

Cd Gv285 Big Vision

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the importance of discipline, prayer, and a big vision for evangelism in his ministry work with Operation Mobilization.

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Matthew 6:33, Acts 2:41, Acts 20:31, 2 Timothy 2:15, James 1:27, 1 John 3:17

Topics: "World Missions", "Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of taking action in spreading the word of God. They acknowledge the progress that has been made in the world of missions but stress that it will not be completed unless individuals actively participate. The speaker encourages Christians to have a vision and to think big in their efforts to reach others with the gospel. They also highlight the need for consolidation within the mission movement and the importance of having a biblical foundation for missions. The sermon concludes with a call for churches to prioritize world missions and to become more informed and involved in missionary work.

Transcript

The reason I suppose most of you came today is to see George and to hear what he has to say to us but before he speaks to us I want to ask him a few questions. And I think often when we think about OM and about George we often think about where he's going, what he's doing. We don't really hear much about him as a person and I think it would be nice if I could have you up here George just for a few minutes before you speak, just to ask you.

Thank you. I've been told, I was doing a little bit of research this week and your personal secretary, I'll not mention who she is, I think maybe she's here today but I will mention no names, Janice Leverden. And she was saying that she has got phone calls from all sorts of different places from you, places with a lot of seats in them, places with not so many seats, and he got up to an imagination.

George, you're extremely busy, how do you cope with such a busy schedule, with a busy lifestyle? Well, I think it's just like everybody else, it's the grace of God and I guess I have a lot more people praying for me than most people and I think God prepared me for this lifestyle even before I was a Christian and afterward from his word. What can I say, the mercy of God, the prayers of the saints, the biblical principles of survivalship or perseverance, that's probably the key for me to find the right balance between things I don't like to do and things I do like to do and obedience to the Lord. How do you work that out with your family, can you tell us a little bit about your family? Well, my family has grown up now, so we are alone in

the home, my wife and I, though we often see our children and I think we had to adjust our lifestyle according to the family.

We made a lot of changes in order to get maximum time with the children and I never traveled as much as it looked because people see your schedule, they don't see the gaps, they just see where you are and especially when I lived on the ship, especially I had a lot of time with the children. How many have you? Three children, two men and a woman. Only one married and he married, they are all British citizens now except my oldest and he married a British woman so we are settled really in Britain as our home now and they've just had a baby daughter, so I've just become a grandfather.

What's her name? Emily Ann, Irish name. That's my mother's name. Yeah, I figured it was Irish.

Wow, she must be a good girl. Well look, whenever we watch the news and so on, we've heard of Baker who hasn't kept clean and this very book here you have, *Rebuilding Your Broken World*. George, how have you managed to, by God's grace? Well, I think I saw when I was just a teenager and I was just converted, I had a real problem with lust and I knew that lust was going to either break me or make me and I decided at a very young age that it was going to make me and I made it a main focus of my life to develop discipline, to learn to say no to things I liked.

So I practiced at a young age saying no all the time to all kinds of things that I liked. I almost became an ascetic and so that helped. When some big temptations came, I had the habit of saying no and so I said no.

I think there's a great mistake of blaming God for the messes that we get in and that comes also because of spiritual lingo. We say, well, I'm only what I am because of the grace of God. That's fine to say that, but does that mean the guy that's all messed up is only the way he is because of the grace of God? So I think we've got to understand that God has given us a biblical plan for living and if we don't stick to that plan, we are going to get in a mess one way or the other.

And we have seen through 50,000 people going through OM, we have seen relatively little of some of these problems. Of course, we've seen some. We're in spiritual warfare and there are casualties.

But I believe that in the light of God's provision, living a holy life is not really so hard. In another sense, it is hard. But I got that really from Dr. Culberson, the president of Moody Bible Institute where I was a student.

He got it, I guess, from ministering at the Keswick Convention. But in the light of God's provision for us, the Holy Spirit, the blood of Christ, the reality of the cross, the promises of the Lord, living a holy, godly life, which includes the human factor, is not really so hard. But there is not enough example and there is not enough emphasis on this in the day and age in which we live.

I know you read a lot, but how else do you stay spiritually fresh? I have probably at least 20 different basic methods that I use to stay spiritually fresh. Just 20? Yeah, the first, of course, is every day in the word and prayer, whether I like it or not, whether I feel like it or not. Every day, some exercise, usually something I don't like.

