

Grace

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the importance of grace in overcoming life's challenges and fostering humility in our relationships.

Duration: 47:53

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:1

Topics: "Grace"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the elders among the audience, urging them to be shepherds of God's flock. He emphasizes the importance of serving willingly and not for personal gain, and encourages leaders to be examples to those under their care. The speaker also discusses the challenges of lending and the need to extend grace when things are broken or damaged. He highlights the value of learning from experienced leaders and sharing that knowledge with others. The sermon emphasizes the importance of writing down teachings to aid memory and facilitate sharing with others.

Transcript

A lot has happened over this past weekend and there's a lot of things we'd like to share. I think one thing you have to become accustomed to on this team is that it's impossible to keep up on all the news and try not to get upset or irritated with someone when maybe they don't inform you about something because so much is happening. And it's just difficult.

And there'll be times when those of you, because we do meet separately on Monday, those of you in STL will have some news, some item to pray, and those in ICT won't know much about that. And there'll be other times when it's reversed. Don't worry about that.

Don't suddenly think, oh, ICT has more news than STL. Well, I'll tell you, ICT may have more news, but you sure got more money. But maybe we'll sell some of our news.

But we, in many ways, the ministry of ICT and STL are very distinct, very distinct and very different. As Christians, we love to emphasize our unity and our similarities. Sometimes we're unrealistic about the differences that we're facing in our particular work.

Many of us, for example, in ICT are hardly ever in Bromley. So that is a little different from some of you who may have to report in here five days a week. This is one of the reasons for this little retreat because

this retreat, one of the goals is to get to know one another as we're so often traveling.

Turn with me to 1 Peter 5. I want to talk about God's grace. You know, sometimes the challenge of OM and of the New Testament can become pretty heavy. I've listened to some of the study program tapes.

Most of my study program I received through tapes and books. This weekend alone, I went through several different tapes on my way trying to listen to all the messages of the conference, main messages of the conference for itinerant evangelists. Akbar Huck, Billy Graham, Faisal Kavangiri, these are always good people for study program.

And I, however, have listened to also some of the tapes of study program here. And, of course, I think many people who come to teach us, they have a burden on their heart. They don't just want to study and teach line on line.

They want to challenge us with something. And I think at times in OM we get many challenges. And if we listen and if we're sensitive, we can almost have to live in a perpetual state of repentance as blow after blow is given to our heart.

And I think it's important to know when the challenge is coming strong that there is grace. William MacDonald, I remember him preaching 20 some years ago here in London at one of our conferences. He wrote the word grace, I think he wrote it down, G-R-A-C-E, and then he did under the G, God.

Under the R, riches. Under the A, at. Under the C, Christ.

Under the E, expense. It's a good way to remember what grace is. God's riches at Christ's expense.

Now I always appreciate when it's study program time that everybody has their notebooks out. I'm glad that some do. The rest, please, do not develop the bad habit of coming to study program time without your notebook.

Because we're not here just to try to stimulate you for an hour so that maybe you can make it through the day or get you just to wake up. We give these things, according to 2 Timothy chapter 2, that you can give them to others. Everybody in OMST, ICT is in leadership training.

How many of you men think maybe, possibly, possibly someday you're going to become a husband? Any of you? Uh-huh, several candidates. Several already are. And those of you who may possibly become a husband, therefore you have to provide some leadership in your home, which is more difficult than leading an OM team, I can assure you, as a fellow failure.

How many of you are thinking that maybe, by surprise, not six at a time like the lady in the north of England, you may have a child? Anybody think that might happen? Okay, some of you haven't decided about that yet. Therefore you will be a leader. You will be a leader in your own home.

Therefore it's good while you have this opportunity of exposure to people who have had, in some cases, like old characters like me, 23 years of marriage and 28 years of leadership. You may learn something and then the idea is that you can give that to others. You can share that with others.

That's one of the reasons we want you to write these things down. Memory is feeble in terms of what it can bring in instant replay. It's fantastic in terms of what it can capture and keep.

All right, let's read the Scriptures. Chapter 5, let's read the whole chapter. To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's suffering, and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed, be shepherds of God's flock that is under you or under your care, serving as overseers, not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be, not greedy for money, but eager to serve, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. Young men, in the same way, be submissive to those who are older. Excuse me.

Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand that he may lift you up in due course. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Incredible words, aren't they, really? Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of suffering.

And the God of grace, who called you to eternal glory in Christ after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power forever and ever. In the Authorized Version, it says God resisteth the proud and gives grace to the humble.

Let me just read that, just to bring a little comparison. All right, Peter, go ahead. Verse 7. I've meditated on many, many times.

Verse 5. In like manner, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another. Be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.

God giveth grace. Some of us may be a little worried about things that are coming, even little things. I know people that find it difficult to go through the Christmas season when they're not at home.

I know a little about that struggle, since I've hardly been home for Christmas for 30 years and have strong sentimental, nostalgic instincts that oftentimes even cause me to wonder if I missed a turn along life's road that had kept me away from my parents and my home for most of my entire life. You see, O.M. was built around making use of your Christmas for evangelism. The whole challenge of O.M. in the early years was forsake thou the Christmas tree and follow us to Mexico.

And there were many tears. Many parents opposed this, the thought of their child not being home for Christmas, going to Mexico with some unknown group to give out Christian literature didn't exactly warm the Christmas tinsel stored up from the previous year. I think most of us realize there is no particular biblical basis for Christmas.

I've never found anybody able to defend it too well yet from the Scriptures. I think you also know that there's quite a segment of Christians that don't believe in Christmas at all. I almost got into that camp as Balimar Aguilar, our first Mexican worker, is an avid follower of that teaching.

Herbert W. Armstrong, a leader of a false cult, by the way, is in that camp, as many other false cults are. I personally don't feel it's worth arguing about. Somehow this tradition has got into the church that they celebrate Christmas.

I think God can use it just like many other traditions if it doesn't get extreme. Unfortunately, it does get extreme and it's commercialized and it's just dragged into the ground. But it's certainly a good time of the year to give out tracts.

I've been giving out my Christmas tracts lately. One I've been wanting to get rid of. I don't know how I got it.

It's absolutely about the weakest tract I think I've ever read. It's got a nice picture on it. Well, I've been leaving some of those on the train seats.

But I find that Christmas time, people often receive a tract, especially as you get close to the day and you can say, Happy Christmas. Over here, by the way, you generally say, Happy Christmas, rather than Merry Christmas. Anyway, I don't want to get into that.

But there may be other struggles that you are going to face in the coming weeks. And it's so easy to become anxious. You know, if we give all kinds of teaching in this work and don't teach people how to deal with anxiety, much of it will be counterproductive.

I've seen people with fantastic knowledge of the Word, fantastic zero, even relatively disciplined, yet unable to deal with anxiety. And all the rest, what will it mean? Because if you're not able to deal with anxiety in your life, it can undermine everything you're doing. I've been having to deal on the phone again yesterday with a woman on the verge of an exoemerant, nervous breakdown.

And it's been a difficult, difficult thing. She's calling from a foreign country. It's costing her a fortune.

I'm trying to get her linked up with someone locally. You know, there are never enough counselors in the work of God. I mean, you can always find counselors that are willing to take your money, but it's hard to find counselors, enough counselors, who have spiritual balance and wisdom, to just take all the people in the church who have needs.

Now, of course, many people today are afraid to go to a counselor. I believe the greatest mistake I've seen some people make, especially married couples, is because of their pride, unwilling to go for help. Just feeling, oh, we'll just claim the victory for the Lord.

I've seen those type, their marriages hit the wall like a 50-ton truck going over a cliff. The Bible says, God resisteth the proud and gives grace to the humble. And sometimes we have to humble ourselves and go to someone and acknowledge that we're not getting the victory.

We've been claiming, we've been praying, we've had the leap experience, we've had the O.M. experience, we've had the touch, the warm touch, glow on the end of the nose experience, but somehow we're still not making it. And some of you may, of course, pray that the Lord would also give you that kind of ministry. The first qualification of a counselor is to be a good listener.

So that's not too hard. Some of you, I'm sure, are better listeners than I am. My wife tells me I'm a very poor listener.

Trying hard. Dealing with anxiety. God giving grace.

