

What God Is Doing

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon highlights the transformative power of the Gospel and the necessity of love and action in the Christian life.

Duration: 42:46

Scripture: Matthew 5:13, Matthew 22:37-39, Matthew 28:19-20, Romans 8:9, 1 John 3:16

Topics: "Personal Testimony", "Gospel Power"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his experiences of witnessing God's power at work in changing individual lives. He specifically mentions a man named Tom Skinner, who was raised in Harlem and became involved in a ruthless gang. Despite his violent past, Tom had a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ through the power of the gospel. He made the decision to leave the gang and follow Christ, even in the face of opposition from his fellow gang members. This testimony serves as a powerful example of God's transformative power and the importance of sharing the message of Jesus Christ.

Transcript

I bring you greetings from the crew and the staff of the ship Logos. At present the ship is in Sri Lanka, and from there she will be going back to India. And we just praise God for the many answers to prayer we have seen in this ministry.

Recently the ship visited Ethiopia, and we also had a program in the capital city of Addis Ababa. Where His Majesty Haile Selassie came and opened the book exhibition and also spoke about the Lord Jesus Christ. We also had an unusual opportunity in Sudan.

And in the Maldives Islands. The ship also recently was able to visit Penang in Malaysia. Where the exhibition was officially opened by the Governor.

We are now very much praying whether sometime in the future we should return to Thailand. We would like you to pray that we may know the will of God. At present I am living on the ship with my family.

And actually this morning I am missing them very much. I more or less wish I was headed back in that direction, but actually I leave tomorrow for Bangladesh and Nepal. We have had two very outstanding visits of the ship to Bangladesh.

I have just come from Vietnam. And it is interesting to see the hunger for the word of God in Vietnam at this time. Also at present there is a great turning to Christ in Cambodia.

I was talking to a man who that day before had been having lunch with the former Supreme Court Justice of Cambodia. Some years ago this man was actually sending Christians to jail because of getting baptized, because of their faith. This caused him to begin to study the scriptures.

Now he has become a devout follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Truly the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. I would like you to turn in your Bible to the book of Romans.

The verses that have meant very much to me. Chapter 1, verse 16. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

And it is amazing to see the way God's power is working in the world today. Since God has given me the opportunity to travel and to speak in many countries. I thought I would just share with you some of the things that I have seen God doing in this decade in which we live.

The most important thing is changing individual lives. Recently I was speaking to a man named Tom Skinner. He was reared in the section of New York City called Harlem.

Some years ago he would have been called a Negro, but today they prefer to be called Black. And he is an amazing Black person. He was the son of a pastor.

But like many young people he decided that religion was a load of nonsense. But like many young people he decided that religion was a load of nonsense. And soon Tom joined one of the toughest, most ruthless gangs in New York City.

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And it was nothing for these people to stab one another with their knives. That was the daily course of events. It was not easy to join that gang.

Much easier to join the church. To join the gang they hung him up on a wooden hook and lashed him 18 times and if he said anything he could not join. To join the gang they hung him up on a wooden hook and lashed him 18 times and if he said anything he could not join.

Soon he became the leader of that gang. To become leader you had to challenge the existing leader to fight with knives and he stabbed the existing leader and took over the leadership of the gang. To become leader you had to challenge the existing leader to fight with knives and he stabbed the existing leader and took over the leadership of the gang.

He had 100 men under his command who would do anything he wanted them to do. He had 100 men under his command who would do anything he wanted them to do. They would go out in the city and have gang wars and the police often would not bother them.

They would go out in the city and have gang wars and the police often would not bother them. Many, many people were bruised and scarred for life as they used to push broken whiskey bottles into the face of the enemy who attacked them. Many, many people were bruised and scarred for life as they used to push broken whiskey bottles into the face of the enemy who attacked them.

Many, many people were killed in these gang wars. He was now known as one of the toughest, most ruthless men in New York with 18 notches on his knife for 18 people he had to stab. He was now known as one of the toughest, most ruthless men in New York with 18 notches on his knife for 18 people he had to stab.

But he couldn't do it. He began to listen. That night Tom Skinner, by that radio, gave his life to Jesus Christ and the power of the Gospel came into his heart.

He went to the gang and you didn't quit this gang without coming out either dead or with broken legs. People didn't just quit the Harlem Lords, that was the name of the gang. Yet that night he stood before that gang and in the power of the Holy Spirit he told them that he was leaving and that from now on he was following Jesus Christ and that they should follow Christ and if they wanted they could also accept Christ.

And he walked out. As he walked down the aisle his number two leader took a knife and was about to put it into his back. He was writhing with anger.

But his arm froze and he could not move his arm. The next day he was converted to Christ. Soon about a dozen more of this gang came to know Jesus Christ and the power of God in their lives.

And they began preaching everywhere. And now there are tens of thousands who have come to Christ to have their lives changed through the preaching of this young black man, Tom Skinner. That is only one example of the power of God in our decade.

I could give hundreds of other examples. God is working. I say this because sometimes you meet Christians who are so negative, they feel everything is going so wrong for the church, we have so many problems and the people are not responding and they get discouraged.

But God is working. God is working among young people. In our small work alone this summer we will have about two thousand young people from almost every church moving out in the name of Christ.

