

Watch Your Step

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the critical importance of leadership qualifications and the challenges faced by church leaders in maintaining integrity and spiritual maturity.

Duration: 49:41

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Timothy 3:16, 1 Timothy 4:12, Hebrews 12:15

Topics: "Watchfulness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the challenges and disappointments that long-term, full-time Christian workers may face. He emphasizes the importance of understanding that their expectations of leaders and colleagues may not always align with reality. The speaker also highlights the need for Christian workers to be mindful of their actions, words, and interactions with others, including handling money and dealing with different types of people. He encourages the audience to seek wisdom from above, walk in holiness and integrity, and be obedient to God's guidance in their work.

Transcript

I'd like us to just look together at 1st Timothy chapter 3. As I mentioned already this week, we just finished our meeting with subcontinent leaders. I believe this new book, *Rebuilding Your Broken World*, is certainly going to be one of the most strategic books of this decade. I just had a letter from another brother who once labored with us, X.O. Emmer, whose wife again and again has fallen into unbelievable adultery beyond almost imagination.

And again and again he has taken her back. Now it is broken again and it will go to the divorce courts. When I think of those people, I don't know if they ever actually worked in India, they worked in Asia, they worked on the ship.

When I think of those people and how the enemy got in, Bible college graduate, number of children involved, I just wish I had, in my teaching over the years, been even stronger in warning people about the fiery darts of Satan. I barely have spoken on the subject of marriage in recent years. I felt that younger men coming up into the ministry, they should take these sessions.

Maybe I fell for subtle intimidations, innuendos, criticism. Very seldom speak on the subject of sex. Again, felt younger men should take those sessions.

They have, usually at the summer campaign, but often the people who were under attack were not sitting in those meetings. And quite a few of them felt they didn't need it. They've already heard, you know, there's 500 verses in the Bible on the subject of sex, but somehow they have it in their head.

They've already heard the message. Stuart McAllister, Nigel Lee, others have given tremendous messages on this subject. That isn't my subject this morning, but I just share those things to somehow try to drive into your hearts that you men and women are now in very key positions of leadership.

You are incredibly vulnerable. One slip on your part could make such a mess in OM India. It will go into international publicity.

It will cause division in a movement, OM, that has enough division under the carpet to blow it in two in about ten days. Because all we need is a couple of our top people just to say, including me, you know, I just can't handle it anymore. I don't know what happened to this movement I started, but, you know, it's not the movement that I aimed it to be.

And so, you know, you carry on, but I'm leaving. I dare to say such a decision would cause a few ripples somewhere among our prayer partners and among other people. I have no plan to do that, but there is a tendency to think that somehow people like Dale Roton, people like Peter Maiden, you name whoever you want, they'll somehow just go on, you know, some kind of OM leadership clone that is above these things.

But I tell you, when Gordon McDonald fell, every evangelical with half a brain shook because he was a man of God and a man of discipline. And yet, he went down, you know, as if someone had planted a piece of dynamite under his desk. Let's look at, once again, these qualifications for leadership found in 1 Timothy chapter 3. It's been a very enlightening few days, especially having time with Phil Bushell and seeing what he is wrestling with to try to establish living churches among Muslims.

When we read about these things in the West, it becomes like a little fantasy story. But when you get with a person who's been in it for years, now one of the senior missionaries in Bangladesh, and realized the complexity and the problems. I think they read one of these passages about eldership recently.

And if they follow this to the kind of interpretation some legalistic minded people have, of course, there is no hope whatsoever for any leadership among these new started Muslim churches. You might as well quit before you start because you'll just never, humanly speaking, find Muslim converts present who are going to, you know, live all of this out so that they can become elders. So it is a difficult passage, combine it with other similar passages.

But at the same time, most of us, if not all of us here, are committed to not compromising the Word of God. Whether these are goals or absolute rules that must be applied in a very strong way, would probably be debatable. I've always leaned a little bit more toward the latter that, you know, these were really basics.

And yet we know that most Christian leaders fail in these things. Do they get immediately fired? And again, I'm tying this in with the other passage on this subject from Titus. This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, some interpret that elders, he desireth a good work.

Bishop or an elder then must be blameless, husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior. It's pretty basic, isn't it? Given the hospitality, apt to teach. I believe that means teachable.

What are some of your other translations saying? Able to teach. So it means he's, he probably is teachable, but he's able to teach the Word. That fits in more with the context.

