

How Disunity Comes to the Body of Christ

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of unity in the body of Christ and the dangers of disunity, encouraging believers to accept and value diversity, be committed to their calling, and persevere in their faith.

Duration: 1:13:36

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:1

Topics: "Disunity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of unity within a diverse group of people. He acknowledges that everyone is different and that it is crucial to accept and embrace these differences. The speaker also highlights the role of Satan in seeking to disrupt unity and encourages individuals to resist his attempts. He discusses the challenges that leaders face in maintaining unity and urges listeners to respond with love and understanding when conflicts arise. Additionally, the speaker emphasizes the significance of walking in the light and the importance of love in all relationships.

Transcript

...career, which is so desperately needed. Short-term work will never be a substitute for that. It can be a compliment.

The next minute, someone's challenging him to, you know, to go back and study something else, or to go back and take up a job for one or two years and prove that he can survive in his local town. And, of course, once people get back and they get into all that, it's not easy to get back on track. And I think this is one of the reasons that many young people who are really moving toward long-term missionary work have never made it.

They were double-minded, and they wanted to, you know, they wanted to be a career missionary, but they also wanted this little bit and this little thing in connection with the family, and this little area maybe of proving themselves. And I know in my own life, and I very seldom have used myself as an example because I know previously in the early days this intimidated people. And I know that, you know, I mean, I have everybody tell me for 25 years I'm different.

You know, you get to be, you know, begin to realize it. Not the way they think, though. But I know one thing in my life, that when God put this world mission thing on my heart at 17, that was everything after that.

I've had many other temptations. And I would love to do this, I'd love to do that. A lot of my problems in life, I have a wide range of interests.

Tremendous range of interests. But God put this world mission thing on my heart, and nothing has moved me from that these 27 or 28 years. Now admittedly in my case, I sacrificed a college degree.

I don't necessarily recommend that. I got started early. Most of our people, long-term leaders, many of them have college degrees.

I was just thinking today, I got my alumni news. I went to college for two years. That's where I met Dale Rotund, and I went to Bible college for two years.

Did a little study in Mexico, of course. And I was thinking, I want to go back to Maryville College and finish up my college education. Just think of the impact that would make.

47-year-old, comes back to college, he'd probably have a banner up. But anyway, those thoughts lasted for about two minutes. Because this is my career.

I don't like the word, but this is my profession. I'm only saying that to get a point across. This is my work.

I don't need further training in other areas. I need more training in life in general, I'll tell you that. I am a missionary by career, by profession.

It's my job. It's my calling. That's the word I like.

It's my calling. And I believe God is wanting, through O.M., to call people into longer-term missionary work. And if your heart is on that, believe me, you're going to have to develop a little bit of Holy Spirit stubbornness.

I had an exciting experience coming across on the ferry today. I've known that my friend Dick Wyatt, who was the second engineer on the Lagos when it sailed around Africa, is now a chief engineer on one of the twelve ferries of the Townsend-Thorson ferry line. For twelve years when I've gone on those ferries, I've asked for Dick Wyatt.

He has never been on the ferry that I've been on. We've talked about it. We've mentioned it on the phone.

And today, when I asked for Dick Wyatt, he was on duty. And we had a tremendous time of fellowship. We also toured the engine room.

That ferry, by the way, has three main engines and three propellers all going at the same time. Amazing ship. But you know, he is... I didn't buy it.

Relax. It's not old enough. But he chose, as a career, the Merchant Navy.

Engineering. He worked hard. He joined our ship for a while, but his career was still Merchant Navy.

He eventually left OM, and he's worked twelve hard years to be in a very senior position with that shipping company. We need that kind of commitment in career missionary work. It may include, for some of you, one or two years of Bible college.

Especially studying courses that are related to what God is leading you to do. But one thing is for sure. In Christian work, there is not the pressure that the secular companies have.

In Christian work, it's sort of a free-for-all. It's harder and harder sometimes to put any pressure or any challenge on people. Because so many people are talking now about stress.

People like me, we feel terrible. We feel wherever we speak, people are getting into stress. Even when we're speaking on spiritual balance, people are getting into stress.

Because they're not balanced. We had a special seminar, really. We had a seminar in the leader's training week on stress, dealing with stress.

And people have come to me and they said, look, some of your leaders are under stress. And I was brought into balance on this today, listening to Vance Havner. Some of you have been around, know I'm listening to this old 79, 80-year-old preacher.

Because I listen to tapes. And he, of course, I cannot speak the way he speaks. But I tell you, it just helped me.

He said, everybody's going on about stress, stress, too much stress, too much tension. He said, have you ever tried to play a good tune on a violin with a loose string? I thought, thank you, Jesus is hope for me. You see why it's good to have some meetings where we just speak English? Can you imagine interpreting some of these? It comes out, can you imagine playing on George Verwer with a loose string? A few other items you want to pick up free.

Herald of His Coming. A little newspaper I've been reading off and on for 27 years. Free of charge.

Some of the most powerful material I have ever read on prayer or world missions. There's an article in this one about revival in the home by Roy Heshin. Taken from the book Calvary Road.

You won't agree with every article in this little paper. But there are some very, very good articles. Theodore Epp on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

Will our next generation be one that does not know God from a missionary letter? This is available in about 30 languages. This is one item, this one's in English. You can feel free to take several different issues.

We put some out tonight, but we have many more. They print these in big, big printings. And we hope you'll take Herald of His Coming and read it.

I want to again mention also the In Touch, the little paper we'd like you to introduce to ex-OMers. And we have a Belgian ex-OMer here, Hilda. This is a special event.

Very few Belgian ex-OMers. Please stand up. We'd like to welcome you.

