

United Action - Orientation 6

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the critical importance of unity among believers for effective action in spiritual warfare.

Duration: 52:52

Scripture: John 17:20

Topics: "Unity in the Church", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

George Verwer emphasizes the necessity of united action in the face of spiritual warfare, urging believers to be motivated by love and compassion as they prepare for outreach. He highlights that faith naturally leads to action, and that unity among believers is crucial for effective ministry and overcoming disunity, which hinders the church's mission. Verwer points to Jesus' prayer for unity in John 17 as a model for the church, stressing that true unity is rooted in the atonement and love of Christ. He warns against the dangers of disunity and encourages believers to approach conflicts with grace and forgiveness, reminding them that a divided house cannot stand. Ultimately, he calls for a collective commitment to prayer and action, grounded in the love of Christ.

Transcript

The subject, action, united action. Let us pray. God, as the time of the crusade draws near, as the time in which we will be launching out into unreached territory for Christ draws closer, we're aware of our weakness.

We're aware of how, how frail we are when it comes to living the life of love and faith. But we know that God in you there is strength. And we pray that during this hour you would unite us for battle.

That you would unite us for the offensive against the enemy. And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now once we are properly motivated by love, once we are compelled by love, once we are moved with compassion, something is going to happen. It's called Jesus to go into the villages. And as each of us realize that we're in a warfare, and then we realize that we have weapons, and we learn to use these weapons, and then finally we're motivated by the love of Christ, action is going to take place.

It always will. Faith always produces action. A man who's sitting in his home and his wife comes out and says there's a fire in the kitchen is not going to remain sitting there if he's going to move, he's going to

mobilize.

There's going to be some action. Faith produces action. And when you and I begin to believe the word of God, when you and I begin to believe the teachings of Christ, when you and I really begin to believe that our situation is a warfare, it's stupid and ridiculous to have action before that.

When one of the national governments of the world decides that it's going to go to war, it doesn't just say, well the situation's at war, let's go, and they start running off to fight. No. And as we read the New Testament, we see that Jesus had a strategy, Jesus had a plan, Jesus had a purpose, a foreordained, God-ordained purpose in everything he did.

He wasn't a scatterbrain. He was never late for a meeting. He was never in a hurry.

There was no disorder or confusion about the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Constantly walking in the will of the Father, which was his meat, according to Job. And so as we consider this task, we realize that it's a warfare, a prayer, the word of our weapon, motivated by love, which is also at the same time a weapon, that this is going to bring action.

But there must be strategy, there must be a plan, too. It can't just be a scatterfire, but it must be a planned action. And in our next tape, we'll be discussing the kind of action we need.

This week, the first and the groundwork of the kind of action, the kind of offensive we need, is unity. It must be a united offensive. It must be a united action.

Next week, Dale O'Connell will speak to us on the subject of reproduction. That our action and our offensive must be reproductive. He'll bring us a message on this subject of reproducing for Jesus Christ.

Another week after that, we'll be hearing a message on discipline. Our action must be disciplined. Our defensive, our offensive must be a disciplined offensive.

So now we're going to the subject of unity. There's no better place in the Scriptures to start the subject of unity than in the seventeenth chapter of John, where Jesus is praying the great prayer in which he prays for unity, in which he prays that we would be united with him, that we would be one. John chapter seventeen, verse twenty.

I'd like to read the whole chapter, but we never seem to have enough time to bring forth all that is not our heart. The twentieth verse. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe of me through their words, that they all may be one.

As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

The world today is looking with utter confusion upon wondering which group could possibly have the truth. And even when they look into the evangelical church, even when they look into the fundamental church, the Bible-believing church, they find at times so much confusion and so much disunity that they hardly know where to go. The church has been torn in six by disunity.

It's hard to find a church in America that has not had a major contention or a major disunity problem within the past five or ten years. Disunity is probably one of the greatest fruits of an unloving life. It's love that brings unity.