Maybe it's the time in the morning you do it, right? Yeah, right. Books, tapes, I also have never lost my art to play. Gordon MacDonald, who fell into that immorality and then wrote this book after he was restored, I was just with him a few weeks ago, talking to him, and one of the things that happened in his life is that he forgot how to play.

Life became too heavy and the enemy really set him up. I think anybody who falls into major immorality, the enemy has set him up. It doesn't happen overnight.

It's a process, bringing in discouragement, bringing in bitterness, bringing in lack of trust in God's will, problems, other problems. What has the Lord been saying to you recently? Think big, pray big. That may sound normal for you who think you may know George Burwer, but that has not been my message lately.

My message has been a lot of emphasis on consolidation. We have so many visionaries in OM. You don't need me anymore as a visionary.

This movement borders on being out of control. In fact, sometimes it is out of control. So I was backing off some of my big ideas and big plans and big visions.

I was the slowest to agree on the second repurchasing of another ship to replace Lavas II. I've had a lot of struggle with discouragement in the past years. But the Lord has just rebuked me in His gentle way, showed me what a coward I am, and told me that I need to think big and pray big, but not necessarily within the context of OM.

My first burden is not OM. My first burden is the whole work of God. I have this burden to see great numbers of people released for God's work, but it doesn't necessarily have to be on OM.

I think OM should have slow, steady growth. We're already 1,800 full-time people and 5,600 children. And I have this great burden to see great sums of money released for the work of God, but I only want a tiny percentage of that to come through Operation Mobilization.

I want it to come in other groups. I could talk a long time about that. I could send you a tape on that if you want.

What could we pray for you personally as George Verver, husband, leader? Well, patience. I'm impatient. Even sitting here waiting to speak is a struggle for me.

I saw that, yeah. No, I appreciated especially the interview with my friend. But I do have a struggle with everything to me in the world is going too slow.

This is a considerable problem at times for my wife. So pray for patience, wisdom. We have a lot of big decisions to make in our work.

I'm just waiting for a phone call right now because for the first time in OM's history, we have a worker who is completely missing. He's been missing for 48, no, for over 50 hours. The director of that area is our work among the Afghans.

It's actually a separate organization we've set up called SERV. It's a relief work among Afghan refugees. This Canadian brother, whose wife went back early to Canada, was last seen about 50, 60 hours ago going off to spend, to have a meal with two Afghans who he had met on a bus.

And our director there, now that so much time has passed, suspects something sinister has happened. What's his name? His name is John Tarswell. He was supposed to see me this week for an interview about being a bookkeeper on my team in London.

He's coming back. But it looks like, just like last year we had two people headed into prison in Nepal, it looks like this year we may be headed for a crisis of even greater proportion. We don't know.

They're not taking hostages in that area. This is not happening among the Afghan refugees. Even though that's an incredibly hot political area.

KGB's big in there. CIA's big. Big drug area.

It's generally not a hostage-taking area. But that means it could be something worse. So thank you for coming.

Thank you for your faithfulness in prayer. I know quite a few of you are involved in those prayer groups. Some of my greatest heartbreaks have been in attempting to set up prayer groups and to see them collapse.

Because it's a hard thing to keep a prayer group going. The church in the 20th century is not really a praying church. A very high percentage of ministers in surveys have acknowledged that they don't even have a prayer life.

These are ministers. If our ministers are not praying men and women of God, it's difficult to reproduce praying men and women of God. There are beautiful exceptions.

Thank you for your financial support. One of the great blunders of OM is some of the difficulty we got into in communication in regard to finance. The struggle we had at times being honest because we wanted to make sure that we weren't hinting or that we weren't breaking our policy concerning walking by faith.

But I think we just need to understand that evangelizing the world, especially the Muslim world, the Hindu world, the communist world, any part of the world, such an enormous uphill battle. Many, many of my men have been with me, women as well, 20, 30 years. They're scarred in this awesome battle to plant the church and take the gospel to every people's group in every part of the world.

We, a few years ago, just wrestled with the need to be more upfront and more honest. We had gone through five years of financial nightmares and yet most of our prayer partners thought we were the great faith miracle workers of the century. They didn't know actually what was going on except a few people who were really on the in.