Many of these young people are from non-Christian backgrounds. Some of them have been on drugs. They are saying in the western world today is drugs.

And yet we have seen how Jesus Christ is the answer even to the drug problem. Some of their lives are being destroyed by alcohol or by immorality or any one of the other subtle ways that Satan destroys people's lives. And each one of these young persons is a testimony of the power of God.

Another thing that we see as we look around the world today is an increase in work of the Holy Spirit in people's lives. More people are studying and reading about the Holy Spirit now today than ever before in history. Every two weeks there is a new book written about the Holy Spirit.

And people are discovering the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Of course when Satan sees this he attacks and tries to bring confusion and tries to get people in their extremes. But God is still working.

The emphasis of God is put upon us. There is not so much to talk about the Holy Spirit. Or write more books about the Holy Spirit.

But to demonstrate this reality in our practical lives seven days a week in the streets and the offices and where it's hard at times to be a true believer in Jesus. But what we need and what God wants to focus on is not the study of the Holy Spirit. But it is to focus on the reality of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every day, seven days a week, we have to go out and declare that the Lord Jesus Christ is living. One of the most important verses in the word of God about the Holy Spirit is 1 Thessalonians chapter 5. There are probably quite a few things that Catholics and so called Protestants may not be able to agree on. But here you will find something that without question we can agree upon.

It's what the Holy Spirit produces in the life of any believer. Whoever he may be. For the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, generous goodness, faith, meekness, self-control, against such there is no law.

5.22 And verse 24 and 25 and 26 should be read together because it's also important. And so the true believer will have these qualities. This fruit will be coming from his life.

And the book of Romans says, if you have not the Spirit of Christ, you are not of Christ. And 1 Corinthians 13 tells us that if we don't have love, no matter what else we may have, orthodox doctrine or whatever other truth, if we don't have love, God says we are nothing. And it has been a thrilling thing to see around the world.

People pay more attention to this love that the Bible talks about on almost every other page in the New Testament. I wrote a small little book for a revolution of love. It was not a very well written book.

And yet now it's gotten into 30 languages. And some mission groups, some churches make all their people read this book as a requirement. Because more and more people of all different groups are realizing our greatest need is more of this compassion, more of this burning love of Jesus Christ operating in our hearts.

I am not saying that doctrinal proof or truth is not important. I am not saying that. Once we say that, we are in a world that has no end.

We need truth and love. Like salt. The Bible says we are the salt of the earth.

Salt is made up of 2 chemicals. Sodium and chloride. Any one of those chemicals separately, alone, if you take too much, poison.

But together. But without love. The epistle of John speaks more about love than any other epistle.

Look at 1 John 3.16. We all know John 3.16, but what about 1 John 3.16? That's also in the Bible. But this we perceive the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. It's not just that Jesus died for us.

Of course that is the gospel. Christ died on the cross for our sins. And we can only be saved by trusting in Jesus Christ.

But there is the other side. Now as believers, we are to go and lay down our lives for one another. And I believe it's the neglect of that that often makes the church so weak in many places.

And what will we do in the next verse? Such a very unpleasant verse. For whosoever has this world's good, and sees his brethren as need, and shunneth up his compassions from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? For whosoever has this world's good, and sees his brethren as need, and shunneth up his compassions from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? You see the love of God is a practical thing. It reaches out to those refugees in Bangladesh.

It reaches out in compassion for the needs, both spiritual and social, in every area around us in this world that just shakes with suffering and difficulty. It is a thing that causes us to be over-compassionate. And it is a thing that is a force that causes us to travel to other parts of the world with compassion and to share love with others.

This is what our generation needs. Europe and many other places. Masses of young people and especially the students have turned away from the church.

And I believe one of the reasons, because I was almost among those young people, is because so often they've had words and talk and so little action on a practical, personal, man-to-man level. Jesus was a man of action. In Matthew chapter 9, you can see a beautiful picture of the Lord Jesus.

Matthew chapter 9. Here you see Jesus going from village to village. Verse 35. And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

He was a man of action. He didn't just sit behind a desk and talk. He went.

And verse 36 explains why Jesus went. He was moved with compassion. He was moved with love.

What about us? It was out of compassion. It was out of love. Are we cultivating the driving power in your life this morning? Not religion.

Of any brand. It's the love of God. It's the power of God.

It's Christ living in us and breathing and moving through us that we may give ourselves to others. Many young people feel the answer is material things. And in trying to get life and to get material things, they discover too late they've lost everything that really counts.

Jesus said, He who finds life will lose it. Jesus said, You may find success. You may find money.

You may become famous. But in fact you lose real life. Jesus went on to say, He who loses his life for my sake shall find it.

Have you lost your life? To find true life in Jesus Christ. That's God's way. But the decision is yours.

Let us pray. Our God and Father, we thank you for your holy word. We thank you for the oneness of all true believers who have your Holy Spirit and who will be moved with compassion to demonstrate to a lost and dying world the living reality of Jesus Christ.

Do not let us forget these things. Do not allow us to be mere hearers of the word deceiving ourselves but by our Holy Spirit by the resurrected Christ make us stewards men in action for your glory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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