Belgian, praise the Lord. When did you first come? Come on and interview. I want to interview.

When did you first come on Operation Mobilization? Talk in here. I was saved in 1970. How were you saved? How did that happen? People get saved through this work and they keep going.

That's the only way to do it, believe me. In 1972 I was in the first solar camping in July in Belgium. And in 1973 again another one in July when I was in Belgium.

This was nothing. But the best, the very best, the very best of the very best is the weekly prayer meetings in Zagreb. Amen.

So the last 14 years have been humbling of the days. I think I'm proud of our culture. And I don't want to miss the best of the whole week.

So if you can organize prayer meetings in wherever you will be, in your team or at home or wherever. This is the thing, you know. Otherwise you can go home and forget about everything else.

Praise the Lord. Now I know you've got a great burden for those eastern countries. Every time you and I get together for a fellowship you've been out on the beaches of the Black Sea giving out tracks or playing your guitar.

Have you just come back from there again? Yes. Give us one incident. I know you always have at least 50.

Give us... Oh, okay. Just give it one incident and we'll keep it confidential. Soviet Union.

Yeah. And all the other peoples. And, well, everywhere where this regime is, I will do them no harm.

Because it's no joke to be there. We can come and go. It's very nice.

And bring them some good bread to eat. But they have to stay there with all the troubles. When we go, you know, back into a nice meeting here, they can suffer in their jail or in their psychiatrist's hospital or in their concentration camp or just in their hometown.

Or in their house they can live without permission. And things like that. So it is nice to remember these things.

And weep for them. With all humility. Because it's no joke to live there.

So... That country and also maybe the satellites from countries around. In Eastern Europe. You can have... I've not been in these places.

Only in Yugoslavia. Three times. There it's nicer.

But it's good to pray also for Yugoslavia, for the churches. Especially in the south. In Macedonia and Kosovo.

Where there are very small churches and very struggling to survive. There are not many young people. There is at least two churches.

Again this summer. And in Prilep and Bitola. And there is one pastor serving two churches because there is nobody else to do it.

And he has to try to keep the life going on. Because there are old ladies. The youngest is 16.

And the oldest is 19. And there is one young girl of 17 among them. And what can she do? So she goes in the morning in work hometown.

And she takes a bus for another hour fare. 50 kilometers to the nearest town. To Prilep to go to the other church.

And there are four young people. What can these people do? And it's a Muslim area by the way. So it's good to remember these people.

Also. And because in the north the churches are very much alive. There are 100, 200.

And youth groups of 20, 30. And they go out in evangelism. Which is by the way forbidden by the law.

But they do it. And they are really very active. So the north has no problem.

But in the south they are neglected. They are forgotten. They don't know what to do.

Just to stay alive. So it would be good to pray for these southern parts. It's very arid.

It's like a desert you know. And also for the Albanian church in Kristina. There are about 10.

And I could meet some of them. And they have no prayer meetings. It's the same thing everywhere.

You know. And well. And by the way you can also remember to pray for Belgium.

Because that's even worse than all these places together. It is true. Okay.

Let's pray for Belgium. Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Let's just pray.

Father we thank you for Hilda. We thank you for what you've done in her life. How you've kept her going through many difficulties.

And the vision you've given her for the eastern countries. And the ministry she's had there. Just sometimes launching out on her own.

Directed by your Holy Spirit. We do pray for this barren. Especially southern area of Yugoslavia.

And the area where also the Albanians are. It's incredible. Muslim area.

Double unreached. God help us to really begin to fix our vision on these places. And to pray.

Pray for those in prison in the Soviet Union. Those in psychiatric hospitals. Those who have been tortured for their faith.

Father we just really pray. That somehow. You'd minister grace.

And grace to us. That our vision may increase. As a result of tonight.

Some of us would set our eyes on the target. And begin to move. With all of our heart.

In the right direction. So hard for us to find the balance. In some of these areas.

But we're trusting you to help us. In Jesus name. Amen.

I hope therefore you will remember our ex-OMers. OM graduates. Introduce them to this paper.
Get them to write in. Give us their name and address. That we can mention them.
Or send us a picture. We need help with this. Birgitta Conlon.
One of our married women. Three daughters. Just does this sort of on the side.
We need help. In touch. Pick up a sample.
Copy. One of the first things I ever wrote. I think I was about 20.
Maybe 21 I guess. I was five years old spiritually. And I wrote this.
A brief history. Of the origin and early work. Of Send the Light.
Later renamed Operation Mobilization. This is just a reprint. Not well written.
But it will give some of you. A little bit of the early days. Written believe it or not.
In May of 1960. Just before coming over. To Europe.
You can pick that up on the free literature table. And lots of other valuable. Items.
Okay. Okay. Let's turn in our Bibles.
Turn to the book of. Peter. First Peter.
There are many scriptures. I'd like to give. The title for tonight.
The message is very very much. On my heart. I hope that.
It will be one of those messages. That you will. Take seriously.
Is how. Disunity comes. To the body.
Of Christ. How. Disunity comes.
To the body. Of Christ. Let's look at.
Chapter five. I think we've looked at this passage before. Let me get it in my.
My other translation. Therefore I exhort. I exhort.
The elders among you. As your fellow elder. And witness of the suffering of Christ.
And a partaker also. Of the glory that is to be revealed. Shepherd.
The flock of God among you. Exercising. Oversight.
Not under compulsion. But voluntarily. According.
To the will of God. Not for sordid gain. But with eagerness.