They didn't know how many were leaving. Hundreds over the years have left OM, mainly because of finances. And so we became more honest and open about sharing.

This burden to see finances released for the work of God and to pray more specifically for finance. Many of you are on the inside of Operation Mobilization. You know a bit how it works.

You have a son or a daughter with us. You're a long-standing prayer partner, friend. You're someone who's financed of work.

And I want to just share some of the big burdens, big visions that we have. First of all, let me say I think it is biblical to think and pray big. But I don't think it's biblical just to be infatuated with bigness.

And I'm not infatuated with bigness. And I think the small things in life are often the most relevant and the things that minister to me. But I think at the same time there's a danger in my life at my particular age,

midlife crisis, of allowing the pendulum to swing away from thinking big and dreaming big and going for big goals into just thinking all the time about the problems, the pastoral care, the lack of finances, the people that have been hurt through the ministry, the things that haven't worked out, and all of that.

There's plenty of that in life for all of us probably who are active. But in the midst of the struggles, the midst of the failures, and we are in OM constantly meeting and trying to improve. We have committees for personnel.

We have committees for doctrine. We meet five, four, five times a year, us area leaders. I'm one of the area leaders.

We spend three solid days going through every single problem of any importance in the movement. We are planning ahead five and ten years. We're wrestling with all kinds of growth factors as our growth has been very fast lately.

OM, despite the organizational hiccups, I really believe is a movement that does things generally decently and in order. The fact that it's big and it's fast moving will have a different set of priorities. And so some things will be undone that will upset people, but they're not usually the major priorities.

In fact, some little thing may get undone because we're giving ourselves to that bigger thing. That bigger thing has to be the pastoral care, the counseling of our people. And that takes big time.

So if the leader of the ship is failing to go around and greet all the people coming to the VIP reception, it could be that he's counseling a married couple in their cabin who are at a point of crisis, and therefore he's behind the scenes and you don't see him. Please pray the Lord will give us the right administrative staff. We need godly administrators.

The tendency is for administrators not to be godly. They've been trained in management. They come from secular corporations.

They don't understand prayer. They don't understand spiritual warfare. And yet they have gifts that we often need.

But if you throw them prematurely into spiritual work, into spiritual combat, you get a mess. Many groups have suffered from this. We would rather train up a manager, and we have trained up many, who's a man of prayer, a man of integrity, a man of purity, and have him make a few mistakes in organizing this or that, than get people in the work who are not committed to godliness, spiritual warfare, prayer, and the life of love and faith in 1 Corinthians 13.

And when a movement is short of finance, as we often are, things get very, very nasty. I can assure you. Because different people have different lifestyles.

OM does not have one dictated lifestyle. You can't have that in Western Europe. You can't have that in the world.

Some of our people have inherited homes. Some of our people have different concepts about culture and lifestyle. And so when there's a shortage of money, the enemy tries to bring in judgmentalism, legalism, phariseeism, you name it.

It'll be right there. And it can get very ugly. We thank God that though we have failed sometimes at the moment of crisis and difficulty, that there's often been repentance and revival, people getting right with one another, apologizing, phoning, writing letters.

And right now across the OM world, there's an amazing degree of unity and love in the midst of diversity and some pain and some agony. Just to keep those two ships going, and there'll soon be 500 people between the two ships, is enough to permanently depress me if I think about it in the wrong way. So I try to think about it in the right way.

We get people, very naive, very young, join OM, want to sail away on the ships. Then they get on the ship and discover it's hard work. They discover that God's people, especially under pressure, can get very ugly.

They discover their leader is not a combination of Hudson Taylor, George Mueller, and E.T. or Clint Eastwood, but just a human being who may fail under pressure. And we do have a percentage of people who come back off OM that are not satisfied. I find that very, very hard.

From my childhood, I did a little psychoanalysis on myself. I discovered I'm the kind of person who likes everybody happy. I like everybody happy.

I came from a happy family. It was a small family. Maybe that was easier.

I want everybody happy. I want everybody to like me. I don't want anybody that doesn't like me.

I don't want anybody that doesn't like OM. We should all like OM. So I find people come off and they're disgruntled and unhappy, and they're sending these memos around.

We had that from Love Europe as well. And I'm one of the ones that have to read the negative. One fellow discovered his team leader was a woman.

