

When God Calls Part 2

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the necessity of a personal relationship with Jesus to overcome the dichotomy between faith and practice in Christian life.

Duration: 22:04

Scripture: Matthew 5:14, Matthew 22:37, John 6:35, John 8:12, John 14:6, Hebrews 13:8

Topics: "Call Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages the audience to focus on Jesus and not get caught up in various principles, methods, or projects. He emphasizes that Jesus is the light of the world, the bread of life, the water, the way, and the truth. The speaker challenges the misconception that discipleship is hard and burdensome, stating that it becomes easy when Jesus is with us. He also highlights the lack of purpose and despair among young people in the Western world, urging the audience to share the hope and purpose found in Jesus with those who have lost hope.

Transcript

This message was given at a conference where a number of people were present who could not understand English. Translation took place therefore step by step into six languages by means of interpreters. This interpretation has now been extracted, but it has resulted in there being a few places where unexpected changes of tone occur in the speaker's voice.

Nothing has been added to or taken from the original message. Well, time passes very quickly. I know some must be tired, especially the interpreters, but I want to think for the next moments on one thing, not a thing, but a person.

I want us to think on the Lord himself. We can give you principle upon principle, challenge upon challenge. We can take you through the New Testament many times.

We can pound home the Sermon on the Mount, the Ten Commandments, the revolutionary principles of the New Testament. What will it mean? When I was at Urbana, where quite a few of you were in December, I spoke on this thing that I call the dichotomy, the fact that our religious lives are over here and our practical life is over here. A great number of people at that massive gathering realized that this was true in their own lives.

I believe this religious dichotomy is almost as serious, or it is as serious, as any other disease that can come on a man. Many of us here, I'm sure, sense that this dichotomy exists in our own experience. On one hand, the hymns that we sing, the doctrines that we defend, the confessions that we sign, and then on the other hand, what we really are, what we do with our time, our money, our education, and everything else.

I'm not going to go into that. I think most of us are conscious of this. We have it on O.M. It's everywhere.

I know I see it in my own life. It's like a spiritual schizophrenia in which we become almost two people. I've counseled young men involved in Christian work.

On one hand, giving their testimony, going to church, involved in Christian work, even on O.M. But on the other hand, sin, moral sin, lies, deception, many things. With some people, it's very extreme. A young man once came up to me, a Bible school student, and every other weekend after his Christian service, he was in gross immorality in Bible school.

Don't try to guess who that is because most of you do not know him. No one in O.M. But it's everywhere. I've counseled, at times, believe it or not, even older missionaries on the field.

Again, I would say this is certainly the exception. But oh, how deep and serious this double life can get. It's the greatest disease in the church.

I believe the answer to this disease, this hypocrisy, is the answer is Jesus, the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not any set of principles. It's not some new spiritual gymnastics that we're going to go gyrating through.

It doesn't lie in a new movement. O.M. is not the answer. It doesn't lie in a new book.

None of these things, all these things are secondary. The secret is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. And as we look in the Bible, we see that the main theme of the Bible is Christ.

You know, for the average person in normal conversation, I have discovered it's difficult to talk about Jesus Christ. You know where we can measure our spirituality? Sitting around a table and having something to eat. Just met some new friends.

What do we talk about? Do we ever talk about Jesus? In the normal flow of our life, do we talk about Jesus? Do we think about Jesus? When you woke up this morning, did you realize he was right there? As you went to wash, he was there. As you went to the breakfast queue, he was there. As you walked to that first session, he was there.

You became tired, he was there. As you didn't understand something that was said, he was there. How many of us can say today we've experienced his presence? It's not a religious game.

He's here. He's living. He walks with us.

He talks with us. He understands us. You know, I find this very strange, even talking this way to most people.

Was Bishop Robinson right? And for most of us, our God is just a man way out. You know, that book made no impact upon me. That outstanding, unbelieving book called Honest to God.

Because it's obvious that this poor soul didn't know God. He had never walked with Jesus. If he had walked with Jesus, he could have never written those things.