Nor yet. As lording it over. Those allotted to your charge.
But proving. To be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appear.
You will receive. The unfading crown of glory. You younger men.
Likewise be subject to your elders. And all of you clothe yourselves. With humility.
Toward one another. For God is opposed to the proud. But gives grace to the humble.
Humble yourselves therefore. Under. The mighty hand of God.
That he may exalt you. At the proper time. Casting all your anxiety upon him.
Because he cares for you. Isn't that a tremendous verse. Be sober.
Be of a sober spirit. Be on the alert. Your adversary the devil.
Prowls like a roaring lion. Seeking someone to devour. But resist him.
Firm in the faith. Knowing that the same experience of suffering. Are being accomplished.
By your brethren. Who are in the world. And after you have suffered for a while.
The God of grace who called you. To his eternal glory in Christ. Will himself perfect.
Confirm, strengthen, establish you. To him be dominion. Forever and ever.
Young people. We're not here in these evening meetings. Just to get a blessing.
Or just to get. A message. That perhaps the Lord can use.
To encourage us tonight. Now that's good. But there's something better.
We're here to get. Wisdom. Understanding.
Biblical knowledge. That we can use. By God's grace.
The rest of our life. I realize many of you. Who are here.
Are new to Operation Mobilization. But this message is in some ways. Geared to those of you.
Who have been around. A year or two. Let's just try to bring it into balance.
And then everyone will get. Hopefully something. Some of you.
A year from now. You're not going to be on OM. You'll be on your way home.
Maybe some of you. Two years from now. You'll be depressed.
You'll be disappointed. You may be even disillusioned. Let's just make that very clear.
That OM is not scoring. A hundred percent. Not even ninety percent.

Brothers and sisters. On reaching. And ministering.

And discipling. And loving. And encouraging.

All the people who come. Into this evangelistic. Training program.

That's our goal. Most of us in OM. Love our work.

If you give me. A holiday. Where I can do exactly.

What I want to do. I'll probably dictate letters. To my friends.

And to pastors. And to churches. And encourage people.

Because that's what I want to do. People always ask me. When are you going to take a holiday? I say brother.

I've been on a holiday from hell. For thirty one years. There's nothing better than that.

Not that I'm against. Traditional holidays. I think holidays should be according to your temperament.

You take my kind of temperament. And you stick them on a beach. With no books.

No dictaphone. Nothing to do but look at the water. That is not a holiday.

That's a painful experience. Now I went to the beach. This time last year.

And I had. I had part of what some people. Would call a real holiday.

Because I do have that type of thing as well. Recreation we call it. I got into a wet suit.

For the first time in my life. Amazing I ever. Got in this thing.

Didn't just get lost in the leg. But I got into this wet suit. And I went windsurfing.

How many of you have been windsurfing? Oh my land. Where have you been? Probably giving out track or something. But you know just a few hours.

Out there was freezing cold. This was outside of the freshwater east. In Pembrokeshire.

Freezing water. That to me is. Recreation.

Last year. In August. I was operated on.

And I wanted to do it the cheap way. You know I had vocal cord. A little surgery.

So I did it all on the same day. Went in the hospital. I was dictating letters there.

In the little day room. Waiting for the doctor. I went in.

And it was a great experience really. Came out a few hours later. And then we jumped in the motor home.

And headed down the road. In fact we took a tour that night of Niagara Falls. And the next day.

I had a true. Verwer holiday. I went swimming in the morning.

I went parasailing the first time in my life. How many have been parasailing? I mean that is tremendous. One person.

Two. Three. Three have been parasailing.

I better explain what it is. This is the advantage of not having this interpreter. I get more time.

It really turns me on. Parasailing. You get out on a little barge.

In the middle of Lake George. This is the lake named after me. In New York State.

And you get on a little barge. And a speed boat is in front of you. With a rope.

And a parachute. You get on the barge. And they tie you into this parachute.

And then the speed boat takes. Full speed ahead away from the barge. Guess what happens? You go straight up.

And I was up about. 300 feet. Crazy.

I couldn't speak. I wasn't allowed to speak for 10 days. Because I had just been in the hospital.

I have a picture of this. In case you think it is a story. My wife was watching from shore.

And here I was. Over Lake George. I used to go as a child for my vacation.

Praising God. Without saying anything. And then he let go.

So you parachute down. First time I have ever done any parachuting. Until your feet hit the water.

And then they speed the boat up. Straight up. In the air.

After that I went jet skiing. How many have been jet skiing? See. You have got all these things to look forward to in life.

This is going to completely destroy this rumor. That George Ferber doesn't have a holiday. Jet skiing is a funny little set of skis.

On water. With an engine. You sort of get dragged behind it.

It looks four times easier than it is. You sort of get dragged behind this thing. In a very awkward position.

Until you can gain speed. And then you can get up. And to get up you really need to be going 25.

20, 25 miles an hour. Over the water. You don't stay up for long.

But that was a great experience. We did a number of other things that day. But you see we are all different.

Aren't we? We are all different. And I think it is so important. To in operation mobilization.

Accept. The wide range of temperaments. That we have.

And to ask God. To bring us. Unity.

Unity in the midst. Of diversity. Now in this passage of scripture.

We read that Satan is a roaring lion. Seeks whom he may devour. And we know that.

When Satan sees. A team of people. Getting united together.

As some are getting united together here. This is a very upsetting experience. For the devil.

French. Germans. English.

Americans. Australians. New Zealanders.

South Africans. Argentina. But do not think.

That when you leave here. And you are united together in that team. That it is going to be easy.

It is not going to be easy. Some things are going to go wrong. They are going to go wrong.

You are going to get hurt. You are going to get hurt. In the process of this training program.

We have a great controversy going on in O.M. We have about 50 controversies. But one of them is. What is training? You are going to hear this throughout the year.