Not given to wine, causes some people difficulty in Europe. Not violent, not greedy of money, filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler. What do you have for that one in a modern translation? Well, the whole verse says self-controlled, respectful, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness.

That's better for Europeans. Yes. Not violent, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

Good. Quarrelsome. Brawler.

One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God? Not a novice or recent convert, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. By the way, in Bangladesh, that's all they have, is recent converts.

So that's, that's interesting. Of course, the whole word recent convert is relative. Is that two years? Is that six months? Is that ten years? Lest he fall into reproach in the snare of the devil.

In like manner must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre. Holding the mystery of the faith. Oh, I love those words.

Because to me, there are a lot of mysteries, more than when I graduated from Bible college. Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved.

Then let them use the office of a deacon. Being found blameless. Quite a few churches do require people to be deacons before they allow them to be elders.

They never want to leave out the women. Even so, must their wives be grave. It's a good modern word for that.

Worthy of respect. Worthy of respect. Not slanderers, sober-minded, faithful in all things.

Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife. Ruling their children, their own houses well. For they that have used the office of deacon, well purchased to themselves a good standing, great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. For if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is in the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness.

God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the nations, believed unto the world, received up into glory. Let's just pray. Father, speak to our hearts and cause us to be obedient to what you say and to take some new territory by faith during our days together.

Lord, deliver us from thinking that it's the new recruit or the new young team leader that needs training. We need training, advanced training by your Holy Spirit in your Word. And we know often because we've heard so much that it's not easy for us to know when there is some new thing you're trying to get us to act upon and to do something about in our own lives.

So just really guide us together as we look at your Word, as we look at the work we're involved in, as we consider how we can improve our own life, our own leadership, and our work for your glory throughout India. In Jesus' name, amen. I have a message that I share sometimes.

It's quite different to young people thinking about career service, long-term, full-time Christian work. I shared it in the U.S. Center for World Missions. That's five points because, you know, we have Luke 14.

There's a lot of pressure on young people in some places to go to the mission field. Terrific pressure. And people, it puts people's backs up.

Sometimes the ones that we actually would like to get to come are the ones that get their backs put up by some other little missionary zealot who quite doesn't know exactly what it's really all about. I mean, who does? So I try not to just challenge people to go. I try to challenge people, I think I generally always have, but I hope in a little more intelligent way, to count the cost.

So I shared this little message at the U.S. Center. I think I had four points. I put them here in my Bible.

Four things I can guarantee you if you're going to become long-term, full-time Christian worker. A term we don't always like, but it communicates. Number one, your heart will be broken many times and you will face many disappointments.

They need to know that from day one. We know their disappointments will often be the very leaders, people they have to work with who cannot possibly live up to these missiological fantasies that they have created during their academic years of reading. They're willing to acknowledge that they don't have these things in their lives, but they surely expect anyone they meet on the field.

And the longer you've been on the field, like you men, the more difficult it is, because the more they expect. They don't realize that in fact as you get older, in the work, and have been through many, many a spiritual battle, there are wounds that will never totally be healed. That's one of the reasons God's using books like Healing for Damaged Emotions and Marjorie Foyle's books.

There's an enormous concern in the West right now for the tremendous dropout on career missionaries. It's not anything new. It's the same thing you were talking about when I was a first year person at Moody Bible Institute.

But it's obvious that being a career missionary is a lot more complicated, a lot more difficult than some people want to face. I, however, discover that full-time Christian work in a person's home country often is just as agonizing with just as many heartbreaks and just as many difficulties. It's not primarily a geographical thing.

In fact, sometimes the geographical things help, because we have to focus on those rather than just focusing on other people. The second thing I mentioned, I thought you might want to know what I'm speaking about these days. You will face endless financial pressure, battles and problems, and also a wide range of differences of opinion on simple lifestyle and how money should be spent.

It's been true the whole history of missions. It's always been a sore point, a difficult point. How much should the missionaries get? How should they get it? Is it a salary? Is it by faith? Is it an allowance? And, of course, there's a great voice that comes right behind that and says, you know, you ought to earn your own living.

And a number of other things about how he allowed a woman to waste valuable ointment on his feet. It does seem that when people want to teach something, they can find a verse. And again and again, you know, I've sort of stopped in my tracks, clobbered by some verse that I hadn't quite thought about.

And of course, as they go into the Old Testament, they can come up as the children of God family of love cult with verses for almost every possible sin and sordid affair. And then thirdly, you will discover that roots of bitterness can come in very easily in Christian work. That Christian work sometimes due to satanic opposition can be far more difficult and complex than secular work, especially when the money and motivation factor is no longer there.