Our God is not a man way out there. Our God is he that hath tabernacled in our midst. We're not just going to some heaven the other side of space.

God has begun a heaven within our own lives. There's been a lot of emphasis on cultivating friendship here at the conference. You want to get to meet people, take the mask off, get to know people.

There's one friendship that I want to cultivate, and it's really the only friendship that's going to break that dichotomy, and that's with Jesus. Is that a name found often on your lips, or does it sound almost a little strange? Yes, yes, in church it sounds all right. In a prayer meeting it sounds all right, but not in just routine living.

You know one of the greatest sins? A great man of God was speaking some time ago. You know what he said the greatest sin of youth was? Immorality? No. Lying? No.

He went on and listed some other sins. He said the greatest sin of modern youth is wasting time. Wasting time is wasting life, and the average young person you meet today, they're drifting.

Even many people that I interview, they have no goals in their life. They have nothing that they're really aiming at. They're just drifting along.

We even get them in on their way, and they just drift in. They don't even know why they've come. They just sort of drifted in like a piece of wood.

This is the thing philosophers will tell us that marks western young people in comparison to eastern young people in the 20th century. We have nothing to live for, and this goes to such an extreme that soon young people are sucked into the new philosophies that so surround us. The philosophy of despair.

It's everywhere. You'll face it in France. You'll face it in Italy.

You'll face it in Vienna. People who not only have nothing to live for, they don't think there's anything worth living for. Some of these people have tried everything.

I witnessed to a young boy in New York City some time ago. He was 13 years of age. He had experienced everything.

Sex? Completely meaningless. He had done everything at 13 years of age. It gave him nothing any longer.

Money? Fun? Drugs? He had tried everything. Every time you can snap your fingers, someone in this world commits suicide. Oh, they could only see Jesus.

They could only understand the Lord Jesus. The only one who can break this double life. The only one who can deliver us from this spiritual schizophrenia that is creeping upon us as terribly as any physical disease.

You see, when you get to know the Lord Jesus, and you have a deep knowledge of his presence, then wherever you go, at any time you can speak immediately to him about your problem. I know that the

dichotomy exists in my own life, but I know some degree of victory over it, because daily, hour by hour, Jesus is with me telling me all about it. His word has been hidden in my heart.

The Jesus that we know is the Jesus of the Word. He's the historical Christ. He's not a symbol.

He's not a mystical feeling. He is a historical person who rose from the dead, and who sent his Holy Spirit, who is also a definite historical person, who abides in us, and who gives us that witness, and that sense, and deep knowledge that Jesus is here. I'm so, so miserable at communicating this.

Please try to understand. Jesus is here. Jesus is here.

Jesus is here. Maybe if we say it a hundred times, we'll believe it. When you lie in bed at night, many people I meet have problems in the area of sleep.

A man who can't get proper sleep will soon become an ill man in almost every case. I meet people tormented by dreams. I meet people who scream in the night, people who can't sleep, and all kinds of other problems related to sleep, which is a very important part of one's life.

But I believe with all my heart, if when we lie down, wherever we go to sleep, we have the conscious presence of the living Christ, most of our sleep problems will disappear. This might not come easy. In some cases it will be a crisis.

In other cases it will be a process. And as you've heard me say many times, any crisis not followed by a process will always end up in absence. Over these past years, God has linked Operation Mobilization together in a spiritual fellowship with LaBrie Fellowship and Dr. Schaefer.

Many people say, well, what is Dr. Schaefer trying to say? You spend 20 hours going through his tapes and you still wonder exactly perhaps what he's trying to say, especially if you're, you know, a little thick between the ears like I am. But basically what this man is trying to say to our generation is this, Jesus Christ is here. Jesus Christ was there at the cross, a historical person, so real as he says it, that if you were there and ran your finger down the cross, you'd get a real splinter.

And of course this concept in philosophy is completely, absolutely opposed to the modern theology and modern philosophy that moves in from this other direction. That makes all the things that you and I love the most basically symbols. That tells us that things are mainly all relative.

