have it all together.

I admire people who have it all together, tremendous answers to prayer, people of faith, name it, claim it, you know, healing. You know, I like to take a picture. God bless you.

Somehow I relate to people like myself that somehow feel they're just on the borderline. Have you heard that new pop song, Borderline? It's just about coming apart. But I want to tell you, though I have felt at times for 20 some years, that I'm just about coming apart.

Do you ever have a holy scream? It's great for my kind of temperament. Go in the woods, go in the closet, you have a holy scream. If I did that now, number one, it damaged my vocal cords, number two, it upsets the English, which is a majority group here.

But I'll tell you, let's not fake it. Let's not fake it. You're not going to get through living 10 more years in this crazy planet with Satan doing what he's doing from one end of the earth to the other, with the misery and the suffering.

You're not going to get through the relationship hassles, and the family hassles, and the university hassles, and the dating hassles, and the financial hassles. Probably you're not going to get through, most of you, without a few screams, even if it be mainly within. And some of us as Christians, we can look all right on the outside, but inside we're screaming.

And I have the ability sometimes to look all right on the outside, and people say, oh, there goes George Burroughs, dynamite for God. And inside, I'm just screaming. I've just watched something on television that's eating away at my heart.

I've just thought again about the Bihari refugee camps. I've just thought again about South Africa. I've just thought again about friends who are having terminal cancer and are screaming in their hospital beds from pain.

And I just pray that among other things, this weekend has been a burst of holy ghost reality in your heart as to what life is about. Any fool can learn by his mistakes. It takes a wise man to learn by instruction.

And we've had men of God and women of God here from all walks of life for these three days, opening their hearts, sharing what life's about, what being as a leader is about, both the pain and the blessing. And I pray you'll not forget it. And I pray that by faith, you'll convert it into action.

You'll refuse to be discouraged, and you'll bounce back every time you fall on your nose. I've fallen so many times, it's a miracle I even have one. I know this.

As Peter emphasized in that first message Friday night, it's God's grace to weak people. It's God's grace and forgiveness to pick us up, put us back on the road when we fail. I'd love to hear from some of you in the next month.

I'll be up front giving out my little calendars. Just got a new fresh supply. Look at that.

And it's a miracle. These are 86 calendars. I'm famous around the world for giving calendars that are year old.

This is 86. I'd love to hear from you in the coming months, but I'll tell you something I prefer. I'd love to hear from you 10 years from now.

I'd love to hear from you 10 years from now and know that you've walked with Jesus every day since this weekend. I'd like to hear from you 10 years from now and know that you have a godly marriage where Christ is Lord. I'd like to hear from some of you 10 years from now from Africa and India and the uttermost parts of the earth where you're planting churches among the unreached people.

I'd love to hear from some of you 10 years from now who may be vicars in the Anglican church or ministers in the Baptist church or elders in the Brethren Assembly in Carlisle, but somehow you're going on. You're still running the race. You're still loving Jesus.

You've been hit. You've been discouraged. You've been misunderstood.

Life hasn't been what you perhaps dreamed it would be at 19, but somehow you've put your hands on the plow and you're not turning back. That's the message I want to leave with you as you go today. No turning back.

Come what may, the whole hell will turn loose on you and your family. You'll stand firm on the promises of God, in the sovereignty of God, and believe for the forgiveness and the mercy and the grace to keep on keeping on. And I'll tell you, the likes of characters like Peter Conlon and myself and so many of us in OM, I wish Rex could come and share his testimony.

This chief engineer who God saved out in the middle of nowhere and brought into our ship, one of the oldest passenger ships in the world. I used to go down and visit Rex in the engine room and I tell you sometime when I saw the work he had to do and the obstacles and the problems, I would just weep. And when I think of the grace of God in Rex's life and the grace of God in so many OM friends that I see everywhere in this auditorium, then I know he can keep anybody here.

My brother Moke here, converted from a Muslim background. Years ago, I never told him this, might as well tell him now. When I met him, I thought, you know, is he going to keep going? So many Muslims, when the pressure comes on, they just can't keep it.

Ninety percent failure rate in Turkey, approximately. Here's a brother that's been going on for a decade or so for the Lord Jesus Christ, though he had all that in his background. You don't have to be from a Muslim background to have a lot of things against you.

A lot of young women today have been raped before they were 12. A little girl came to me some time ago and been raped again and again and again by her own grandfather. How is that going to be healed? I will tell you where sin abounds, grace doth more abound.

Never forget it. Though you may feel you're such an unworthy character, though you may fail even in your Christian life as I did, where sin abounds, grace doth more abound, and that's what this has got to be about. It's not rules, it's not discipleship programs, it's not getting all heffed up in a weekend conference and going out of here like some kind of wind-up spiritual tornado.

It's the grace of God available to all temperaments, all nationalities, and I'll tell you, we Americans can get a hold of it. Anybody can. And I'm still praying for the salvation of J.R. because nothing, nothing, nothing is too hard.

I think it's too late for Bobby, but nothing, nothing is too hard for the Lord. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, you know how complex many of us are.

We laugh, we cry, we sing, we dance. We get hurt by people one minute and we embrace them and love them the next minute. We shout at our wives one minute and tell them to go wash their hair, and the next minute we're hugging and repenting and jumping through the tulips like a couple of young lovers.

We thank you, Father, that as Christians we're not running away from life. We're not running away from television or the arts. We're not running away from politics.

We're not running away from atheists or social action or institutions. We're not running away from each other or the church with all of her need and all of the mess factor. But we are among those people who have put our hands on the plow, are looking light straight in the eye, and we are by your strength saying we will not turn back.

We will not turn back. As Eric Little, we will run the race to the end, though we're in utter pain as we cross the finishing line. And oh God, when those subtle intimidations of Satan come upon us, even this very day, we will hold the shield of faith and stop that fiery dart.

And if we fail or it gets through our armor, then we will repent and we will claim your cleansing, and we will bounce back and get back into the ring, even if we have to go 15 rounds with a personified devil. Oh God, grant us wisdom in these things. Take us deeper into your word in these weeks to come.

We will know how to wear the whole armor, that we will be in your Holy Spirit-controlled training program the rest of our lives. For we ask this in faith, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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