I guess we've all seen these things in various ways over the years. And when we speak to young people, certainly we don't want to present them a negative, you know, just totally negative picture. So you can be sure I usually balance such things out.

I don't speak on this that often. I don't have that much time when I'm asked to speak. But I believe, of course, it is important to count the cost.

Now let's go back to the book of Daniel. I'm going to tie together. Just bear with me.

Book of Daniel, chapter six, I'm spending a lot of time in Daniel in preparation for this spring harvest where I've got to speak to many thousands of people four mornings in a row from the book of Daniel. They provided me some notes so that I supposedly will stay on course. I can't figure out exactly what they're driving at in these notes.

And believe me, you need a Bible scholar to understand the book of Daniel. And what makes it very interesting is that they absolutely disagree. You can't even get agreement as to when it was written or who it was written by.

I'm still trying to figure out who wrote it. I don't think anybody knows. Obviously it wasn't Daniel.

But we're not going to get into that this morning and get you all depressed or confused. We're going to just look at verse, chapter six. Chapter six.

This is a chapter I've always been referring to. Daniel was preferred, verse three, above the presidents and princes because an excellent spirit was in him. The king thought to set him over the whole realm.

This is an amazing occurrence. There's a lot in this book about adjusting to other cultures. There's a lot in this book about how far you should go.

But we're not going to get into that. It is just amazing that this man became sort of a prime minister in a foreign, strange land. Look at verse four.

Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom. But they could find no occasion or fault for as much as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king and said thus unto him, King Darius live forever. All the presidents of the kingdom and governors and the princes and the councilors and the captains have consulted together to establish a royal statute. Talk about a conspiracy.

I mean, how could a man have a chance against this kind of conspiracy? Do you have anything like this being organized against you? It's basically everybody. To make a firm decree that whosoever shall ask petition of any God or man for thirty days except of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now O king, establish the decree, sign the writing, that it be not changed according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

Wherefore King Darius signed writing and the decree. We can learn a lot, by the way, from verse nine. Simple little lesson.

Think twice, pray twice, read twice before you sign anything. Because some of our problems in life come when we sign things without knowing exactly what we're signing. There is such a thing as small print.

Of course, he rushed into this. Verse ten. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, and this always seems to be the greatest act of foolishness on the part of Daniel and myself, you know, I would not have counseled in this way.

I mean, after all, the Bible teaches private prayer, and you're not to practice your piety before men. You know, how do you balance this off with that teaching? You can write me your memo on that. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, his windows being open.

I mean, at least he could have closed the windows, and maybe it was, yeah, right, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem. He knelt upon his knees three times a day and prayed, gave thanks, a little worship meeting before his God, as he did previously. Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying, making supplication before his God.

And you know, the rest of the story led to the great lion's den experience that you have in the latter part of the same chapter. I just want to emphasize this morning, because this, excuse me, message is geared to those of you who are in main leadership positions in this work. I just want to emphasize this morning that, you know, in a sense you are in a Daniel position.

Do not play down the position you are in. This is the work of God. You are the elders.

This group in this meeting are the elders of a significant work of God. If I didn't believe that God raised up this work, not the people who first came here 25 years ago, you know, personally, I'd want out. And God, in His sovereignty, you may feel inadequate.

You may feel overwhelmed, as I often do. I again and again and again and again am amazed at the situations I get into, the leadership position I've been put into. And though we can emphasize being a servant, and we long to be servants with every fiber in us, there is also the message in the Word of God, not just in the Old Testament as here, but in the New, that, you know, there is a need for leaders.

Paul wasn't just a servant. Paul was a leader. And he had to lead, he had to exhort, he had to change, he had to challenge.

He had to call people to repentance. He also pioneered and began whole new churches. How is he going to start a whole new church and the people in the church not look to him for some kind of guidance or counsel or leadership? Buck Singh, not only a servant, as any group that used the name servant, it was the Buck Singh movement, which perhaps should have never been called by that name, but he was a dynamic leader, an authoritarian, and God has sometimes often used authoritarian type leaders.

They often make serious mistakes toward the end of their lives, and the second generation suffers greatly because of that. But that doesn't mean all the work and all the tens of thousands that were converted to Christ. None of that counts.

It's difficult. It's complex. The new book about C.T. Studd brings out some of the truth about the end of his life, and it's not mega-motivating.

