

Cd Gv278 Leaders Breakfast, Kathmandu 85

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, perseverance, and faith in the face of adversity, and the need for Christian leaders to be aware of the challenges ahead and to count the cost.

Scripture: Luke 14:31

Topics: "Discipleship", "Financial Integrity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of building relationships in God's work. He shares the example of his own ministry, which took 13 years of building relationships before they were able to acquire a ship. The speaker also highlights the significance of integrity in handling finances and encourages individuals to seek help if they have financial problems. He references Watchman Knee's book on the topic and urges listeners to humble themselves and not manipulate bookkeeping. The sermon concludes with a reflection on the passage from Luke 14:31-33, emphasizing the need to count the cost and forsake all to be a disciple of Jesus.

Transcript

Let's just pray together. Father, we thank you for the chance just to meet in fellowship. Each one of us is a distinct individual that you have called unto yourself.

Lord, we never do get to know each other enough. So often we're like trains passing each other in opposite directions. We have our own baggage, we have our own ministries, and we just get a quick view of other ministries as they pass by.

And Lord, I just thank you for the opportunity of being here and just sharing the burden and vision you have put upon our hearts. Thank you for your mercy these past thirty years since you plucked me from my own state of selfish confusion there in New York City. Just guide us in our time together now.

In Jesus' name, Amen. When you've been speaking to groups of Christian leaders for twenty-seven, twenty-eight years, you would think it's just a simple thing to sit down and have another meeting, but for me it really isn't. I very much esteem those who are carrying the work of God in their own country and always feel a little bit hesitant to say too much and need to really do more listening.

But perhaps one of the credentials to share is that I do spend an awful lot of my time just listening to others. I'm a tape worm. That doesn't sound right actually, but I listen to tapes all the time of different men

of God and of course spend a lot of time reading many of the different Christian magazines.

I have received so much from other people. One of the great privileges I had when I lived in India was to travel and live together with Buck Singh for quite a period of time. I might just mention that Buck Singh is very, very feeble now.

He's just barely getting around. They carry him at times, but Ray Lynch, one of our sort of itinerant evangelists, was with him recently. Buck Singh in his true style insisted on taking him right to the station platform, not over the railways, down the other side.

Very interesting movement of God there in India. I had the joy of getting Buck Singh together with Dr. Francis Schaefer, another friend of mine who just a year ago went to be with the Lord. These two men had some influence on me, many, many others even more than those two, but I thought sometimes these people are in two different worlds, Buck Singh and Dr. Francis Schaefer.

So we got them together at Lausanne, took a picture of them. I think one of the things the Lord had to teach me, as I was a bit narrow in my early Christian days, I believe the road is narrow, but I believe some of us make it narrower than it is. It's already narrow enough.

All those who truly know Christ as Lord and Savior, but some people like to make it even narrower right down to the music you listen to, the kind of haircut you have, all different things that we're supposed to do or not do if we're to be the true believers. Another group arrived in England not so long ago, claimed they're the only true New Testament church. Of all places they set up their little base in Blackpool.

They like to be able to criticize everybody, but if you criticize them you're going to be in trouble. I appreciate prayer because I am now in trouble for just making a few statements. But I praise God for what you're doing here.

As you know, I am here because I'm an exile from India. I thought it might be good just to tell why. I would always be curious about somebody like this Berwer character.

But it was a pure unadulterated blunder on our part, a lot of zeal, very similar to what the Nepalese are doing now. Nepalese are going to Dhaka and they're bringing in goods from Hong Kong. They're taking them out of the bags in the Dhaka airport and they're putting them on, clothing, rings, everything.

Apparently there's some law that says you're allowed to bring in so much. Everybody has a radio and a camera. It's the funniest thing.

My whole plane from Dhaka is filled with all these Nepalese. Their gold rings and their watches, they have them for at least an hour. They all go through.

I see. Anyway, they all go through customs and they're apparently declared. I don't know what happens there.

But I had a similar idea. Years ago in India, there was a quota. Everybody could bring a little quota legally into the country.

And we in OEM didn't have very much. So I thought, you know, let everybody at least take their quota and when we get it in the country, we'll give it away, we'll sell it. And so all the OEMers back in 1967 brought in their quota.