We're trying to esteem the women in OM. Jean Giff is pioneering in her low-profile leadership operation here in Ulster. The whole of the OM world is watching Jean Giff as we have been criticized of being a chauvinistic operation.

But it's not such a simple subject. This one man found out his team leader was a woman in France. He packed his bag, left, shaking dust on the team, and wrote me two and a half heavy pages of theology about women's ministry that I don't even understand.

Despite the problems, despite the setbacks, God is putting on our hearts to think big, to pray big, to dream dreams, to keep aiming for the high goals, as we're told in the book of Philippians. What are some of the specific visions? Firstly, the ongoing vision for the Muslim world. We are just, next month, finishing a decade of Muslim evangelism emphasis.

All of you who pray for this work can be thankful to God for what he is doing to enable us to reach Muslims. There are many, many other societies, I shouldn't say many, but there are some other mission societies who have the same commitment. We have people here, like Peter Crawford, laboring with one of those societies.

And what a joy to meet so many XOMers in so many other mission agencies, pressing on, especially when it's among Muslims. We want to increase the number of people we train in Muslim work and send into other missions. We want to increase the number of people working with us in Muslim evangelism in

the Arab world, in North Africa, which is part of the Arab world, in Turkey, in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

We are seeing an increase. The work in Pakistan has had ten years of phenomenal growth. Mike Wakely is now back in Britain due to education for his children.

And John Brown, one of your own Ulstermen, is there as the leader of that work in Pakistan. And believe me, he has a huge, huge responsibility leading that work. So we've got some great burdens for the Muslim world.

To see Muslims converted, to see little worship groups coming into being that can become living churches, to train people for other mission agencies. But also, part of that vision that I'm very involved in is to try to see a grassroots movement among God's people for Muslim evangelism, for helping supply the literature. We have great literature needs to reach Muslims.

They're open to reading. We have great needs in other areas. Because most of us strongly feel that evangelism will not be completed, that there is no such thing as true closure when it comes to evangelism.

Even if we complete all of our goals by the year 2000, the very next morning there will be millions of people to evangelize. Do you know how many people will be living in the world by the year 2000? But that does not stop us from having higher goals as we move toward the end of the century. It's good to aim at something without overplaying it, over-dramatizing it, saying things that are irrelevant or ridiculous.

But surely, it would be a great goal if everybody in the world could have heard and have received something of the gospel by the year 2000. Whether it's by radio, by literature, by personal work, by multiplication, by groups that dig in and plant churches and see them multiply, or by groups that sweep through and reach 10 million people in a summer with the Word of God. That everybody deserves to hear the gospel at least once.

If that happens by the year 2000, we'll have to do it again in the year 2001. Radio stations won't fold up, OM won't fold up, churches won't stop, mission conferences won't stop. In other words, we need to see a basic overall increase of our whole thrust.

That's going to take a grassroots movement where every church that believes the Bible, and may there be more of those churches in the months to come, years to come, including right here in Ulster, realizes that world missions is a priority. They start using books like Operation World. They start having a biblical-based missions conference.

They start giving greater esteem to things like the Bangor Convention and other similar conventions. They read more missionary material. They become informed.

We have more missionary information in the world today than ever before in history. I'll make a verbal generalization in saying that more information has been produced about missions in the last 50 years than in the previous 1,950 whatever. Because we have the computer.

Because we have so many organizations, so many fellowships. God has done already so much. So much has been done.

There is a great foundation. This is why you will get mega optimistic statements about how the job can be done if every church just targets one people's group. And all kinds of other amazing comparisons that

come to us from different directions.

Lausanne II, the great congress on world missions, world evangelism in Manila, recently showed how the job can be done. That doesn't mean it will be done. It can be done, but it will not be done unless you and I start to run.

You didn't know I was into poetry, did you? I'm not actually. Every Christian, a marathon runner. Every Christian, a visionary.

One of the final messages I shared at the OM conferences over in the Netherlands a few weeks ago, a few months ago, was called Little Visions. I'll be happy to send you the tape. And I shared that for every big vision we need an army of people with a little vision.

You're that army of people. Most of you are not the big visionaries that are going to walk out of here and start some new organization or launch some great plan. In fact, people easily get into that in the flesh, and we have a lot of things being born that rarely anybody looking at them.

They're not much that really from God. Somebody got an idea, and they went with it, and God's gracious. There are many levels in which God is willing to work with us.