What is training? Am I being trained? Now different O.M. fields. Have different training programs. But let me tell you who the master trainer is.

That is the Holy Spirit. And when the O.M. training program goes wrong. It may be the study program.

It may be the evangelism. It may be something else. When the O.M. program goes wrong.

That is when God's graduate school often begins. And though we do not like to plan it this way. Sometimes you can learn more.

On a team where things are going wrong. Than on a team where things are going right. And if you have had a hard experience on O.M. this year.

I am not excusing anything that we have done wrong. Please forgive us. But I think it is so helpful.

If you ask yourself. God. What are you saying to me.

Through this mess. Through this leader. Through this problem.

Through this disappointment. Through this hurt. Do you think it is possible to have a social policy.

Like O.M. has. And in this area. There is no easy road.

We have debated and discussed this. Every year for 28 years. And we make some modifications.

But there is no easy road. And there is no way. Please understand.

That you can join a fellowship like this. And even break such a simple thing as a social policy. Which we now have people who laugh at it.

I laugh at it sometimes as well. But do not think you can come into something like O.M. Break that policy. As simple as it is.

As easy as it is for us to forgive people. We do not hold that against them. If they break a social policy.

But do not think you can do it. Without things going wrong. And when it goes wrong.

It may be the leaders of O.M. Who have made the mistake. Because our leaders. Are not professionally trained people.

Who know exactly what to do. Every time a human relationship goes wrong. You think we have some group of professional experts.

Who have a master's degree in psychology. And another advanced course. In handling social confusion.

I will tell you. We avoid a lot of hurts. If we just simply agree.

As unto the Lord. Even though we may not fully agree. Just to keep this simple policy.

Even here. If you are a first year person. Because it just so easily.

Gets out of control. Easily people take sides. Some side with the leader.

Who may have to discipline the couple. Others side with the person. Who is being disciplined.

And I have seen whole teams. Come completely apart. In fact last year.

Two years ago. Through one social policy. Mixed up on one of the ships.

I will tell you. We had hurt and agony. That it took them months.

To pull out of. When I got there. Six months later.

Some people were still not out of that. Why? Because we in our naiveness. And in our own disposition.

Many of us are crusaders for justice. Right? This is the justice generation. And we want equal rights.

For everybody. And it is amazing. What people are crusading for.

And believe me. I am in agreement. With quite a bit of it.

But brothers and sisters. We live in an unjust society. And if you think.

OM is totally just. And totally consistent. You know.

You are just in for some big surprises. That is our goal. And we are rebuking.

And exhorting one another. And we are probably doing better. Than perhaps some.

Who don't aim at this with all their hearts. But there is no way. You can come in OM.

Without seeing some inconsistency. Some weakness. Some unfairness.
Somebody's birthday gets remembered. With a big cake. And somebody else's birthday.
Is completely unnoticed. Do you think it is possible. To be completely consistent.
On a ship with 300 people. Of 25 nationalities. Trying to accomplish.
What they are trying to accomplish. Do you think everybody here now. Has the same amount of money in their pocket.
Do you think every OM leader. Lives in the same size house. Drives the same age car.
And treats his wife. The same way. Surely.
You realize. That life includes. Variety.
Which has to include. Some degree of inconsistency. We preach.
The message of the revolution of love. But we also teach. In our messages on balance.
And the human factor. That this is a goal. And we are not yet there.
That includes your leader. That includes your roommate. That includes.
That includes. Anyone you may be meeting. In or out.
Of operation mobilization. So the enemy is going to try. To bring disunity.
And some of the things. That disappoint people the most. When they see disunity.
In the church. In an OM team. Between leaders.
Do you think all of these leaders. Are in complete unity with one another. Some of them.
Barely speak to one another. If we as leaders. Spend all of our time.
Building our own fellowship. As leaders. We won't have time.
To talk to any of you. And personally. I prefer sometimes.
To just talk to brand new people. That I've never seen before. Rather than the same brother.
That I've been fellowshiping with. Every September. For 25 years or 20 years.
Who's probably fed up. With having fellowship with me anyway. But I can tell you.
With this strong minded group. Of couple of hundred men and women. Who are leading this work.
There is not. Like mindedness on every issue. And you're going to see.
Leaders that don't get on. So well with each other. And you may find a leader.
Who says something negative. About another leader. Even though that really isn't the right way.

To go about it. Because these leaders are human. They are under pressure.
And they are prime targets of Satan. And because we're dealing with a lot of areas. All at once in OM.
You ever notice that? In which you don't find. Quick simple solutions. Let me give a few specifics.
How we've seen disunity come in the past. Number one. Proverbs 13.10 What does it talk about? Pride.
Pride. Pride cometh before a fall. Pride bringeth contention.
Again and again I've seen this. In my own heart. When you find yourself.
Reacting against somebody. Criticizing somebody. Hurt by somebody.
Just check. Could it be pride. In your own heart.
I'm not talking about. Expressing yourselves. And in Operation Mobilization.
We want to leave. Quite a bit of scope. For expressing yourself.
I tell you. No one's going to stop me. From expressing myself.
That's a key to sanity. You start bottling it up. You can't say that.
People will think you're unspiritual. We get uptight. There are ways.
And biblical ways. Of expressing ourselves. I told you last week.
You have a suggestion. About the conference. Send it to Nigel Lee in an envelope.
Mark Nigel Lee. How easy it is. Just to murmur to somebody.
About this or that. Rather than a constructive. Criticism.
Every week. Every single week. I'm reading letters.
That are critical of Operation Mobilization. Or something we do. That's part of my job.
And I'm subject to a board of directors. That's why I wasn't here yesterday. We had a board meeting.
So that these people can find out what we're doing. We're in subject to these people. They're not in OM.
They're from different churches. Businessmen. Lawyers.
Accountants. Farmers. We are accountable to those men.
When they hear criticism about OM. They talk to us about it. It's tremendous.
I thank God. For constructive criticism. We can't ever make all the changes.
Everybody wants. But we can make some of them. And now.
We have a policy. That when you're a longer term OMer. You are part of a general council.