And like good OEM people, they forsook all. We've always preached forsake all that you have. So we preached that very heavily in Bombay.

Turned in all their goods. But somebody spread a rumor that we were smugglers and the customs raided that flag. I was off preaching in Andhra Pradesh.

But my friend who had all these things in his apartment, the customs raided that flag. Well, you could not convince them that something wasn't wrong. And we eventually were found guilty of breaking the technical.

It's really a technical part of the law that you cannot as a foreigner sell your possessions within one year after arriving in India. I came back to help him and two of my friends were killed at that time in Europe and I wanted to go to the funeral. And when I tried to go to the funeral, they thought I was trying to run away, so they arrested me.

That all got cleared in court, but there's a separate list. When your name gets in this kind of thing, your name goes over to another list. And that's where eventually I got put on the blacklist.

There may be some other reasons, but that seems to be... Of course, I could have resolved the whole thing one day when I was sitting in the customs office and the man came in to collect the bribes. And I refused to pay. Maybe I was naive, maybe I still believed in honesty, but I would not pay a bribe.

And then they really decided to have a go at us. But you know, in God's providence, that mistake, and it was a mistake, was mightily used of God because it showed us from that day that we should build the work on Indians. I was already becoming dominant in the work.

Everybody wanted me to speak all over India, speak at the Merriman Convention, speak here, there, and Indians would, you know, back off. And the Lord led us to put the work in the hands of Indians. I got out of the way, came here to Kathmandu, and it was here that a lot of the burden for the ship ministry increased.

Not that I could stay on the ship around India. That wasn't the burden at all. That, of course, did happen, but there are many other reasons for the ship ministry.

But actually we have a very favorable relationship with the Indian government. My particular personal case is actually a separate file. And God's mercy, he's given us 20 years in India.

We had 300 full-time staff there, one-third foreigners, less now, two-thirds or more Indians. God has given us a tremendous conference center in Gorakhpur. We just put a roof over the dining hall from one of the old mission groups that could no longer use the place.

You know, those of us who are new on the scene, we get these benefits from the older groups that have properties that they want somebody to look after. And God has given us this great conference center in Gorakhpur, and there'll be 300 or 400 gathered there next week for our annual Indian spiritual life conference. And I will be down at the border, and some will come over to see me for fellowship.

I've never actually done that before. I've come here for leaders' meetings, but I've never been sort of down at the border, just meeting some brothers who have read my books and have been involved in the work 5 and 10 years, and we've never met. So we'd appreciate your prayers for that.

And we'd appreciate your prayers for the work in India. I thought it might be good also to just share a little bit of the history of our work here in Nepal, because if I were here, I'd wonder, you know, what are these people doing here in Nepal? When I was living in Bombay, a brother named Victor Gladhill came through overland. Maybe he came with me on a ship, but we had a bookshop in Ankara, Turkey, and it got closed by the government.

Turkey has been our priority field for now over 23 years. Dale Roton and I have been together 28 years in work. He pioneered the work in Turkey.

But that bookshop wasn't working, and before that, we did not do very much with educational books. That was not, you know, a few dictionaries and bookshops we opened in Mexico, which initially gave me the idea of educational books. But in that Ankara bookshop, we had some educational books, and we didn't know what to do with them.

And so we told the OM vehicles coming through Turkey, pick up those books, and, you know, we can always sell them in India. And in God's providence, that led to the birth of an educational book exhibition program in Bombay. It's quite a decision for a group like OM to get into educational books, but it opened doors to all the schools in Bombay.

And Victor came up here to Nepal when I was living in Bombay and with a truckload of these books and had an exhibition, of course, and that was when I first began to pray about Nepal, actually. Before that, I had heard of a man named Prem Pratham, the first Nepali Christian I think I'd ever heard about. He was getting a lot of publicity around 1965, and he's been a burden on my heart.

I think some of you know that story. But in God's providence, when I was not allowed back in India, I didn't even know. I flew into Bombay in the summer of 1968, and they put me back on the plane, next stop, Bangkok.

And everybody was waiting for me in Patna. So I never forget arriving here in Kathmandu in the summer of 1968. And God just overwhelmed me with the love for this country, the people here, the need.