I mean, some of the things that we have born in the United States under the name of Christian ministry, I mean, it's bizarre. I mean, it's bizarre. And I think A.W. Tozer was right when he said the greatest need in the church today is for discernment, to be able to discern that which is born of God and that which is born of man.

God may still bless it, though it's born of man because of his love, his mercy. But for every big vision, whether it's another ocean-going ship to reach tens of millions for the gospel, whether it's another big Love Europe Trust to mobilize 5,000 people to reach millions with God's word, whether it's another radio station or a big thrust into the Soviet bloc, as some people are planning, for every big vision, we need an army of people with a little vision. Little visions.

How their work can fit in to the big vision. How their prayers fit in. How their giving fits in, which may only be the widow's mite.

How saving used postage stamps. How many of you save used postage stamps for world missions? You keep, especially the ones that are nice pictures. Raise your hand.

There's a little vision everyone can have. You know how much money has come into Operation Mobilization through selling used postage stamps? It must be 10,000, 15,000 pounds. Life is not always big things.

It's little things. Do you know how much money we have saved in our work by using used clothing? The missionary barrel. We don't have a rule about it.

We're not as fervent in this as we used to be, which is a bit heartbreaking for me. But we probably saved 100,000 pounds over 30 years on clothing. And that goes right through many, many other areas of life.

Because a lot of the things that we think we need, we actually don't need. And we don't necessarily need it. To be new little visions by what someone described as the small people of the world is that which is going to enable these big visions to come to pass.

Just even talking to some other believer about the Muslim world. Just telling them that there's someone by the name of John Brown from Ulster who's leading this work in Pakistan. Just making available a piece of literature perhaps about the ship ministry or about Pakistan or about the Afghans or about our evangelistic thrust in Great Britain, which has greatly increased in the last few years.

Now called Luke Love UK Evangelism. Or telling them about a unique two-year program where they can be involved in Asia as a short-term worker. What a wonderful thing if some people even today, instead of taking one of these for yourself, would take a few extras and become a mobilizer for missions.

The word mobilizer, though we've been using it for 27 years, has actually become very popular lately among California missiologists. They're using this word mobilizer. So when everyone's changing their name in missions, our name is becoming more acceptable.

That's encouraging. It's also probably a bit trivia. We need people with the small visions.

I remember visiting a friend in Australia. Some of you met my co-worker Tom Webb. He's from Australia.

If you don't understand what he's saying, don't hesitate to ask him to repeat it slower. But I was in Australia and I visited this friend and he had a sign on his front fence, budgies for sale. Or was it some other bird? I know it was some bird for sale.

He was a school professor, teacher. I said, what's this? You're selling birds. What's this about? He said they had a missions conference.

They had a challenge about faith promise giving, which has the concept of not just giving what you think you can give, but trusting God to be able to give according to your faith. It's a personal thing between you and the Lord. And he felt that God wanted him to sell these birds, there seemed to be quite a market for these particular birds, and give all the money from the sale of those birds for world missions.

I don't think the main missionary money should come from us selling things, but there's nothing wrong with selling things for the kingdom of God if it's done in a proper way. In Acts chapter 2 and Acts chapter 4, they sold things for the kingdom of God. Someone said the greatest obstacle in financing the work of God is frozen assets.

Everybody's sitting on their assets. We live in the age of nervous tension. We live in the age in which the insurance men are the ones making real money, except Trevor Alexander.

We live in the age where we're told we've got to lay up so much, and no one can ever tell you how much. It just keeps getting bigger and bigger and bigger. And very few are willing to reduce their assets for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Let me just say, it does happen. Let me add to this something you may not realize, especially at work like OM. We more easily attract people willing to go than we can find people willing to give.

That's our ethos. I'm known as a recruiter. I'm invited to young people's meetings.

If there's anybody wealthy around, and George Burr was in town, he'll probably not go to the meeting, because the word is around that I live a simple lifestyle. The word is around that OM preaches forsaking all. How many wealthy people want to walk into a meeting with some American loudmouth, preaching, except you forsake all that you have, you'll not be my disciple.

But the truth is that often it is harder to stay home, especially once you're older. You're fed up with business. You're fed up with the world.