In fact, if we came to grips with the message we received in our last session, but I want us again to look into the will of God, to go from book after book in the New Testament and see what God is, that you and I and the other team members be united as we go forward to battle. Just how important is it that we have unity there on our school campus or in our home church or wherever we are? Just how important is this unity? Well, it was important enough for Jesus Christ to pour out his heart over us. And when we realize the essence of unity, we realize that it's in the atonement.

Unity was wrought for us in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. We were away from God. We were strangers.

We were awaited. We were brought back to God. We were reconciled to God through the cross.

We had been reconciled. That's the word of God. And when we are reconciled to God, the cross has two great pieces of life.

One goes vertical, which to me stands for our relationship, our vertical relationship with God. Unless there's that great cross, to me this is brought clearly into my thinking when I think of the words of Jesus who said, and whatsoever you do unto the least of these my brethren, you do it unto me. What would happen to us if moment by moment, day by day, hour by hour, we realize whatsoever we do unto the least of these, unto the weak convert, unto the man who seems to think proud, to the teacher who we don't appreciate, to this person who doesn't agree with our theology, to that person who doesn't agree with our evangelistic effort, whatsoever we do unto these, we do unto the Lord Jesus Christ, do it in my name, will not go unrewarded.

Here again we are to some teachings that are so revolutionary, so dynamic, so new, so different, so out of the American way, out of the British way, that it's hard for us even to... And so we pass them by, like we do with most of the basic teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, we manage to theorize them, we manage to rationalize them, and away we go, eating away at our little side issues, our little secondary matters, arguing over little bits of prophecy, and missing the main brunt of the gospel. H.G. West, who wrote one of the most famous histories of all of civilization, that shortly after Jesus Christ left the earth, his followers twisted his revolutionary teachings. He used the word revolution, and he went on to say that shortly after a few centuries went by, rituals and all these other things, for the basic revolutionary teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now we in the modern church are screaming at a desk and swallowing a pillow. How true it is that we have eyes but see not, ears but hear not, as the devil of the old. God said in the third chapter of Revelation, we have a name that we live, oh yes, we've got names, we've got reputations, you sing in a choir, you're the president of your class, you let us overdrive last week, and you're in charge of the social club, and you do this and you do that, and you're the chaplain, and you've given devotions, or led devotional messages, and your church thinks you're quite keen, and they're helping pay your way through Bible school.

We've got names, we've got reputations, we're evangelicals, we're fundamental, we're Bible-believing, we're the Christians, we're the Lords of the Word of God, we've got names that we're alive, oh yes, we've all got names, oh so many names there are these days, to give to those people who claim to follow Jesus

Christ. But God says, you have a name that you live, but you're dead. Could that be true about some of us who are listening to this day? It was true in my life, and at times, as I read that passage afresh, I realize it's even true today.

You've got a name, George Burmer, director of OM, director of Stem the Life, he's the live wire, you've got a name that you live in, you're a leader of young people, you've got what it is, that they all may be one, may they all still be one in heart. We see that they were black corn, we see that they had all things common, we see a group of people, this is the prayer, the greatest of all the folks, how do we think there can be unity all by going through a little motion? It's beyond my understanding, but the devil is doing it. There must be regeneration waiting in the future.

The unity that Jesus Christ talks about here is something that is Jesus prayed for unity. And we see this in a book, how Jesus laid out the 18th chapter, we see one of Jesus' most basic teachings concerning the maintaining of the unity, as we work together as a team, as we go forward to Mexico. Now let's be realistic, let's see things as they are.

There's two people in all the world right now that are working together in unity. For eight years in all my travels in twenty different countries, I've looked for groups, splits, divisions, arguments, seeking for vainglory, jealousy, strife, envy, pride, all these things I've managed. This can be one of those heart-breaking things in Christian work.

And it's better to learn now back in school than go out to the field and learn the hard way and be like many who never learned. If you think you're going to go out into Christian work, you will find as we have found, and as all Christian organizations have found, that the biggest enemies can be those of others. And it isn't just operation mobilization in these days, every piece of matter.

God doesn't want us just to push things in. We need to walk in the light. And here, in the 18th chapter of Matthew, it shows what we're to do.