It's so incredibly important. What are some of the hard experiences that you may face in your day-to-day living where you're going to have to claim grace? And where I believe and I've seen how God can give

grace. I've just listed a few.

Because I wanted this to be very practical because we hear about grace, God's riches at Christ's expense. We know we should appropriate God's grace. That means God's help, God's active love, God's lifting us up.

In fact, that's the term it uses here. That He may lift you up in due time. This is a new international version.

Phew! So God wants to lift us up when we're in a difficult time. One of my great burdens, as you know, for OM, is that we face life head-on. We face life as a reality.

And I think that's just so important when we're in OM. Let me give you a few of the things where I think some of us may have to claim grace in a special way. Number one, I've listed when you feel your parents don't really love you.

We always get some in OM who are not doing well in connection with their relationship with parents. Your relationship with your parents will affect you all of your life. You cannot run away from it.

On young women, there may be some things that you don't like in your mother. There's a good chance you're going to have the exact same thing in your life, so don't get shocked. Don't get shocked.

And young men, there may be some things you don't like in your father. And you get very upset when you see that same thing creeping up in your own life. God can give grace to face the reality of your childhood experiences, of your home background, no matter how difficult.

There may be someone here has been raped, maybe by your own father. You think that's uncommon today? You obviously haven't been involved in counseling too many people. You may have been beaten.

You may feel neglected. One of the reasons so many young people feel betrayed by their parents is because they were generally, as children, sensitive, idealistic, and we have it brainwashed into us as children that adults behave in one way, in the adult, mature way, and children behave naturally like children. Just the fact that those words communicate different things.

Don't be childish. Be mature. Mature communicates that older people are mature.

And even this verse a little bit communicates this because it says we should submit ourselves to those who are older. I thought for a while this meant, you know, older in the things of God. But other Bible expositors say this is referring to age.

Maybe we can have an argument over that. The fact is that no matter how mature your parents were or are, they're human beings. Now, if they aren't believers, I mean, you can only expect, of course, inconsistency of behavior and other difficulties.

Maybe coming home drunk. Maybe doing things that really hurt you very, very deeply. These childhood experiences are quite important.

And it may be that in your subconscious, deep down in the heart, use an old biblical term, there's a sense that your parents don't love you. And there could be, there may be the possibility that deep down you have never forgiven your parents for something they have done against you. Maybe you felt they loved your brother more than you.

It's always a nice warm feeling. Or maybe you feel they loved somebody else down the road more than you. Or maybe you feel the dog got a better deal in the house than you did.

You tried to get biscuits and got your hand slapped and the dog seemed to get his biscuits every time he barked. I just believe that as Christians we can appropriate God's grace. Is there any water around here? Somebody get me some water.

I have a cold, tradition. God can give grace. Your parents probably do love you, but they probably have emotional struggles with certain things perhaps you do or certain disappointments connected with you.

Hard on a child for something he does because they have that same thing in their life and are unable to totally justify it or bring it into perspective. God can give you grace. Some of you are probably from broken homes.

Don't allow the enemy to push you into the puddle of self-pity. A high percentage of people on planet Earth now are from broken homes. You're not some kind of special weirdo.

There is no reason for you to feel now you are hindered. Latest reports from some psychologists indicate that the old concept of young people from broken homes having less chance in life than those from stable homes, actually this is now being questioned. Some recent statistics show that many, many outstanding people and even percentage-wise are coming from terrible home situations.

And many people from so-called good stable home situations are not doing so well. You know, it's hard to prove things from case histories because there are so many different types of people in different cases. But please, claim the grace of the Lord for your background.

Don't deny it. Lane Adams in his amazing book, I'd be happy to send you a copy, *Why Is It Taking So Long To Get Better?* brings out some of the psychological implications of Christian growth. I personally feel this is not emphasized enough in some books on sanctification.

The psychological factor is almost left out. That's why, to me, without studying Watchman Nee's biography, you can never understand Watchman Nee's teaching because he never put all that in practice himself, neither has any man who's ever lived. And Watchman Nee got himself in terrific difficulties.

He was excommunicated from his church. He went through all kinds of struggles. He was a very human person.