Which is the sort of final place. Within OM. Where we come into unity.

About what we're going to do. It's not a matter of. Peter Maiden and George Voe were sitting on.

You know. In the hills of Cumbria. Telling 1600 people what they're going to do.

A lot of our time is just listening. Just reading. Just listening.

Praying. And from the criticism and the suggestions. We work for improvement.

Before God. You know as leaders. We discovered that pride does not die easy.

If pride is dying easy. In your life. Perhaps you could write me some of your secrets.

Secrets of victory. Over pride. You could put your picture there.

Number two. The second reason. Often disunity comes.

An OM team. Headquarters. In the church.

Is idealism. Idealism. Idealism.

Now I think we should have ideals. I think you should have biblical ideals. And believe me.

We don't distribute books like A.W. Tozer. Because we're trying to destroy your ideals. I mean.

He is an idealist. That's probably why he had some difficulties with his wife. And his children.

He was a prophet. Maybe prophets shouldn't get married. But the bible doesn't teach that.

But he was very idealistic. Later in his life. He said a lot of things.

That brought other things into balance. He openly confessed. That his greatest problem was lack.

Excuse me. Lack of moderation. You know what moderation is? Self control.

And he pointed out. How as preachers. We can easily say things.

That are a little bit. You know, immoderate. And he pointed out in that same article.

A.W. Tozer. It's difficult to pin a preacher down. I was introduced in a meeting.

This past Sunday. As. I'm sure the pastor didn't realize what he was saying.

As mobilizing. Millions of young people. In 1963.

Across Europe. Millions. It was actually.

A little less than 2,000. And it wasn't me. It was many people.

And hopefully the Holy Spirit. Isn't it sad. That sometimes we.

As Christians. Lean a bit toward exaggeration. It's a tremendous meeting.

One of the greatest meetings. I've ever been to. It was packed.

How many were there? Hundreds. You find out later. There was 101.

It's not hundreds. It's 101. Or to be safe.

About 100. Even that's not safe. Because the next man says.

A little over 100. Because that's about 100. A little over 100.

So the next man is saying. Well. A lot more than 100.

The next man says. Well. It was between 100 and 200.

And the next turkey says. Over 200 people were gathered in the meeting. Forgive me for using the word turkey.

In vain. We don't like to do that in OM. Idealism.

David Seamans in his powerful book. Healing for Damaged Emotions. Tries to deal with this.

And it's a plague. In Operation Mobilization. It's a plague.

It ruins teams. It ruins relationships. We get people.

That we really think are tremendous. Did you ever get somebody. Wow.

He's a really great person. I want to get to know that person. Somehow in God's providence.

You manipulate things a little bit. Organize or pray. And you get that person on your team.

You discover a few months later. Selfish. Proud.

Insensitive. And worst of all. Doesn't like you.

We can laugh now. But for many people in Operation Mobilization. It's a shattering experience.

To have someone they think is a man or a woman of God. And that they want to learn something from them. And later to discover it's a piece of clay.

Piece of clay. And I think many, many pastors had a nervous breakdown. Because it was impossible.

Impossible. To perform. To the degree that his congregation expected him to perform.

And believe me there's many a pastor that becomes a performer. Because if you don't please some of these saints. They're going to give you.

Not the right handed fellowship. They're going to give you the left boot. To the door.

And I will tell you. I have faced hundreds of broken and discouraged pastors in my ministry. And it's often linked with the idealism.

This is a New Testament church. You get even people who boast about it. Ours is a New Testament church.

Ours is the real fellowship of this day. We're not a dead church like that one down the road. Ours is alive.

Look at it. We've got a band. We've got this.

We've got that. People are being saved every week. Then you join it.

Maybe for a month. Sometimes even years. It may go relatively well.

Sooner or later that church is going to be tested. Sooner or later things are going to go wrong. Sooner or later people are going to be ugly.

Praise God. You can repent all day long. If somebody around the office is really driving you bananas, he's a real spiritual cockroach, and you'd really wish that somehow the earth would open up and he would go to the other side.

None of you, of course, get that kind of hostile thoughts. I do. But you repent of that.

You know that's wrong. It's not from God. Such things as we don't want to just go around claiming that we never make our needs known.

I have stopped saying that for seven years, I think, at least. What we have tried to say, even before these few changes, and I must avoid getting on about this tonight, is that we have not overtly made our financial needs known. Now in the future we may not say that because it got us into a lot of dead-end streets.

And it made other people, and other mission groups, think that we were better. And super-spirituality sometimes came in. And a lot of other difficulties.

Anyway, we won't get into that. But I think God is constantly wanting to put on corrective lenses in our thinking. It is possible to listen to a report about a person.

Here's Brother Joe over here behind this map, okay? And you hear Sally says something about Joe. And John says something about Joe. And then you get a third witness.

Maybe an older, mature person. They say something about Joe. Even in that case, there's a possibility that it's not, the evaluation is not correct.

It's possible. Now, with three witnesses, there's a good chance that maybe there's an element of truth. But a lot of people are trying to prove things these days by case histories.

Do you know what I mean by case histories? Testimonies. This person did this, and they were healed. This person did this, and they were healed.