... up a sin in our brother that causes us not to be able to have fellowship with him, starting at the 15th verse. But over this my brother shall trespass against thee. His fault, between thee and him... ... in this crusade, we must go quick before we begin.

If you think your leader is going to be perfect, you're really out for disillusionment. If you think the directors of this work are a bunch of sharp men, are a bunch of keen Christians, are a sort of spiritual supermen, you're really out for disillusionment. The basis of unity is not perfection.

The basis of unity is the cross of Jesus Christ, forgiveness, mercy, and love. And if you're going to have unity with any brother, it can't be based on the fact that you think he's keen. It can't be based on the fact that you think he's dedicated, or you think he's spiritual.

It has to be on the basis of unity. And this is why our unity doesn't last. Because we base it on our own truth.

We base it on even anything from the way a man looks, to the way a man talks, to the way he prays. Instead of basing it on the fact that we have been united in the Beloved. We have been accepted together in the Beloved, says John.

And so when things do arise, when problems do come up, when there is sin, God's provision is life absolutely. Don't just hide it. But go to your brother.

Now we want to put this into practice. We're not just talking about faith theory. We're not asking you to do this so that you can be able to tell someone else to order with God's way of doing it.

It means if you're in Mexico, and you see some brother, maybe he loses it. Weep out. And in terms of every inch of... But if We've seen it work for centuries.

Day after day, he's sued against that team. Silly team members never approached him on a scriptural basis. They back-fought, they argued, they got him bitter.

Too wrong. Never did think of this fellow. He had already been approached against God in serious things.

And right there was the spot he repented and confessed his sin. This is God's way to have unity. But remember, when you love, joy, peace, long-suffering, generous goodness, and if that isn't evident, probably all you'll do is stir the water in... Oh my God, show us that there's a way to unity.

There is unity in Jesus Christ. A wonderful, wonderful unity. Now I want you to turn to Mark chapter 3, the 24th verse.

We read this. As if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. As if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

And if Satan rise up against himself and be divided, he cannot stand, but have an end. There is here a tremendous spiritual principle that's expressed in other places in the Word of God. It's expressed in basically this whole idea that a house divided against itself will fall.

As we said in our opening prayer, most of us, as we hear these challenges, as we see the task ahead of us, as we see the money we need to pray in, oh how we need to get desperate concerning the financial situation, how we need to believe God, how we need to take by faith that which we need. And I'll tell you, the reason we aren't sometimes getting places in the realm of praying in funds is we aren't united. I tell you, it's in these prayer meetings when our hearts become united in Jesus Christ and when we lay down all of our little petty differences and we become one in Christ as they will in the New Testament, that we can unite concerning the funds we need.

And in this tremendous battle to reach men for Christ, we need to see money. Money is manpower. If we were living maybe a few thousand years ago, we wouldn't need money, because if you wanted to have a shoe put on your horse while you, maybe you're working in a garden, you bring me some tomatoes and I'll put a shoe on your horse.

But now we use this thing, this exchange rate, this currency, and so money represents talent, time, energy, man, effort, all converted into currency. That's why we pray for funds. We're not praying for money, we're praying for manpower.

Money represents manpower. My father back in New Jersey worked hard there in New Jersey, but he invested money in Europe for the salvation of souls, and it's just as if he were working in Europe. And I believe on the basis of Matthew 9, praying for laborers into the harvest, we pray for money, we pray for labor power into the harvest.

And we need to get desperate concerning this, and we need to realize how close this is hinged with our unity one toward another and our unity together in prayer, that we might see real answers. And if your group there and your college is all divided by petty differences and status seeking and desire, who's going to be leader of this fellow's leader, he's really not capable, and maybe I should be the leader, and all this nonsense, you're never going to claim what you need. You're never going to claim that transportation, you're never going to claim the money.