And you have maybe an idealistic view of Christian work. And you think, how wonderful, how fulfilling, if I could serve the Lord. Here I am working in this secular place with pornography pasted up on the wall and people foul-mouthing Jesus Christ every other day.

We have more families and older people that want to join OM than we are able to handle. Doesn't mean we don't need more, because we have to get the right people. But more than that, we need people who have a vision for resourcing the work of God.

That takes me into the second big vision that I have on my heart. This is a vision to pray for the release of hundreds of millions, and I said hundreds of millions, of pounds and dollars and deutschmarks into the work of God, into feeding the poor, and into putting into practice 1 Corinthians 13. I expect and pray only a tiny fraction of that will come to OM.

Only a tiny fraction, so don't misquote me. But we are in touch with probably a thousand organizations and church movements. Almost all of them need finance.

Many of them are in cutback mode right now because of lack of finance. Going outside of the church, we realize that God in His sovereignty uses secular organizations and government to meet the needs of the hungry and the needy and the refugees across the world. We may not agree with their approach.

We may have a higher calling. But surely we must see as an act of God when millions, tens of millions, are suddenly released from Sweden, a very generous country, to help the starving people of Africa. In a sense, the more secular money that flows out of UNESCO and America and Britain for the refugees, for the hungry, for the housing, for agricultural needs, the more they do that, the more we, with our limited resources, speaking humanly, can focus in on the spiritual task, winning men to Jesus Christ.

And OM, as a movement, will not be sidetracked from our calling to evangelism and disciple-making and church planting. We are in the camp of Luis Palau, who says that preaching the gospel and seeing men and women saved is the greatest way to bring about social change. That doesn't mean we won't do other things.

We're working among Afghan refugees. We're working among Mozambique refugees. We have an educational program on the ships.

But our priority is the proclamation of the gospel, the making of disciples in every nation, the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ, and all that goes with that, including every possible effort to edify the saints and build up God's people. Would you begin praying in a bigger way for finance for the work of God, for all the work of God? Would you release finance through prayer, even through government agencies? Do you realize how much money there is in this world? Do you realize that a place like New York City, there are so many millionaires, they bump into each other in the street. One of the richest cities in the history of our planet is New York City, where I was converted to Jesus Christ.

It is incomprehensible the money that is there. Arab money, Italian money, Irish money. It's all there in New York City.

Billions upon billions. Have you ever heard of Trump? Have you ever read about some of these people? The money they have, the way they live. Should we as God's people just sit back and watch them spend millions on rockets, millions on pornography, millions on every possible crazy, wild, ridiculous thing you can think of, and not be desirous to claim a few million for the Kingdom of God, whatever way the Lord chooses to channel it.

We must not be on the retreat. We must not be specialists in thinking small. We must not exaggerate the story of the widow's mite, thinking that God never brings in large gifts to His work.

It's not either or. So many of the controversies, so many of the things we fight about are not either or. People ask me, in O.M., what keeps it going? Is it the small gifts or the big gifts? Must we fight between the small gifts and the big gifts? It's both.

Large gifts that have come in from the earliest days of our work in answer to prayer, often in unexpected ways, surely a work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of people who didn't even know us, were a major factor in this work being born and going forward. I bumped into an old man in Wales when I first came to Britain named Samuel Howells, the son of Rees Howells, a man of prayer, a bit of a recluse now. I was down there with him not so long ago.

But I saw the faith of these people and I saw their emphasis on prayer. I had some of that, of course, before I was there. And I don't know how it happened, but another lady who was a friend of that institution in the very early days, I had only been in this country a short time, I was about to go to Italy.

It looked like O.M. was about to be born in Italy. I was going down there to figure out what was happening. It was all a result of a couple of letters.

I went to Rome. And when I came back from Rome, I was crying to God for money. We had almost no money.

The summer was coming. No one knew hardly who we were. It looked like about 80 or 90 British people were going to come on O.M. And there was a gift in my post of 5,000 or 6,000 pounds.

This is 1962. What was 5,000 pounds? 6,000 pounds in 1962. Only later in God's providence did I meet that woman.

We'd later send a bigger gift and discover the amazing way that God had worked through information, through providence, through faith, to put that upon her heart. Brothers and sisters, one of the greatest joys you can have, even as a small, so-called small, unknown person, is releasing finance for the kingdom of God. I could keep you literally here for days telling you of how God has financed this phenomenon.