The unique style opened the door, but I wasn't here really to reach Nepal. It's not possible for me to be in any place without getting a burden for the people. But I was here to meet with the leaders, and we've been coming here ever since to have our leaders' meetings.

We've even had a few major OM conferences up here, but that seemed, after trying it a couple times, not the wisest thing because so many Nepalis wanted to get in on the conference. And then, of course, people started asking questions. There's always someone seemingly available to spread rumors.

And one little man up here spread a few interesting stories. So I guess if there was ever a non-hotel movement, it was Operation Mobilization. I mean, in our work, staying in a hotel is almost considered anathema.

You either sleep on the floor and save your pennies for the next bill for the Bibles. Somebody here from the Bible Society, I think we must be about their largest customer almost. But just for a number of reasons, we try to just come and meet quietly in one of the hotels here and get on with our business.

And it is very much a business meeting. We just talk and try to get some of our things resolved, and that's what I'm in the midst of right now. But when I moved up here, we decided to carry on the educational book

exhibition, and it just grew and grew.

I remember when the man who is presently the king came to the book exhibition. I have a picture of it. But then after quite a few years, I guess it just became so big.

And even though it was largely educational books, of course, many, many Christian books were going out. We were just refused visas. We were never really asked officially to leave Nepal.

Just the people who were there at that time, they were refused visas. And educational book exhibits of Nepal closed. And that became the name of the company that owns the ship Lagos.

And a lot of the concepts for the Lagos were born here in Kathmandu on the roof of the little house down the bottom of the hill, Kopendal. And this, as you know, the ship Lagos has received some very high esteem from governments all over the world. Very few governments have refused a ship because it is a legitimate educational project.

And often prime ministers and top government people come to the ship. And it is quite an amazing ministry. It's gone on 14 years.

And of course, some people thought it was crazy. They thought it was so expensive. But that ship, even in those days, didn't cost much more than a large house in Great Britain.

And some Christians, quite a few actually, live in large houses. Nobody likes to condemn them. So we hope people won't condemn our ship because 144 people are on it.

Well, I know the letter I read last night is 144 people on the crew list. But they're not all on the ship at the same time. A few of them are in the lineup.

The ship Lagos is in the West Indies. I don't think you can get much further from Nepal. I was just there for a week in a very, very exciting time.

There are 15 ministries based on the ship. And its whole purpose is geared around serving the church. It's the churches that invite us to come.

We get a very wide range of churches who accept the ship because it's an interdenominational ship. It has people on it from all different groups. And it's, in some ways, a true ecumenical approach.

Tremendous things have happened in bringing Christian leaders together for prayer and for conferences. The ship is a very neutral ground. And men that have never even said hello to each other who live in the same city have come and got to know each other.

And many, many tens of thousands have recommitted their lives to Christ and his ministry. I don't know about Nepal, but in many parts of the world people in Christian ministry are discouraged. I'm probably going to be speaking about God's strategy for victory over discouragement because it seems to be one of the main methods of the evil powers to get people discouraged.

You know, even there in the West Indies, the problems they have in some of the churches are just amazing. It's a very responsive area. People are coming to Christ.

They easily accept Christ. They don't always know exactly what that means. But don't think when there's a lot of overwhelming response that everything gets easy.

If you have greater response here in Nepal, actually you may have more problems. And we often, in a very naive way, pray for revival and pray for church growth. And there's a scripture that's on my mind this morning that perhaps I could just read.

So it's good to have a scripture reading. In Luke 14, that I think as Christian leaders we should think about more often. Luke 14.

It's a very strong chapter, isn't it? There went a great multitude and Jesus said, Whosoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. This has been one of the very basic foundations of our own challenge to young people. And I might just say that there's a great move among young people right now in the world and a great move in connection with world missions.

That doesn't mean there's going to be a great stampede of missionaries. Because there's a tremendous gap between where the young people are, even when they are interested in missions. Many are not.

But even when they are and they'll go to Urbana, 17,000 just went to the Urbana Missionary Conference. I was in smaller European conferences, 1,000 in God's World Congress in England with Brother Andrew in Holland, 300. In Europe we're always sort of chugging smaller numbers.

We always make our claim that qualities are specialty in Europe. But we won't get into that. God is working among young people, but there's a great distance between where they are with their enthusiasm, their music, their interests, their questions, and what it takes to be a long-term career missionary in the footsteps of Hudson Taylor.