He got sucked into the Taylorite exclusive brethren for a couple of years. That's when he came to this country. Then he broke bread, went to Keswick, and then broke bread at Honor Oak.

And that's when the exclusives completely excommunicated him. And they have a communications network where within a day they can completely cut a person off worldwide. Taylorite brethren, by the way, are quite strong in the Brownlee area.

And it's just so often that books, heavy books on sanctification, are written before people have major failures in their life, therefore they couldn't incorporate those failures. Watchman Nee wrote those three volumes on spiritual leadership or spiritual life, three huge volumes. We were the distributors of those.

We introduced those to Britain. We still feel there's a lot of great material in them even though it's rehashed Jesse Penn Lewis, Austin Sparks, and a few other people. By the way, I talked to Mr. Sparks on

the phone the other day.

It's interesting that David Wilkerson in his last newsletter put the whole newsletter given over to the teachings of Austin Sparks. Who's the founder, by the way, of this Unroke Fellowship, which is now no longer a movement in Britain because it never took off, but it's just another local church. But his wife, still alive, she's 80-some years of age, very strong prayer supporter of OM.

God gives grace in connection with these struggles we have in relationship with our family. Some of you are going to go home Christmas. Those who are not able to go home, you shouldn't hold that against people.

If they live close by, it's quite easy to go home. It's not too expensive. It's harder to explain.

The closer you live, the harder it is to explain to your parents why you're not coming home. That puts us often into question. Are we a cult? I think more important than ever, and I used to be strongly opposed to anybody going home for Christmas.

I used to work everybody right through, including Christmas Day. It's still more or less a habit in my own life. But I do take my hours off.

I actually played golf last Christmas. But I believe when you're within range, and when possible, and you go home, it provides a fantastic opportunity to put into practice in a much more difficult environment some of these principles, at least more difficult for some people. And whatever you do, don't be disappointed if you have a few failures.

I would go home as a young Christian with all my goals and all my newfound power, Holy Spirit power and sanctification, and the crucified life, and I'd last that two days before I'd get in some kind of a, a bit of a bust-up with my father and my mother. And then I'd feel so guilty, and I thought, I'm not changing. What's the purpose of all this? Bible college, I'm the same old loudmouth, hyper-reactive, hostile character that I was when God found me.

God gives grace. And often the difference is that we're convicted of what we've done, and therefore we humble ourselves and even say to our parents, look, I'm sorry for saying that. That's the thing we wouldn't so often do years ago, when our pride locked in place, and we expected our parents to come, and they would apologize.

Maybe if they apologized, maybe we'll also apologize a little. And of course, you could go on for weeks like that. Number two, another area where you need a lot of grace, is when you try very hard to do something, and you fail.

That's a great experience. Have you had that experience? Maybe you'll have that around here, in SDL, ICT, you try really hard to do something, and you fail. But, a normal experience in life, don't let it throw you off.

God can give grace. Number three, when someone, especially a friend, gossips about you. Have you ever had that experience? We've had whole households here in Bromley just blown right in two through that.

Two people were becoming close friends. Then, the third party got involved, and, this party said, this party here is saying something about you. You thought this person was your friend.

How would that person ever say something negative about you? They're your friend. I'll tell you. Because, they are human beings.

Human beings are, to some degree, subject to changing moods. Any of you ever change in your mood? Of course you do. And when we change in our moods, we sometimes say things that otherwise we wouldn't necessarily say.

I got a fantastic quotation passed on to me the other day by Gary Dean on this thing of demanding too much, expecting too much, demanding, in a sense, too much so-called consistency. I don't know where it is right now, but, I think there is this danger in Christian work. We expect too much from one another.

We don't want to really accept our friends and one another as failures. And then move on from there. And I just believe it's, it's an opportunity to appropriate grace.

If someone gossips against you, whatever you do, don't just keep that in your heart. Don't go around thinking, this person has said this against me. Now you have it against them and you carry that on week after week.

Why don't you just talk it out? And when you talk it out, use the question method, not the accusation method. That's why maybe in the past you've had trouble talking things out. You've used the accusation method.

Use the question method. Say, look, I just heard that maybe what I did the other day, it hurt you, maybe it didn't, but I just heard that, and if it did, look, I'm really sorry. I didn't mean to say that.