And the world today and the modern so-called intellectual has swallowed this relativity pill hook, line, and sinker. God has raised up men like Dr. Schaefer and others who have studied under him to call us back once again to the fact that we have a historical Jesus Christ. He died on that cross some 2,000 years ago.

That's the only reason, only reason I'm here tonight, or the main reason. And if that is true, everything else will fall into order. My basic theology is simple as that.

If Jesus Christ died for me on that cross, then everything else has to work itself out. Isn't that what Romans 8 says? If he spared not his own son on the cross, will he not give us all things with him? Will he not solve our problems as well? Will he not give grace to live the life as well? Will he not give us our financial needs as well? Will he not clothe us and feed us as well? You see what I'm trying to say? If there is a historical Christ, and we believe there is, and he has died for you, he shed his blood for you, then everything else is minor compared to that. How quickly we get inverted into our problems.

And there are probably some here that think you have the greatest number of problems of anybody in the conference. And I pray you'll realize that this is operation mobilization, not operation introspection. Because as we look into ourselves, we start delving around in our mind.

Then maybe we pick up a psychology book so that we can get longer words than the Bible words to put on our problems. So many have been deceived by psychology simply because they put a bigger word on something. We're sure they've proved that what we believe about it is not true.

I call this water. That's water. At this point, George held up the beaker of water which was provided for the speaker.

Along came, comes an intellectual. Scum, freonies, zerdialia, not going to drink any more of that anymore. That's just what has happened with psychology.

God calls something sin. The Bible speaks about being guilty of sin. Along comes Mr. Psychiatrist, and he calls it inferiority complex or guilt complex.

You know thousands of young people have turned away from the faith simply because psychiatry has made some attempt to explain what actually happened to them in conversion. That's so ridiculous. What's the difference what you call it? What's the difference how it happened? If Jesus is the historical Christ, whatever he might use to bring us to himself, inferiority sense, anything doesn't matter because he's a historical Christ, and he actually lived, and now he's living, and you and I can know him.

We can walk with him. We can talk with him. My favorite book in the Bible is still the Gospel of John.

I praise God that over these years we've been able to distribute tons and tons and tons and tons and tons of this one book, the Gospel of John, all over the world. Every page of the Gospel of John, you see the same thing. Jesus walking with men, calling them to faith, ministering to them.

We see him as the light of the world, and he wants to be your light in these dark days that we live in. We see him as the bread of life, and he says those who take of this bread will never hunger again. We see him as the water.

We see him as the way. We see him as the truth. On every page we see the living Christ.

You want to break the dichotomy? Some of you have been looking at OM. You've been looking at principles. You've been looking at people.

You've been looking at new methods. So many methods there are. I want to invite you tonight.

As it was said to the Greeks, sir, we would see Jesus. We would see Jesus. I want to ask you with all my heart to cultivate the practice of the presence of the living Christ.

When you wake up tomorrow morning, you might sense his presence. When you go out for the exercises, you might sense his presence. Now some think this exercise is sort of a joke.

It's not a joke, and there's men down through history that have died on the mission field because their bodies were not in physical condition. And I could be wrong, but I believe I can say that Billy Graham today would be out of the ministry if it were not for his systematic daily exercises. And I've heard recently that he's mainly cured himself of pneumonia, which he was constantly getting basically through running and

developing stronger lungs.

You see, this is so typical of a dichotomy. We say we want to be dedicated. We say we want to burn out for Christ.

We say we want to accomplish great things for God. But if we're told that we actually are going to have to touch our toes and hurt our back six times to do it, we'll immediately drop the plan and do something else. Many of the young men we take to India, within five months they're knocked out.

Not because they didn't love the Lord Jesus, but because their physical bodies were not ready for a rough and tough and difficult life in the back deserts of Bihar or Rajasthan. And I believe with all my heart, we're not ready to do the little things, getting up on time, getting a proper diet, getting a proper exercise, if we're not faithful in those little things. And all of our great powerful prayers for all kinds of worldwide miracles will just be like a lot of hot air coming out of a tube.