O.M. is not a work of George Borer. It is a phenomenon. The Holy Spirit in the 20th century that follows in the steps of the movement that George Mueller began, the movement that Hudson Taylor began, the movement that goes back to the men in Acts 2 and Acts 4 who in reality and generosity saw finance released for the work of God.

You may say, well, should we pray it in or should we give it? We won't argue over that. But we need a big vision. We cannot look at refugees and close our hearts.

We cannot look at people without Bibles and close our hearts. We cannot look at missionaries returning from the field for lack of finance and close our hearts. We dare not rip even a Hudson Taylor cliché out of context and use it to defend our own lack of reality, generosity, and diligence.

We must respond. The Bible says in 1 John 3, He that hath this world's good sees his brother in need, opens not his heart of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him. That's strong.

That's strong. My heart broke today just in a small way when I heard the number of people in Ulster who are unemployed. I don't know how many of you have been through unemployment.

A man can crack up, a woman can have a nervous breakdown through unemployment, especially if they're not a believer. If they're a believer, they have other resources. If they're a believer, they're always employed.

More time for prayer, more time for literature evangelism, more time for reading, more time for loving, more time visiting. Of course, many believers don't have that vision. We know many believers are living worse even than unbelievers and that's a hard one to figure out, but I'm speaking generally.

But for people that don't know Jesus, to live in perpetual unemployment can so seriously damage a person's emotions and mind that they will never recover apart from a miracle and that's the miracle we preach, new birth in Jesus Christ. We must never harden our heart. I have seen so many needs, so many needs in this world.

I cannot but ask God for something big. If he chooses to bring part of that through me or through O.M. in fear and trembling, I will handle that. He has done that in a tiny way, but my greater vision is for God to do it as he would choose.

Use World Vision, use Tear Fund, use the great S.I.M., use WEC, use CLC, use new movements that are being born like horizons, use some of the old denominations, some of which have great missionary work. Use whoever he chooses, but that the gospel may go out to every creature, that there may be enough Bibles for everybody in the world, enough New Testaments, enough literature, enough bicycles, enough video recorders and video cassettes and audio cassettes, all the tools we need to do the job. Just like old Winston Churchill said to Roosevelt in that great war, give us the tools and we'll complete the job.

Do you realize the miracle we have in a movement like O.M.? We've got 1,800 people, most of whom, maybe not all because there are some who are not functioning spiritually properly right now, but most of whom have one passion. They just want to serve the Lord. I've lived with these people for 25 and 30 years.

I hardly know a single person in O.M. that has as a major goal material gain. In fact, we went into extremism because we wanted to put all of our money, all of our time, all of our energy into world evangelism. What do I have later, 30 years after I began? I still have no property, no bank account, no money in the bank.

I have only clothes that mainly I got out of a missionary barrel. I have no desire for these things. For us to live is Christ, to die is gain.

Did you think we changed when we became older? Yes, we have changed to some degree. And we don't force our personal convictions on other people. And there are some O.M.ers who own their own home and

we're happy for that.

It's saving us a lot of rent. And we are purchasing a few pieces of property in the world to just save us from the endless battle with rents that we've often had to face. But beneath the small changes, the heart of O.M. is not changed.

It's to give the gospel to everybody in the world. We can say to some small degree, as Paul said in Acts chapter 20, that for the space of three years or 30 years, we've not ceased night and day to warn men night, sometimes with tears. I don't think we can say we knew what Paul knew during that three-year period.

Will you pray big? Will you think big? Do we realize the potential right here in Ulster for world missions? When a church in Ulster gets a vision to put up a new building and gets a vision for a new parking lot or gets a vision for whatever, do you ever get it? Does it ever happen? It does. Not always. There are phenomenal resources in this little part of the world.

And on top of that, we have the widow's might principle. Double-barreled shot. And I believe the present level of missionary giving for most places in Britain is a scandal in the sight of God.

Now, that's a silly message to give to the likes of you who come on a Saturday afternoon. Some of you are going to need wisdom not to give, like me, and buy something for your wife. I'll tell you, the day I went out and bought some flowers for my wife, she thought I'd gone right out of my mind.

The Lord does give good things. The Lord does give good things. And one of the greatest victories in OM was when we discovered a little more of the reality of our humanity.