This person did it, and they were healed. Therefore, all people who do this will be healed. You get it? Brilliant logic, right? Crooked thinking.

Generalizations. Pendulum thinking. Overreaction.

I have a message. I don't think I'm going to get to it this year. How to make decisions.

How do we make a logical decision in our lives as we face so many different possibilities and so many different ideas? I don't think I'll get into that tonight. The time is going. I am still myself learning how to think through issues, how to relate the Word of God with the actual situation, how to be a better listener, and how to ask God, as it says in James, for wisdom that comes from above.

If I didn't believe God could give us wisdom that comes from above to combine with all we get. With all we get from His Word and from what we read and from what we listen to. Think of the wisdom just in this book.

Surely we can learn from people like this. We may not agree with everything that Charles Coulson says. But here's a man who's gone through real life experiences.

Prison. Failure. He's also been through divorce.

And he opens his heart. He just opens his heart. Somebody says, Well, that's not Bible exposition.

I don't want to read that. That's not expounding the Scriptures. Is that the only way that Christians get truth? Some people give that idea.

I believe in expounding the Scriptures. I've been listening to Stephen Alford over the weekend expound the Scriptures. But I tell you, I thank God there are many ways to communicate to God's people.

Testimony, exhortation, different types of preaching, just reading the Word, and Christian books. And I tell you, I learned something from this book. And I believe one of the greatest marks of spiritual health on OM, and I pray it'll never go, is that we read widely, we listen widely, and we're always learning and always growing and not afraid because of pride to change when we see that something isn't best.

Number five is impatience. You know how much the Word of God talks about this? Talks more about impatience than it does evangelism. Talks more about impatience than a lot of things we talk about in OM.

Would it be an awesome thought for you to think that maybe God has mainly brought you on OM this year to teach you patience? You thought you were coming to serve the Lord. We get a certain group that come in. Serve the Lord! God's called me to serve Him.

Nothing wrong with that. The Lord's servants? But you know, if you're going to serve the Lord, it needs to be in the energy that the Lord alone can give. And that means self is going to be crucified.

Christ is going to be reigning and ruling in your heart. And that means God wants patience in your life. That's one of the schools where my victories and my problems have been far greater than some of the other things I've mentioned.

God is so merciful. And I praise the Lord. So many ways He teaches patience.

I won't go into the list. There's not time. Number six, just plain old lack of love.

Ooh, that sounds too, too, too, too. That's just too... It doesn't have a punch to it. Lack of love.

What's your problem, brother? Demons! A lot of people believe that now. Everything is wrong, you know. A little twitch.

I just heard of a guy. He went up and down the country. He said in his message he had so many people laying hands on him to get him free.

He thought he was going bald. I hope he was exaggerating. I know that sometimes there are serious cases.

I like to use this terminology in which the enemy seemingly has got, you know, a foothold in our lives. He certainly did in my life in the area of lust. And I tell you, I'm not afraid to pray.

I'm not afraid to fast. I'm not afraid to ask someone else to pray. But more often our problems are more basic.

And the lack of love is certainly one of the big basics. Most of the problems on our teams, not all of them, most of them could be solved with a little more love at the right time. And of course the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5, 22, the fruit of the Spirit. It's like the spectrum of love. We've all heard messages on it.

You had an orientation tape on it. But we still don't have enough of it. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance against such.

There is no law. Let me just say this, and this has been the motto of OM since its inception 28 years ago. Whatever you get in OM, if you don't get love, you haven't got it.

Please don't go around too much talking about OM principles. Why don't we talk about biblical principles? Why don't we talk about what the Word of God says? I believe in the OM principles. I'm not against that if it's kept in balance.

But if you want to talk about OM principle, I know it doesn't sound so exciting as far as I'm concerned, and I've been watching it all these years. Love. Love.

I have a little message about people that are difficult to love. All kinds of people I've met along life's road. What a challenge.

Number seven, darkness. Just spiritual darkness. Lack of walking in the light, 1 John 1, verse 7. I don't think walking in the light works very well if love is not mingled with it.

I know leaders who have been totally devastated when some team member finally decided he was going to tell that leader a thing or two. And into the person's office he went. This thing and that thing.

And maybe that leader had just been giving his all. He'd been going the extra mile. He'd been staying up late, working, trying to hold the team together, and this brother comes in and just blasts away.

I want to tell you something worse. It's when a leader gets upset and starts blasting away at some new recruit. And I pray, if that happens to you, you'll somehow let love grab your heart at that moment.

I know most of these leaders. They don't want to do that. They don't mean to do that.

But they are all different temperaments. They get under pressure. They've got a lot of goals, a lot of programs.

Actually, one of their greatest goals is to make you happy. I can tell you, every leader basically wants to see happy, fulfilled people by this time next year. But the very thing we're wanting to do creates pressure that sometimes keeps us from doing it.

Certainly in my life. My very desire at times to do the right thing and say the right thing to my wife, my secretary, my team, my children. The very pressure in wanting to do that has made me vulnerable so I didn't do it.

And then when they misunderstood it and thought that I had something deep against them when that wasn't the case. It was a passing thunderstorm and the whole thing goes out of control. Walking in the light is good, but it needs to be with dignity.

Do you like that word? We need a little more dignity in operation mobilization. It needs to be with love. It needs to be with a deep sense of respect for that person.

He may have failed. He may have said the wrong thing. But if he is in a place of leadership and to me even not in a place of leadership, he deserves your believing the best, your respect.

By the way, let me just throw another practical thing in that could save a lot of situations. You try to share something with a leader and you feel he didn't hear. We have people, they try to share something when the leader is on the run.