I just had lunch with Hudson Taylor III, James Hudson Taylor III. My wife especially loves history. She got overwhelmed by this historical lunch we had.

I hope this man comes to Nepal sometime. Please invite him. He spent four years in a detention camp as a teenager.

I think of all the things we're told today about taking care of our children. We must never be separated from them and all these different things. My view is that every time you make a rule, somebody breaks it.

But here, these children suffered in a detention camp and came through that very solid, stable, outstanding missionary leader who spent most of his life not as a leader but working as a missionary in Asia. But there is a great gap, really, between what most mission societies want and what is actually there. I wish you could have been with me at the Jesus People Christian Rock Festival north of Chicago last June.

I think of the variety of meetings I have from Pastor Nicanor's little flock down here to the Jesus People's Rock Festival in Chicago with 5,000 jumping, leaping teenagers who, by the time I get to preach to them, six rock bands have blown every circuit in their head. And I started my message by saying, I can see you young people want heavy music. This is all start screaming.

Well, sit down because I've got a heavy message. Anyway, I got invited back, so I'm there again next June. But really, for many of those young people, it's the first challenge they'd ever heard, ever heard on

missions.

Even though Keith Green's made a great impact, he's now in heaven. Many, because the States is so big and so pluralistic, many have not even really known much about Keith Green. I just spoke at the Keith Green Memorial Concerts in Great Britain.

We had 20,000 come to those concerts. And you can't get young people in big numbers to missionary meetings without a lot of work. But to those Memorial Concerts, they came 2,000 to Manchester.

We had 3,000 young people make a commitment that they would go into at least short-term missions with the willingness to be open to God's next step. We estimate we'll have more people with us this summer in our summer training campaigns than perhaps ever, maybe close to 2,000. But I think as we think of these great numbers of young people coming to us, there are now 1,600 people full-time in OM and 300 or 400 children.

God drives us to this passage of Scripture here in Luke. And I think as you think of the growth of the church here in Nepal, what the Lord is doing, this is a very, very good passage to read. Let's start at verse 28.

No, I already gave you verse 27. For which of you intending to build a tower sitteth not down first and counteth the cost whether he hath sufficient to finish it? Lest perhaps after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him. In a lot of the countries I've visited, there's at least one building in the city that got started with a great burst of energy and something went wrong and it never got finished.

I don't know if you have any of those projects around Nepal. They usually become quite the talk of the town. There was one in Bangkok for years.

There was a Buddhist monument in Sri Lanka that was the standard joke for everybody arriving there. I don't know if they finally finished that. But there are many examples of this passage, though of course God is trying to bring a spiritual message to us.

For what king going to make war against another king sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he is able with 10,000 to meet him that cometh against him with 20,000. Or else while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an embassy and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he is of you that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple.

Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its savor, with what shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor yet for the dunghill, but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. What an interesting passage.

One I'm sure you've all studied many, many times. You know, when people think of our ship ministry, we now have, as you know, a second ship, a 6,000 ton ship headed for Asia after many years in South America. People think, well, especially people that sort of know OM or they think they know OM, think we just had all these prayer meetings and God performed a miracle and along came a ship.

But in fact, from the time God gave a few of us a burden for the ship Lagos to when we actually owned that ship, there was six years of counting the cost, six years of research about ships, about the problems, about fuel, about registration. And so when we actually got that ship in September of 1970, by January of

71, she was sailing and has never ceased her ministry through all kinds of red tape, problems, regulations. We didn't realize all that was involved.

And in any project you launch out in God's Word, you'll never understand everything, but we understood a lot. And we knew that the work had to be built not on the steel of the ship, but on men. And God gave us, during those six years of praying, outstanding men, men of integrity.

In God's Word, the number one need is not money, it's not buildings, it's not even big numbers. It's men of integrity, men who cannot be bought, men who cannot be seduced. In a country not far from here I just arrived, one of the leading pastors has just been seduced by a woman in the church.

I tell you, the grief, the problems that that church is now facing is overwhelming. And the great need today, in every country I go to, is men of integrity. I'm sure you know the word integrity.

It's one of my favorite words. It combines honesty in every area. It combines openness.