My wife read about it a long time ago, I think from a book written by some of the people who left him when things got a bit bizarre. Only history, I guess, will tell the truth. But you men and women are in very, very key places, and Satan is going to increase the pressure on your lives.

I'm trying to find the right words, but I think of just an old cliché, you know, we've got to watch our step. What we do, what we say, who we write, how we handle money, what we do in connection with customs, what we do in connection with immigration, what we do in connection with people who are angry with us, want money from us, ex-OMers, those who are very favorable toward us, and those who would classify themselves. Unfortunately, some of them as our enemies.

Because of lack of carefulness, in my own book, *Revolution of Love and Balance*, a book that I never edited properly, certainly a book that I had very little control over in terms of translation, when it got into Swedish, it says things that I never meant, but those messages came from rather strong verbal messages, and taking that, because it's hard to take the humor and get it into the manuscript. And so when it gets in the manuscript, it gets a little more rigid, and certain words like the church, the book in Swedish comes very, very much across as being anti-church, which wasn't the thrust. I was speaking of the church in a general way when I talk about the church being drowsy or the church needing revival.

But it came across in Swedish a bit anti-church and upset quite a few people in Sweden, and those people fortunately came and confronted me. Now we have a whole book in Swedish against parachurch groups. I'm not the main cause of that, by the way.

But a significant chapter in there really, I've just seen the English translation, really takes OM to the wall. And some of it perhaps couldn't be helped. Some of it could have.

Perhaps what I said and what eventually went into the Swedish edition had been more carefully edited, and maybe if we understood more about culture, the difficulty of translating books and the cultural blunders that can come in those writings. I'm told, by the way, by Swedish evangelicals that somehow God's used this book because most evangelicals have mounted up their attack on this, and they don't accept it. It does say toward the end of the attack on OM that we are learners and we are changing.

In fact, we got a higher rating than some other groups. We need to somehow, as we go forward in this work, claim a little more of what Daniel has here, a little more of this spirit of excellency. Mistakes are costly.

If we had a thorough examination, for a number of years I've been sending people on the ship, key people, my little articles about asbestos, because I had been very conscious of asbestos, and yet when we bought that ship, it never entered my head. I had read about asbestos. I know that contemporary society, they've got a neurosis about asbestos.

We could have nailed that. If I had been more diligent, if I maybe had been a Daniel, I could have nailed that. I never even thought of it, never even thought of it.

Now we've got a problem in Amsterdam that will match anything we've had for a long time. We know, of course, when we make a mistake that we have to claim God's grace. We have to believe that he will overrule, like the blunder I made in Bombay when I first came to this country, thinking that somehow I could help the Lord in his handling of the finance by buying a few extra possessions and then selling them.

We declared all those things at customs just to keep the record straight. It was right up to our quota, but we didn't realize that though that's quota and that's legal, to sell them is illegal. So Verwar and India became history, and here I am in Kathmandu, 20 years a refugee.

Very few governments punish their refugees as great as New Delhi. Just try to get your name off their blacklist. It's an interesting story, but I'm sure God has overruled, but that's no excuse, no excuse for a blunder on my part.

Lack of thoughtfulness, lack of perception. Now in the early days of OM, the blunders sometimes were easier to handle. We were a rather unknown group.

They still cost us, and I don't want to frighten you, but let me tell you, the mistakes in the next few years in OM India could have very, very big dividends and could drag the whole work into confusion and OM International with it because this is considered a key. Next to the ships, people often look to, and with the ships, look to OM India as one of the very key long-term works of this movement. So my prayer really this morning as I share these thoughts is that we may walk carefully before the Lord.

This is why I so firmly believe in team leadership and why I submit to other leaders, especially to Peter Maiden. I may be extreme and sometimes I call him and ask him about things and I'm sure I should just do it, but it's always good to have the unity of another brother about something. An expenditure of money.

Before I purchased that old coach, before that other vehicle I used to sleep in, I got a number of people, the chairman of the board, Peter Maiden and a number of other people to be in unity with me about that. It provides a covering. It means when somebody comes back on you and tries to claim you're doing your own thing, that you're covered, doesn't mean it's a total answer because two of you could make a mistake.

And I just pray that as much as possible in the future that when we make decisions that affect people's lives, that affect relationships with other organizations, that as much as possible two of this team group here could make that decision together. Also later on if accusations come in terms of the false use of money, it's so much better if two people or the group have made that decision. This is why we're not about to build a building in Hyderabad because somebody got a fancy about this.