He is busy and they try to get to him. And they get brushed off or you know, they get a negative and so they go back and sulk and they hold that in their heart. In working with leaders, here is a little motto.

If at first you don't succeed, try again. Maybe with a letter. Maybe he has said no.

You feel you want to appeal. Write a letter and say look, just give this one more consideration and what you decide, I'll live with it. That's a good way to go.

My wife has got a lot for that method. But don't say, please, don't say the leader was too busy. He wouldn't listen to me.

Especially if it's only been a passing, you know, quick little comment. And sometimes it's necessary to communicate to your leader that you really want to meet with him and talk about something serious. I tell you, when I get communication like that on my desk, that goes right to the top of my list.

If somebody says, you know, I have something serious, I really need to see you. That's very different than people who just make a passing remark. Oh, you know, I'd like to get together with you.

Have you got any time? I may get to that person. But I tell you, the man who writes the letter or, you know, gets to my secretary or sees me and says, I really need to see you. This is important.

It's on my heart. I've got to get it off. That kind of stuff, my antenna goes... And sometimes you lose sleep because you end up talking late into the night.

Listen, I'm not... I'm not... How can I say? I can't overstress this enough. There's got to be vital, loving communication between the new recruit and the leader if this thing is going to work in 1985 and 1986. There's got to be that communication.

Neither party can withdraw. And I think with the size of OM today, the complexity of OM today, more followers, new people, whatever you want to call yourself, disciples, learners, you have to take the initiative. I know people that have waited all year or six months for the leader to call them in for fellowship.

And I tell you, especially many male leaders don't easily take the initiative in calling all the girls in for fellowship. There's nothing wrong with that. But some just find it difficult.

But they would not be refused. Any woman who wrote to any of our leaders and said, look, you know, I'd like to get some time with you and just talk about something. There's nothing wrong with that.

We need more of it. And women certainly need to be heard more around Operation Mobilization. Number eight, the lack of vision.

If we lose the vision, we don't know what we're really going after, why we're doing this. Then our motivation goes down and sometimes division comes in. Number nine, division often comes because of rigid thinking.

I'm convinced we have a five to ten percent people in O.M. who are way too rigid in their thinking. And you know why God has brought you in O.M.? If you're in that camp, God wants to make you a little more broad-minded. Some of you are very brethren.

How we love the brethren. But you've been reared in the brethren. You mainly know the brethren.

Maybe it's time to get to know the cistern. But you mainly... And you're a little bit rigid. And let me just tell you, if you're rigid P.B., and I was baptized in that little fellowship twenty-seven years ago, believe it or not, by Dale Roton, you're going to find O.M. very hard.

And as a new recruit, you may prefer to leave at the end of the week and go back and just work with your own denomination. Because O.M. is committed to an inter-denominational position. Not in word, but in deed.

Then you get some people from the Pentecostal side. That's the fastest growing church in the world today, the Pentecostals. And I tell you, Pentecostal pride can come as fast as brethren pride in the 1800s.

The brethren, you know, they're going a bit downhill. One thing about the brethren I fellowship with these days, they seem a lot more humble than they used to be. Praise the Lord.

But the Pentecostals, they're riding high. They got churches with 500,000 men! I always thought God was a diamond miner rather than a coal manufacturer. But no doubt, they're all spirit-filled, dedicated, realistic people.

Let's believe the best. But I find people, I listen to a lot of tapes, fellowship with a lot of people, I find people, and I know, I must have been in this camp, maybe I still am. Because I don't believe in sacrificing basic doctrines, and so in that sense, we're all a bit rigid, aren't we? We're all a bit rigid.

But, oh, wouldn't it be beautiful for some of you who are a little bit narrow, a little bit rigid, a little bit broader mind, you know. Maybe if you're Brethren, you can fellowship with a little more Pentecostals. Maybe if you're Pentecostal, you could reach out and fellowship with some of the Brethren.

Maybe if you're Lutheran, you could get to understand these Baptists. Maybe if you're German-Lutheran, you could have fellowship with an American Southern Baptist. Or maybe if you're Anglican, if you're Anglican, you could have, you know, some fellowship with, what would be good? What about the Methodists? We don't get so many of those.

But this is a Methodist book I offered you free. Rigid thinking has divided many O.M. teams. It's destroyed headquarters.

It's destroyed homes. And I feel one of the greatest things that God has been doing in my own heart is just make me a little more broad-minded about a lot of things that I once thought were so important, so important. Doesn't matter now.

It's not worth... Let's not hunt mice. You ever heard that expression? Let's not hunt mice. Little things.

You've got your big gun and you go down the road. Boom! A little mouse. Let's hunt elephants.

Let's hunt elephants. And the Lord Jesus taught that. He said you strain in a gnat and you swallow a camel.

And we do that in O.M. We do that on our teams. We get tidiness neurotics linked up with Mr. Mess Pot on the same team. And one is perpetually cleaning.

And he changes everything every day. And he washes everything every day. And he's got heavy-duty deodorant.

And he's got super deodorizer soles in the inside of his shoes. And, you know, we can use some of those people. Let me tell you.

But, that person needs to become patient with the other person who has not yet learned some of these basic disciplines. Keep communicating. Don't get upset.

Don't throw in the towel. Don't let that thing grow up. Become bigger and bigger.

He hasn't washed the teacups. We're going to bed with dirty teacups. My mother taught that all the dishes must be washed and put away every night.

And if my mother taught me that, then that's gospel truth. And this is heresy. Dirty teacups.

In our home, we have had civil war on this issue. We not only have dirty teacups in the kitchen, which is quite painful for my wife at times, we have dirty teacups everywhere in the house. And dirty coffee tubs.