You know, a man, you can give him 5,000 rupees or 10,000 rupees for a whole series of jobs. He will keep track of that money. You can trust him when he comes back.

You know, even the cup of tea he bought out of the fund will be recorded. By the way, I have practiced that my entire Christian life. I keep my money in an envelope, and when I take the money out of the envelope, I write down what I buy.

Now, God knows I make mistakes, and I don't get all the cups of tea. Sir John Lang, the founder of the great Lang Construction Company, supposedly he got everything recorded. He became a multimillionaire, gave more money to Christian work than any man in the British Isles.

He's the record. He spent a cup of tea. The lack of integrity in the area of money is playing havoc, at least in that land to the south.

I pray it will not come up here. We need, in God's word, men of integrity. If you've got financial problems, share them with somebody.

Humble yourself. Don't be afraid. You made a mistake.

You need help, but don't ever just start playing around with the bookkeeping because it catches up, and the enemy uses it. Watchman Nee writes about this. My favorite Watchman Nee book, some of those books, people make two and two equal eight and go into funny extremes, but his most balanced book, though people don't read, I'm sure it's in this library, this evolutionary library that's been here for 17 years or so maybe, is a book there, Normal Christian Worker, and he talks about this area of honesty and integrity with money.

We have practiced this from the earliest days in our work, and as you know, our work in India is all built on Indians. I tell you, if some Indians wanted to take us for money, boy, they could, but God gave us men of integrity. We've never had a scandal in 21 years of work in India with money.

In fact, the one big scandal we had was in England, and that was an outside organization, nothing to do with O.M. The man sold us the fantastic cassette tapes with the most outstanding preachers, and somewhere in somebody in my office sent the money in advance, and we never saw the tapes, and we never got the money, and he claimed, this is the greatest, one of the most expensive mistakes in the

history of O.M., he claimed the money didn't arrive. Confusion in the bank. Can you believe it? This young guy in my finance office sent the money again.

The man got both transfers. I mean, he was a good, full-blooded American. Don't ever think corruption is unique to any one country.

Our greatest problem in India was an Englishman who was a Bible school graduate and turned out to be a homosexual, practicing homosexual, and terrible things took place, and he may be the reason that I'm not in India. He may have been the one that went to the customs and gave them a big load of big story, but I think I learned in my early years when I went to Mexico that Satan really does attack Christian leaders, and he really tries to get them into a mess, and I think of one or two here in Nepal from years back where they just got too much money, and it just got them into one big mess. The Bible says money, the love of money is the root of many evils, and I love those verses in Proverbs.

More or less indicates it's better to be poor and not have some of these problems. Well, let me just share on the basis of this passage this burden I have that in your work before you go forward with this project and that project and with this vision and that vision. It may be a new building.

It may be a jumbo jet for Jesus, rather unlikely with the length of your runway, but I had a man write me recently. He thought because we could have a ship, he could have a jumbo jet for Jesus, and I've had to explain to people the ship didn't come overnight. Before we ever had a ship in 1970, our work was born in 1957.

God gave us 13 years building relationships. The key in God's work is relationships and getting those faithful men. I have 300, 400 faithful men all over the world.

I don't have at present in O.M. one single really major problem. I know some pastors, they have one man in the congregation whose one main goal is to get rid of the pastor. I mean, that's not very pleasant.

Anybody like that in your church? But it can be difficult when you have somebody right within your own movement whose one goal is to get rid of you. Of course, all of this kind of church work and Christian work isn't as simple as I first thought. I was just with a church where the pastor, one of the pastors who took over, just ran the church down, down, down, down, and what do you do? Not say anything because you just want love? Somebody has to speak up? And eventually they had to vote and ask that pastor to leave, and I was just there with a new pastor who now he's supposed to be the miracle man that comes in and builds it all back up again.

It's a miracle if he even stays sane. But I have been fortunate, and I think sometimes interdenominational work like I'm in sometimes is easier than even a local church situation, though we are very much involved with churches in France alone. We started 17 churches.

We never start OM churches. We find some other person in another group who wants to plant churches, usually an indigenous group, and we just help two years and then we go. We want to do more of that.

Of course, we have people there, many people who know the language fluently. A lot of people study French when they live in England. But to summarize, the burden I have this morning is to count the cost in each step you take forward in your work.