It's going to be discussed and it's got to be approved even on an international level because of course it affects the whole world. All over the world various fields want to build buildings. You can't even believe all the memos coming down the pipeline on headquarters buildings and houses.

Once you open the door to getting property, which we have done in OM, it gets very, very interesting. So be patient as we pray through this and as we discuss it and come up with what we feel is the best way to go. Realize if we don't go ahead with great wisdom in this project, which is just one of many projects we're facing, it could be misunderstood.

It could bring a lot of confusion. But I believe the Lord can give us wisdom. As we go forward, our relationship with the opposite sex must be completely above board.

We just, in our position of leadership, we cannot afford men to be seen with other women alone. That's not only true in Indian culture. It's true in certain Christian situations.

We believe in OM in other cultures as much as we possibly can. In the West certainly we have to counsel women after meetings. I do that generally, very briefly, try to turn them over to another woman.

But I do it in a group. I don't take this woman back into my upstairs private office so that we can really be alone together and deal with these problems. Case after case, let us not be naive.

Counselors have been seduced by women they were counseling. That was written about in Moody Monthly years ago. I sent the memo around.

In fact, Joyce Landorf wrote the memo. Later to fall into adultery and blow her marriage and her ministry into many, many pieces. You have her books in your library.

She handled it quite wisely and withdrew herself from public ministry. We do have to watch our step perhaps more than the average person because of our place of leadership. I mean, if these men had moved in on Daniel's room, instead of finding him praying three times a day, there was the best looking prostitute in town there in the room, what's he going to say? Well, she was just bringing me a cup of tea or whatever they were drinking.

In those days, I think he would have probably been in big trouble. Got in enough trouble just in praying. And that's what we need to understand.

We'll get in enough difficulty just doing the right thing. We'll be persecuted for righteousness sake. Praise the Lord, that's hard enough.

Being persecuted for your own folly is something that is actually more difficult emotionally and mentally and every other way. So especially in the area of handling money, in the area of everything connected with moral purity, we've got to be incredibly careful and cautious and prayerful. This is why I still urge leaders in OM to walk in the light.

If you feel that you're weakening in some area, walk in the light. Get some extra prayer. Get some extra help.

Now, I realize this isn't as simple as I used to think a long time ago. Because if you're not careful who you walk in the light with, it's that very person that you have shared with who launches the gossip campaign to destroy you. Now, you may sometimes think it's hard to be a leader in OM.

But I believe it's easy in this world compared to being a pastor in the average church. Most pastors have at least somebody in the congregation who has one major goal. Get rid of it.

And I tell you, they are often successful. You watch how many pastors actually stay in a place more than 10 years. And if they do, they usually have quite a gift to get rid of the opposition.

The pastor who's not gifted in getting rid of the opposition or silencing the opposition, he himself will be silenced. That's why, you know, there has to be strong leadership in churches. I was in a tremendous church eight months ago.

Team leadership situation. No one leader with much authority. I was very impressed.

Got a great heart link. I just renewed contact with them a few weeks ago. For six months, the whole movement's been in chaos.

A couple of people started to teach a weak view on inerrancy and what that meant. They're a church, by the way, very doctrinally fine-tuned. They're very broad-minded in a number of areas culturally.

And that's why they would fit. This church would very much fit into it. But doctrinally, they're much more fine-tuned.

Very studious, very theologically tuned. More so than perhaps we are. And so, of course, more easily doctrinal problems come.

And this leader just shared with me on the phone. He had just been to South America, and he saw how some of the churches operate there generally with one man with a fair amount of clout, you know, who can remove people and get on with the job. And, you know, he was being swayed in his philosophy about leadership.

And after what their fellowship went through, with no one with enough authority to really stop the opposition, six months of aggro and problems, he was getting some doubts about their very strong emphasis on team leadership. In OM, we have tried to emphasize both these concepts. We have tried to emphasize team leadership.

But with it, we have acknowledged that God does put his anointing on leaders and that he gives strong leaders who can, especially when he has a consensus of the group, speak with authority, be able to win the confidence of the group in order to make heavy decisions. The hardest decision is to remove anybody from the work. In India, we have had to make those decisions usually.

Here in Kathmandu, it has become a rather famous place. Praise the Lord, we know of no decision this year at this level. Praise the Lord.

A number of you now can relax, especially me. It would be great if you all met up here and decided, George Verwer maybe shouldn't be coming this way anymore. But we want to continue to find that balance.