And we started to accept our humanity. And with the acceptance of our humanity, sometimes it costs a little money so that we can function in a way that is honoring to God and also in a way in which we can maintain our own sanity. Because we're not living in a refugee camp.

And God doesn't expect you to live in a refugee camp. Because He is concerned for you. He's concerned for your emotional and psychological needs.

And if I hadn't learned that, I probably would have driven my wife into a permanent depression. But with all said and done, at the end of the day, the possibilities for releasing finance and resources from Northern Ireland is awesome. No part of Britain has a stronger church than Northern Ireland.

Whatever criticism may come in your direction, you are certainly the strongest part of the Church of Jesus Christ that I know in the British Isles. And I've been up and down every part of Britain for 27 years. So I'll be happy to debate the man who wants to take me on on that subject.

Only there might be a fee. But the Bible says, to whom much is given, much will be required. And if God has given you much, if you have a great heritage, if you have great churches, if you have more people feeding on the Word of God on Sunday morning, if you have more Christian literature, more Christian bookshops per capita, then more will be required.

More missionaries, more resources, more prayer. Will you think and pray big in the weeks and months and years to come and ask the Lord to do a new thing in Ulster, in our own lives, in our missionary work. We have many other big visions, but I feel the time is gone.

I'd love to talk to you about the big vision we have for India. We hope to move from Bombay to Hyderabad and open a new center that will help the work be more indigenous in the next 20 years. We're praying for a whole series of miracles to find the finance for that.

But more than that, we hope to be able to train more people and send them into every part of India with the Gospel, not only to reach people as we've done, giving the Gospel to 300 million people in the last 25 years, but to see men followed up, to see churches established, especially among Orthodox Hindus and Orthodox Muslims. The doors are falling off the hinges in the so-called Soviet bloc, which is no longer a bloc. Hungary is opening like a beautiful flower.

News today indicates that East Germany may follow what's happening in Poland and in Hungary. The possibilities to reach hundreds of millions, hundreds of millions of people in that great bloc of the Eastern Zone is facing us and other mission groups. God has prepared us from the very beginning of our work, our coordinating base in Austria, our fingers in dozens and dozens and dozens of literature pies in almost every major language of that part of the world, our networking with other groups like People International, led by Ron George, who specialized in Central Asia and Soviet Asia.

The possibilities are phenomenal. Will you think big for the Soviet Union? Will you pray big for that unique bloc of the world? And we know that Western Europe, as our leaflet told us, at least last year, is the only continent in the world where the Church is not visibly growing. The possibility for using short-term personnel, even in the summers and Christmas and Easter, to supplement and complement existing long-term work is phenomenal.

We live in a global village. Do not think we take young people on Love Europe just to give them a blessed summer, just to see their lives change. That is valid.

We take these young people to Europe because this is proven to be an effective way of helping the existing Church. We, with this army of young people, can do things they can't do or don't want to do. A lot of it is donkey work.

A lot of it is routine, going out into the streets, fishing people into the meetings, helping their young people come alive, because young people enthuse young people. Praise God for those who are 70 who have a ministry and turning on young people at 18. But generally, that's not the situation.

Young people enthuse young people. Will you pray for big things to happen in this big world? That doesn't mean we're not interested in other things. We are very interested in righteousness and justice.

We are very interested in the abortion situation. We are very interested in the prisons. I'm going to prison again in a week or two.

Not to stay, but to preach. We are so excited about what other mission agencies are doing. Our big vision for releasing finance, we hope, will affect every biblical agency in the world.

And I would lead OM, if God called me to, in order to lead a vision that would have that kind of impact on the whole work of God and the whole church of God. Let's pray big. Let's read the book of Acts and see how on one day, in one place, 3,000 people were added to the church of Jesus Christ.

And begin to move with a new exhilaration and new faith to accomplish God's purposes and certainly, as much as we possibly can, between now and New Year's Eve, the year 2000. Let's pray. Stir us, O Lord.

Stir us to greater prayer. Stir us to greater action. Before suddenly, before we know it, we're standing before you.

Standing before you, giving account of our time, of our resources, of our lives at that great judgment seat. We're trusting you to give us balance and wisdom and discernment that we may go forward in this vision, not as fools, except it be fools for you. Grant this, we pray, for it is in the powerful, authoritative name of Jesus Christ that we ask this.

Amen.

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