Don't worry about slowing down a little bit. The last couple of years, we've had to slow down. Our big ship ran into financial difficulty first time around South America.

A boom! I mean, never has South America seen so many Christian moves. Then the Falklands War, financial crisis, we went around South America again, and it was a bust. And if it wasn't for the rest of OM, the MV Dulaz could have gone into bankruptcy.

We probably could have found some other road. Fortunately, the rest of OM could bail her out, and we've slowed it down. We've slowed it down, stayed in Europe, just worked very, very carefully on budgets.

OM now has budgeting. It's not bad for a church to have a budget. And a little financial planning, not just, you know, sort of go along without thinking about these things.

God really put our ship ministry back on the even keel. Both ships are now functioning with full staff and crew. We're always short a few people.

Dale Roton, the one who's been with me for 28 years in this work, is coordinating the two ships. Pray for him. Dr. Alan Adams is the director on the Dulaz, and Frank Fortunato, the young man who was almost killed in that famous OM accident in Yugoslavia.

His fiance was killed. He is now the director of Lagos. But we've learned that sometimes it's good to slow down, build those relationships, spend time together, get to know each other.

You can't build on sand. And building in God's work on a solid foundation means building on men and women of integrity. Better to have two or three of integrity than 10 or 15, and within that group some who are going to bring destruction eventually to the work.

It's not an easy road. And I think Christian workers must be ready for many, many disappointments. We launch out so idealistic.

We've got such dreams, such visions, what the church is going to grow and what the Lord is going to do, and so many are going to be saved. There's always some little hyper-optimist who flies in from cuckoo land and tells us if we do this and we do that, we're going to have revival, we're going to have miracles, we're going to have people being transported physically from Calcutta to Nepal when the planes don't run. And really there's a lot of grief and heartache that comes through just plain ordinary foolishness.

And my plea to many of God's great visionaries is to slow down, spend more time with God, spend more time with each other. Be sure you're walking in the light. Be honest about your failures.

Don't hide them. When you hide them, bigger failures come. That doesn't mean you tell everything to everybody.

And Paul Tournier seems to indicate there is a place for secrets in the Christian life. I think he's got a point. I don't know if you've ever read his writings, Paul Tournier, brilliant writer.

God is working here in Nepal. As you know, we are here as a hospitality base for our people coming up from India. This now has to increase because our British people have to get visas.

Amazing, the change in India since I was last here. The death of Indira Gandhi. Punjab crisis.

And I thank the Lord that he led us years ago to build on the Indian brothers, to find Indian men and women of integrity, to slow down. We could have been 2,000 strong in India. Probably would have blown in two or three.

One of the main goals of our work in India is to graduate people. And we have our graduates in almost every single major denomination, church, and movement in India today, thousands of them. And that gives us also a terrific relationship with the church and with God's people.

Not all of God's people. There's no one in history that's ever been able to relate to all of God's people. But certainly we have a wide range.

And here in Nepal, we're here as a hospitality center. We're here repairing our vehicles to send them back down. And we hope the third reason we're here, and as some of you know, Wayne and Sheila, I think it's more important you meet them than meet me, are now our leaders for the work here in Nepal.

One of your longer-term missionary or service agencies, whatever you call them, got our last director. And as you know, David Turner is returning full-time with one of your more official groups, which we're happy about. That's the story of OM.

They're with us for quite a few years, and then they get recruited into some other agency. I am thankful that a few do stay around to help me survive. And of course, our work greatly varies from country to country.

We have permanent work in about 35 countries. Every country is a unique semi-indigenous entity. The work in Turkey is nothing similar to the work in India in terms of strategy.

It's very slow. It's learning the language. It's all personal contacts.

It's building the church. Some of our men there, you can't even tell that they're not Turks. The work in India, because there's 700 million there, yeah, do feel free to go.

I'm going to take five more minutes to go myself. But because there's 700 million in India, because so many groups are digging in, planting churches, staying in the same place, especially once they're married with children, we feel in India we should continue the mass distribution and train men on the move. Almost all of them, when they graduate, they have to settle somewhere.

By then they get married. They have children. They're no longer ready for the back of the OM truck.