A house divided against itself will fall, and if your little group there on your campus, your prayer group, your orientation group, is divided against itself and is not united, it's not going to see great things for God. As I look back over the history of this work and see the fantastic things that God has done, and I've seen this world grow from just three fellows going into Mexico with one truck until 2,000 young people last summer with 150 vehicles moved over a million miles of highway to reach this point out of Europe. The unity that God has given us.

Dale over there in Turkey, Greg over there in India, Dick Dry over there in Iran, and Maynard down in Iraq, and Jonathan over there in Switzerland, and Federico down in Spain. I also understand how I can love some of the Italians in our world, that our unity might again be strength, the instrument blunt, disunity makes the instrument cold, evangelistic. God says it's rubbish.

Paul said I tell all things are dumb, but I might know Jesus Christ. Oh, that we might be one as they, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one. It can happen, and when it happens, miracles will take place.

Mechanics and stenographers and type directors and literature men and radio men and evangelists and teachers become united in Jesus Christ, and they will be reconciled. There will be spiritual dynamite set off that will eventually shake the whole world for God as they're here and there scattering the church. God hasn't called us to judge the church.

God hasn't called us to sit over the church and pass judgment upon it. God, oh, my God. And Romans 1, 12, Greg talks about it a lot, but then I want you to turn on to Corinthians, the 12th chapter.

It's the enemy, 1 Corinthians 12, there at the 14th verse, for the body is not as the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not as the nose, the hearing, wherewithal, the smelling. Now God has set the members, every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him, and if they were all one member, where were the bodies? And now are they many members, yet but one body, and the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more, those members of the body which seem to thee to bestow more abundant honor, and are in comely parts, have more abundant comeliness.

For our comely parts had no need, but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked. That there should be no division or schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.

One member be honored, all members rejoice with it. Now you have a body of Christ, and members in particular. God hath set some of the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, health, government, diversities of tongues.

Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? Let us come Oh my God, open our eyes to tremendous, tremendous link with prayer. And Philippians 2 drives the same thing home when it says let nothing be done through strife or vainglory at that state of seeking, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other as better than themselves. Let not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, and then it talks about the humiliation of Jesus Christ. Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. I love the way that follows the verse on his feet.

Because indeed this is the hardest, but this is where we're going to have unity, when we learn to esteem the other as better than ourselves. This can experimentally and practically become a reality in our lives as we realize just where we stand before God. And as we realize that time is relative.

You see, we judge people on a time basis. We say, well this fellow is away from the Lord five years ago or five weeks ago. What he did five years ago is still going on.

And when we look at a man who's 60 years old and we say, well he's dead, he's not on fire, he's lukewarm. What are you going to do when you're 60 years old? All the judgment you give is a judgment you get. And you look at a church and you say, well they're not really on fire, they're not evangelizing, they're not witnessing, they have no vision.

What's your church going to be like when you're 60 years old? And you look at a pastor and you say, well, I'm going to be a pastor 25 years from now. Beware. Beware.

You'd better esteem him as better than yourself in the light of the relativity of time, in the light of the fact that you don't really know who has judged the outward appearance, and how easy it is to be wrong in your judgments. I've had people come to me. We always look at the bad.

If a man has done 99 good things in his life and one bad thing, I guarantee you that's the thing that people will talk about and remember. And so you can go and talk to somebody about a friend of yours and you say, he's good, he's good at this, he's good at that, he's good at this, he's good at this, and he's this, and he's terrific. And then just toward the end of the conversation you mention one or two things where he's sort of really fouled up and that he's sort of sinned.

I guarantee you that's the one thing they'll remember. Peter says love covers a multitude of sins. We need to look at the book of Proverbs to see how the tongue caught this unity in Christ.

And a man offended is harder to win than a high castle. We need to look at the book of James, the third chapter, and see what God said about controlling our tongues. We need to look at the book of James, the third chapter, and see what God said about controlling our tongues.

The disagreements will cause us to love one another more as the blood of Christ covers all. And with all this in mind, we appropriate that which Jesus Christ has done on the cross. And we realize God has answered that prayer that Jesus prayed.

And we have become one as they are one. And to fight in this coming crusade. And accept that which God has said.

And appropriate all that God has given us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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