I didn't mean to do that. Or something along the lines, oh, you know, I heard that you were offended by my changing mattresses with you last week without asking you. And, you know, I'm really sorry about that.

And I just think it's so important to talk things out. And yet the way we talk things out is just as important as talking it out. Walking in the light without love can be very, very hurtful.

O.M., over the years, has always had a few walking in the light extremists. And, you know, boy, remember around doing anything, there, there, Calvary Road in their back pocket, wombo! And people have just been blown away. Some people have a more sensitive nature and temperament who have never faced up to perhaps some of these problems in their life.

And the first person who walks in the light with them, you know, you can get too much light. The first Super 8 movie I was about to make, the guy had one of these special lights that's only supposed to burn for three minutes and then you turn it off. He had forgotten that.

He just left it on. Boom! The thing blew up in my face. Really, it was a miracle that I didn't have a lot of glass in my face.

And I think that walking in the light must be accompanied by sensitivity, by wisdom, by love. Don't think you've got to talk to everybody about everything that's on your mind and heart. Especially some people who don't understand these teachings at all.

Maybe your own parents are not going to be able to handle it. I've had, we've had people on a run go back to their parents and major walking in the light. Ten things I haven't been able to stand about you, your mother.

God just laid it on my heart to share this with you. Mother's never even heard of this theology terminology. So we need a lot of wisdom.

And if you find out there are some people gossiping about you, God can give grace. Number four, when a leader you have confided in it breaks confidence. That's another type of problem, isn't it? I know people of cases, I can't remember specifics right now, but I know it's happened.

They shared something very confidential with the leader. It took them a lot of struggle to do that. And then, at least they thought, in some cases it happened, the leader broke confidence.

Remember, when time passes, if you're a leader, it is hard to remember what is shared in confidence and what is not shared in confidence. The wise leader will keep some notes. But, I don't think people purposely break confidence, but I think as human beings it's impossible to guarantee 100% confidence.

One of the reasons I am fairly good at keeping confidence is that I have so much that I decided just to be careful, you know, completely, that all the information I'm carrying around. But, I know that it's very difficult because oftentimes we don't realize what we're doing and we actually think we're helping somebody. When someone shares something with me that I feel the leader directly over them should know, I try to say to that person, you go tell him.

Or, I get permission from that person. For example, we have a policy about people with a homosexual problem. That if they have a homosexual problem, they're still allowed to stay in Atlanta.

By the way, there are many missions that will not take people with homosexual problems. But, we would like to, you know, have it in the light. That doesn't mean everybody, but the leader.

We just had another major crisis in O.M. over this out in Asia. This person who got involved in this, we just didn't know about it, therefore we couldn't help. Now, the question is, if someone shares a homosexual problem, which is something you generally, of course, keep in confidence, it's good, especially, suppose they share it with me, and I'm not the leader over them.

It's good if the leader over them, responsible for them, knows this problem. And I think the best thing is the leader who's counseling to say to the person involved, look, you go to him and share it with him. He will understand.

And he will be able to, perhaps, help you. It can be true in a number of other areas as well. Don't, don't allow the enemy to ground you up into powder because you find out that some confidence has been broken.

We're way too protective as human beings about our reputation. We're way too worried about what people think of us. And we need balance desperately in that area.

Number five, when someone you have won to Christ, loved and helped, turns back. That's one of the first big experiences I ever had in life. Because I immediately was into winning many people to Christ, even as a very young Christian.

And so immediately I was being hurt deeply by people going on for Christ and then going back. So don't let that devastate you. There will be casualties in the spiritual life.

There is no guarantee that someone is just going to go on from victory to victory no matter what follow-up plan you use, no matter how loving you are, no matter what you do. The more you can do to help them, the better. The greatest evangelists and soul winners of all times have had individuals who they gave a lot of time to and then turned back.

It's a hard experience. And maybe your own brother, maybe your own sister. But God gives grace for that experience.

And you must appropriate that grace. Number six, when a friend that you have loaned something to, say your car, that you put a lot of time, effort and money into, goes out and crashes it. Have you had that experience yet? That's just a little practical experience in life.