And other dirty cups. And I don't know how it's happened, but in our family now, even though we teach forsaking all, we have over 50 cups. All different sizes and varieties.

And no one really wants to wash them. Mind you, we're we're pressing on and we've seen some real victories lately. Little things.

We may laugh that here, but on our teams, our blood pressure goes up. Have you ever seen the team member when his blood pressure is going up? You know, it's like an elephant is sitting on one of his horns. And then he tries to say something.

Alan Redpath once said, when you're upset, when you're upset, you know when you're upset, do whatever you want. Just don't open your mouth. You could wiggle your ears.

Wiggle your toes. Count to ten. I've been saved in many situations in the past years when I wanted to burst out and say something.

And I learned this lesson. Count to ten. And it works.

You say, oh, that's using Karl methods to be spiritual. Let me just say this for you, dear spiritual brothers and sisters. When you're battling a war on many fronts, sometimes you have to use as many different methods as possible.

And I find some of the practical methods are an enormous help for me in standing against Satan. It's not always just prayer, just the word, just quoting the blood of Christ, just standing in the name of the Lord with a shield of faith. Sometimes there are practical things.

You may want to get some more sleep. You may want to go get a decent meal. You may want to go have a walk.

You may want to just get some exercise or do something you like to do. Isn't it wonderful that as Christians, we are allowed to do many things that we like to do. Isn't that great? Because years ago in O.M., there was a little group that believed that the Christian life was mainly doing all these things you don't want to do.

We had people actually come on Operation Mobilization thinking it was about the best purgatory program going. They didn't want to be a disciple, they didn't want to forsake all, they didn't want to be a missionary, but then they felt so guilty about it, they didn't know what to do with all that guilt, so they joined Operation Mobilization. And then we wonder why we've got X-O-M-ers around the world who haven't quite made it through life.

Don't think we have some miracle cure for deep emotional long-term struggles. It's going to take time. But one thing we can do even as we go from here tonight is somehow by the grace of God at least be going in the right direction.

And unfaithfulness in little things, it may be washing up, it may be the vehicle, it may be your manner of dress, it may be your breath, it may be some other little thing. In Christian work, it can be tremendously important. We're dealing with people.

I remember taking a course under Billy Graham's senior counselor, and they emphasized, when you're witnessing for Christ, you make sure you have sweet breath. You make sure you don't have any odors coming from your body. Little things have caused teams tremendous confusion.

And in O-M, we're not just wanting to teach you the big spiritual lessons of life, how to tear down enemy strongholds in the Soviet Union. We want to teach you basic principles of godliness. My mother always used to say, cleanliness is next to godliness.

Well, my tenth point is simply failure to receive admonition and correction. How do you handle correction? Has anybody corrected you in the last day or two? How did you handle that? Maybe if nobody's correcting you, you could sign somebody up. Sign somebody up.

Maybe somebody living near you in the dormitory and say, look, why don't you be my exhorter corrector for the next ten days? Anything that I do you think's a bit offensive, let me know. When I have a man working for me as my helper, and I always do, one of his jobs is he sees something I do or say that's offensive, he's supposed to tell me. It's a blessing.

It's a blessing. Who do you have correcting you? Really walking in the light with you. Maybe you see enough yourself, maybe you can correct yourself.

But I needed help. I needed help. Do you get offended if someone says something to you about maybe some little habit you have? Little idiosyncrasies we have.

I know, I have one or two, and one really bothers my wife. I'm battling away at this little pesty idiosyncrasies. Couldn't necessarily call it a sin.

Life isn't just sin and non-sin. Life is many things. Little idiosyncrasies that irritate people.

Maybe you could ask someone to give you a list. Ten things you do that I find rather detestable and offensive. You say you're not ready for that kind of advanced training.

Okay. May the Lord make you ready in His time. How does this unity come? These are just a few ways.

Let's learn from this. Let's learn from this. And let's believe.

Would you believe with me for greater unity within OM this year? We already are united in Jesus Christ. He paid it all. It's not all our efforts.

He has made this possible. So let us, even as we go from this chapel tonight, even as we think of our brothers and sisters who don't know English, who we need to be exercising greater sensitivity toward, let's just think of ways that we can build the unity. And I will tell you, OM will have a lot more mileage for Jesus Christ this year if we'll hold the shield of faith up against some of this stuff.

This is my greatest desire. I don't have any super huge burden as far as strategy for this year. I've got my Muslim thing there that is a major thing.

I've got this Africa with the doulos. Don't worry. I've got too much vision.

It's hard for people to live with it all. But my goal this year is personal holiness in little things. I want to be more gentle in 1985-86 with my wife, my family, my team members.

I want to be more sensitive. I want to think through better before I open my mouth. And yet at the same time I want to be less nervous about my mistakes, my sins, my poor manners that my wife lovingly reminds me of fairly regularly.

Praise the Lord for committed wives. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this time together.

If we can win some victories in this tonight, it will gain us mileage every week this year. In our dormitories, in our flats, on our teams, in our headquarters, on the ships, in the vehicles, in our families, in our leadership, in our discipleship, we want to deal with these areas, these subtle methods that Satan uses to bring division and disunity and confusion. Lord, we are so different one from another.

Even different words have different meanings to different people. It scares us sometimes in OM when we see the complexity of what we are attempting to do. We realize we need each other more than we know.

The new recruit, the longer term, the ten-talent man, the one-talent man, the PhD university graduate, the Bible school dropout, the creative, the plotter, the visionary, the consolidator, all different kinds of people. God draws together. Break down the barriers even as we wait upon you in prayer tomorrow.

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