I hate getting out of bed. I hate it with a passion. I hate doing exercise.

I like the first three or four hours of the day as a completely do-as-you-feel-like-it project. The first four hours after that I'm willing to move a little bit. I want to tell you, as God has by his grace enabled me to be faithful in those little things, it has revolutionized my life.

You know what will help us most of all? He is there. He is there. Wherever you go.

I love to walk with Jesus. Wherever I go. I like to get up in the morning.

He is there. I like to get up in the morning and walk down the street with Jesus. He's the only one who enjoys my singing.

And that's all that counts. So the whole day goes wrong. As long as the day goes wrong, as long as your projects blow into the air, it doesn't matter.

Jesus is there. You know, it's like when you first fall in love. It doesn't matter what happens.

It doesn't matter what happens as long as she's there. And it's the same way in our relationship with God. Many of us have misconceptions, terrible misconceptions about this work of OM and about discipleship.

And we develop a terrific negative type of thinking. Oh, it's so hard bearing our cross, knocking on doors. Oh, I've got to witness.

Think of that. I've got to go out on Wednesday in Brussels and have yogurts all summer. And I've got to do this and I've got to do that.

You want to know something? You don't have to do anything. And secondly, discipleship is easy. When Jesus is with us, it's easy.

If you pull it alone in your own strength, memorizing the manual, setting your alarm clock with triple bells, and doing all kinds of other things, that might not be any harm. But if Jesus isn't there, you don't know his presence. You don't experience his closeness.

It's all worthless. Jesus said, except you forsake all that you have, you can't be my disciple. But that was the same Jesus who said, come unto me, all ye who labor and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

For 12 years, I've been living this way. For eight years, my wife and I have been living this way. We can't say it's hard, not when Jesus is there.

But when we forget him, and we do, then it's hard. Then it's hard on the mind and on the body as well. Jesus is there.

That's what counts this summer. If you're on a floor, or you're on a luxury bed, if you're having filet mignon, or fish and chips, or if you're having peanut butter and jam, if you're traveling in a Mercedes 1968, or if you're traveling in a Bedford 1958, it doesn't matter. The thing that really counts is Jesus there, is Jesus there.

Oh, may we see this. May we see the Lord Jesus Christ wanting to be our friend, wanting to take our hand, wanting to love us, wanting to walk with us, wanting to encourage us, wanting to forgive us, wanting to do so much for us. We'll only let him.

I ask you with all of my heart, make Jesus your leader this summer. Take him wherever you go. Talk with him.

Share all your problems. Cry with him. Sigh with him.

Die with him. But whatever you do, see Jesus. He is all we need, all we need.

Let us pray. Lord, we know that many of us have a spiritual schizophrenia. We have a double life in the church, in the OM conference, in the prayer meeting, in the Bible study.

We're one thing. We know your name. We talk of you.

We argue of you. We tell about us. But oh, God, out in the streets, in the restaurant, in the vehicle, in our bedroom, in the dark of the night, we're far from you.

We forget about you. Your name is not heard. Your footsteps are not there.

We're like Jekyll and Hyde. Oh, God, we pray tonight, all of us of one heart, bring a spiritual revolution upon us, that, Lord, we might see you. We might see Jesus.

Tomorrow, oh, God, when we arise from our bed, we might acknowledge his presence. Though we may not feel it, though we may not have any tingle within us, help us to acknowledge your presence and to live in the light of it. Lord, I pray this for my own life.

I've run miles ahead of you. I've gone hours without thinking about you. Forgive me, Lord.

Change my life tonight, that from this day on, there may be more of Jesus and less of George, more of Jesus, less of Operation Mobilization, more of Jesus, less of trucks and literature, more of Jesus, less of principles and rules. Hear this prayer, God. This is the need of this work.

This is the need of our heart. Lord Jesus Christ, your son, we ask in his name.

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