Maybe with your hair dryer. Maybe with something else. You've got this vision for being unselfish.

And so you decide to let somebody use one of your little possessions, maybe your Walkman or your tape recorder or your bicycle, and boom, they broke it. So easy when something goes wrong to overreact. I will never loan anything out again.

I will lock everything I have in my cupboard. Again, there are great opportunities in semi-community life. We're in semi-community life here.

We have privacy and there are things where this community takes a lot of wisdom. The very fact that we are coming together as a group to do something big and real creates hazards. If you were living alone on an island, you would not have some of the hazards you have here.

Right? You would have other hazards, depending what else was on the island. Every environment, every environment has built-in hazards. And we all become very conscious, don't we, when we're on OM, we become conscious of OM.

OM becomes almost like a person. I hear people talk about OM just like a person. And it's a terrific scapegoat.

Anything that's gone wrong, OM, it's just like male chauvinist drivers. When everything's gone wrong, it's a woman driver. It's a woman driver.

It's a fantastic scapegoat. It's a normal part of human nature. So the very fact that we're sharing vehicles, the very fact that we're sharing premises, and a lot of other things, there will be some of these things happening.

We want to work on this. We want to be better stewards. And we need challenges along that line.

We need to put it into practice. But you know, learning how to accept the spoiling of your goods. Ever heard that terminology? Try the New Testament.

Learning how to handle the spoiling of your goods. I have found that a trial in life myself. Being tight somewhat by nature.

Wanting to be careful. I have found that a difficulty. Number seven, when you've lost something valuable after fervent prayer, alerting the whole body to pray, claiming in the name of Jesus the return of that item, it doesn't show up.

You know, we always get the testimonies about answers to prayer. Somebody's lost something and praise the Lord, God answered prayer, I found it. What about testimonies for prayers that weren't answered? We're not honest enough sometimes, aren't we? To really say, well, look, you know, I've prayed now for four weeks for my watch to return and it hasn't returned.

I'd love to talk about that sometime. But one thing we know, God gives grace. God gives grace.

It's always there. There is no temptation given you that is not common. And God will provide a way of escape.

You have to choose that way. I used to think that verse indicated automatically you would just escape the temptation if you were walking in the Spirit. No, you still have to choose the way.

It's there. The grace is there. You have to choose it.

It's an act of faith. You've got to use your mind. You've got to use your will.

It's not sitting back in your bed saying, O thou grace of God, come thou upon me. It's a step of faith. It's believing.

It's like Lloyd-Jones says, speaking to yourself, speaking to yourself. This is the way I'm going. There's the river of grace.

I'm going to drink from that river. God gives grace. Number eight, when you felt you had the victory over a particular sin and then you fall again.

There's no young man who at one point in his Christian life hasn't felt he had total victory over a particular area and then fallen again. The disappointment of that failure can easily throw one into the pond of despond or self-pity. Self-pity is one of the most subtle forms of self-love.

And we then blame God. Why hasn't God delivered me? So many people I counsel are in that syndrome. Why hasn't God delivered me? I prayed about this.

I fasted and prayed about this. You see, all the fasting and all the prayer in the world doesn't dehumanize you. It doesn't turn you into some kind of computer.

You still and I still have the great capacity to fail. And victory in many areas of the Christian life is an ongoing battle. An ongoing struggle.

Number nine, when one you truly love gets ill, you pray hard and so do other people and that person dies. This is dealt with in Edith Schaeffer's amazing book Affliction and on many other books. There's not time to go into it.

Just two other points. When you have wrong feelings towards someone, work hard to get the victory and fail finding it even harder to love that person. Any of you feel you have an irregular person in your life? Have you read Joyce Landorf's book Irregular Person? I'm just in this book now.

It is amazing. The insight this woman has into relationships. By irregular person, she means someone that no matter how hard you try, somehow you just can't.

It just doesn't work. It may be among your own family members. I have seen this philosophy of the irregular person in the church, in OM, all these years I have never been able to nail it down the way this woman nailed it down.

I've always seen it. I've even taught something about it. But I've never been able to put my finger on the way she has.