So perhaps our third burden here, and this is one of the reasons I appreciate being here this morning, is we really do want to serve the church. The last thing we want to do is hinder the church in any way. And we hope you Nepali people, if you see us doing something that really is not right, that you would go to Wayne and share it with him.

We don't have a great vision for Nepal. We are not making any publicity about Nepal to any degree. We may mention, you know, that there is such a country and get people to pray.

You know, we're just, OM isn't that type of movement where we just, for countries where security is important, just start announcing big plans. We're just here wanting to serve. I'm even hesitant to come and take meetings here.

I do it because you press me a little bit, and the Lord has blessed the meetings in the past, maybe because I'm Nepali size. I certainly don't look Nepali. I have a great reputation in Bangladesh as being a foreigner with a Bengali body because Bangladesh people also are not exactly giants in the land.

But bringing Wayne here, of course, has swung the pendulum of OM's broken image. Praise the Lord for the privilege of just even being with you this morning. I hope these thoughts from Luke 14 and this little bit of sharing about some of my own mistakes, some of the problems, and yet how God has blessed this strategy of going slow, of counting the costs, of putting the emphasis on integrity and relationships.

Of course, the greatest emphasis of all is what we read in that first verse. It's knowing Christ. It's worship.

It's knowing God, personal holiness. That is what we'll be talking about in the next couple of days. But then right next to that, building on a solid foundation, and that means, of course, there will be disappointments.

I've had many disappointments. I've had people that I thought were really going to be God's men just wipe down, just wipe down. Sometimes money, sometimes women, sometimes false doctrine.

That's why you see sometimes it's good to go slow because if you move that man into a major position when that happens, it's much more difficult to pick up the pieces than if he's just in training. We always keep a lot of our men for many years in training. And then we move them into something stronger.

And I noticed that in India, Bhaktsen used a similar method. Of course, he would call them God's servants and keep them at Hebron for training. Then he'd send them out to see if they could work with one of the churches.

And if they just, you know, as we say in English, if they just blew it, he'd call them back. Of course, he got criticized for this kind of thing. But sometimes some of the men he sent out caused more grief to the local church than they did blessing because they were immature.

They were proud. And maybe I just close with this. It seems that pride causes a lot of the grief and problems in the work of the Lord.

And it makes people hard to correct. I think I found one of the hardest ministries as a leader is to correct people. And if you have a task of correcting people, you need to learn how to correct people.

It's not just marching into their house, boom, boom, boom. It takes the most love and sensitivity. Bring out their positive points.

Show appreciation. If you don't show appreciation to a brother or sister, you have no credentials for correcting them. And really, some pastors that I've worked with and OM leaders, so slow to show appreciation.

People want appreciation. They'd like to be thanked. But sometimes we've had on our teams a brother, a sister, nobody has said anything to them for weeks until they do something wrong.

Then, boom, broke the social policy or did this or did that. And of course, it can be very destructive. And I find that the Lord is leading me lately in a lot more of my messages, not to bomb people on the head with a heavy, verbal dynamite message.

I still have those. But for every dynamite message, you need nine comfort, build them up, encourage them. God's people get down on themselves.

They feel their failures. They're carrying sins in their hearts. I've had 3,000 people stand to their feet in my meetings in the past two months, repenting of sin, asking God for victory and rededicating their lives to Jesus Christ.

That's not a great feat because so many of God's people are weighed down by sin and discouragement. And we've got to be able to come in and lift them up, show them God uses sinners and they can repent and the blood of Christ can cleanse. Even moral sin, even sin with money, even pride, God can cleanse, God can restore.

It's not the end of the road. We need to have that kind of message and yet at the same time to so beware of pride in our own hearts, which so often leads to destruction. Well, thank you for this little time together.

Let's just pray. Father, I thank you for these men, women. Thank you for the ministries you've given them.

Lord, you know our burden to be able to serve them and serve the church, to be a blessing, perhaps only in small ways. Think of the literature opportunities. We think of the films and cassettes that we're involved in, many other ministries that are just quietly going on.

Nobody knows sometimes from where they come or where they go. We thank you for this. Thank you for Wayne and Sheila in this time of grief.

We know you're ministering to them in a special way. Lord, we just believe that even these international people who come here, that the life of the Nepal church can make an impact on them.

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