We want that team leadership, but we also want you men in your different respective situations to have enough spiritual authority to do what needs to be done. And, of course, that means you become even more vulnerable. For years, quite a few of the hard decisions, some of them seem to get made by Ray here, and often with the backing of the group.

And yet again and again, some people would take out their wrath on Ray, and he became the bad guy. Alfie over here is always a little more loving, a little more maneuverable. He became the good guy.

If you want anything, go to Alfie. Don't go to Ray. And, of course, we realize, don't we, Alfie, mistakes can be made in both directions.

So leadership, it is difficult, but I think personally the kind of leadership we have here in the long run is a lot easier than many of our fellow pastors, many men who are in isolated situations. And the enemy seems to be able to set them up. So let's go to Daniel.

Let's go back to Timothy and Titus. Let's set high goals in our leadership. Let's walk in the light, but with great wisdom, and especially incredible care with what we do, with what people share with us in confidence, lest the enemy take that, twist it, and use it to destroy the work of the Lord.

This, to me, is a great challenge for the years to come. And it's not just those two or three areas I've touched on. Every area, right down to the way you drive a vehicle, right down, of course, to the way you treat your wife and your family, right down to every policy that this movement stands for, that as much as possible we will be without blemish, and we will do that which is right, pleasing, and correct before the Lord.

And let me just say that once you're in a Christian leader, even one wrong sentence out of your mouth, especially if it hits the press, and for someone in my position to say something that's not true, or that's harsh, you know, it can cause a lot of difficulty with God's gift of humor, and with a few sentences that will come. When I do make a slip, you know, I can often rectify it. But it's better not to make the slip in the first place.

And some people aren't as gifted in rectifying their slips as maybe I am. I'm not so sure about that. And I talked to a leader some time ago who just didn't realize, he didn't realize the importance of his position and how he was in the public eye.

And an amazing story is Charles Swindoll. I mean, he is, in the United States, you know, 100 times more known than George Vera, and I feel in the public eye in the States. Not that much, I'm still adjusting to it.

But I'm told by other people that Charles Swindoll builds a second house. And \$2 million. It got into Moody Monthly.

It wasn't \$2 million, it was only \$1 million. But what an explosion. Two people fired at Moody Monthly when Charles Swindoll got on the move.

And I tell you, he was deeply hurt. You know, these great people, they're all vulnerable, they're all sensitive. He was shaken by this.

And he said in an interview, he never realized this was a public thing. Because once you're in a major position of leadership in most cultures, you are considered a public figure. A magazine can come to your house, they can interview you, and they can write up whatever they want, and if they're somewhat careful, you can't take them to court.

And Charles Swindoll said he didn't realize he was a public figure. He said, maybe I was a little naive. I just about wrote him.

I said that's one of the most accurate statements in the history of your literary career. Brothers and sisters, let's not be naive. You may feel you're just a humble servant of the Lord, going down through Lucknow on your little bicycle.

But according to what I see, the way God works, you are one of God's key servants. And your names are known. Some of your names are known all over the world.

We now have India Today, a major journal, not exactly, going out. And in any case, the devil knows, screw tape, and all his co-workers know, and they want to bring scandal. And through that, because when

scandal comes, it's very difficult to handle, the people that try to correct you, or try to resolve it, will probably hurt you in the process.

When are we going to learn that whenever a major mistake is made, or a major sin comes in, the people who have to handle it will make mistakes in the process? When are we going to learn that? It's such a simple thing. I tell the young people in my orientation, you break a social policy, I can almost promise you that the OM leader who handles it will blow it, and you will get hurt. So isn't it simpler? Don't break the social policy in the first place.

And you know the big problems don't come when the social policy gets broken. The problem comes in trying to handle it. And different leaders take sides.

One feels this one is too strict. The other one feels this one is too light. So then they each gather their camp.

You actually get two different camps on one little breach of the social policy that was barely worth even mentioning. Let's pray. Lord, our God, we thank You that we can just come up here and be together like this and think on these issues.

And Lord, I know this message is certainly to a large degree for myself, as I now have somehow, through 34 years of running the Christian race, gotten more into the limelight, more into print and into video. It's quite frightening in some ways. And I just cast myself upon You and pray that I may have this excellent spirit, this wisdom from above, to do the right thing at the right time, to walk in holiness and integrity.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19932.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-verwer/watch-your-step/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

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

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

www.sermonindex.net