And you know, I'm not just talking about first and second year OMers. I'm talking about people who have been on OM 15, 17, 20 years. Don't think being on OM 15 years makes you spiritual.

You're still human. You're still going to fail. This is why whole missions break up into two.

Because the new recruits are all expecting so much from the leaders. They're still human beings, maybe going through greater struggles in the 30s than they ever faced when they were 19. I certainly had more struggles in my 30s than I did in my 20s.

I mean, in my 20s I was just like some pellet shot from a gigantic cannon. And I'm sure I had some problems. I don't remember.

But life changes. And I think many men face enormous problems when their children become teenagers. And they no longer can just say, do this, do this, go here, go there.

They just go. And then they're mouthing back and they got their own counter philosophies and all kinds of interesting things. And I just think oftentimes a younger person in the faith is used if God didn't minister to someone else who may be older but they're still human.

They're still failures. They're still sinners. And it's so sad when Christian movements break in two because the newer generation is so disappointed in the older generation.

We easily underestimate people or overestimate. Again and again I hear people overestimate. Oh, he's a great man of God.

Oh, he's a spiritual Christian. Oh, he's this or she's that. Or we underestimate.

Find the balance in evaluating people. Very difficult. Very difficult.

It's easy to go by first impressions. I know people just write somebody off. First impression.

Especially if they have a hyper view of their own gift of discernment. Just write some guy off. Oh, I love sometimes to fellowship with those people and give them a few facts that maybe they didn't know about that particular person they may have just written off.

Don't write anybody off. Jesus didn't. He had Judas on his team.

And we just need a lot of wisdom in that area. And then my last point. When someone openly belittles you and shows you are wrong in something.

That's hard, isn't it? Rule number one is that you should not belittle people. Put them down. Put their nationality down.

Put their person type down. Put their denomination down. Now don't get hyper about it because it's hard to live in life without being belittled.

And it's good to learn to laugh at yourself a little bit. Don't think people are always picking on you. Don't think, Oh, I've got such a tremendous disability.

Nobody understands my disability. You know, there are most of us have disabilities. Emotional disabilities can be greater than physical disabilities.

And the man who looks like he has it all together later on in life they discovered he had a great area of weakness. Everybody's reveling these days that John F. Kennedy had a great weakness for women. Interesting.

Now that he's dead now everybody can pick over and decide what he's made out of. But, you know, if great people in the world and even Christians have these weaknesses you shouldn't be surprised if you come up with a few. And if somebody in an off moment when maybe they're in the flesh or maybe when they're under some particular pressure they belittle you they humiliate you God can give grace even for that.

God gives grace. He resisted the proud and he gives grace to the humble. These are just a few experiences some of you have already had.

Some of them are further down life's road. And isn't it great to know whatever experience may come upon us even today God gives grace. That's what the Christian life is all about.

God's grace. God lifting you up. When men have knocked you down when you've knocked yourself down God lifting you up.

God putting you back on the highway of blessing. Let him do that to you. Let him do that for you.

Every day of your life. Let's pray. Father we thank you for your grace.

Grace that lifts us up in time of need. Abundant grace. As the burden grows greater the grace grows even greater yet.

And we thank you for this. And we praise you. And this day we want to appropriate grace for hard situations for difficult relationships for sin or mistakes for things that go wrong.

Help us Lord at the moment of crisis maybe to just get a moment away or maybe into the foxhole of our own mind and appropriate grace for that situation. In the family in the warehouse behind the wheel in the routine of life. We ask in Jesus name.

Amen. May the grace of God be with you. Amen.

Is there any announcements? Otherwise if we could go. Yes. A little bit early this week but on Saturday we won't be having any evangelism like usual.

But what we will be having is a sort of a drama workshop type of thing. So for all of you who have been involved in a drama group for some time since you were here or anybody else who would like to come along and just try your hand and see what turns out. We will be doing a number of different things running

through some of the sketches we have got.

We have got a couple of guests from the Rotterdam Free Church who have done some drama for the Mission for London Family Day and things like that. And in the summer they will be coming along and showing a few of their sketches. We know a few mind exercises things like that and perhaps a bit of improvisation That's Saturday morning.

Okay. I want a few minutes over so if you could be diligent in going to work you might save me some difficulty.

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