

Leadership in Acts 31.8.83

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the foundational leadership principles found in the Book of Acts, focusing on evangelism, prayer, and community unity.

Duration: 50:10

Topics: "Leadership"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of witnessing and having a world vision. He also highlights the significance of prayer and attending prayer meetings. The sermon encourages believers to be bold and ready to suffer for their faith. The preacher also addresses the need to handle problems in a practical and balanced manner, using the example of the early Christians in the book of Acts.

Transcript

Create your own leadership, ongoing training program in which, long after this conference is over, you will continue to seek ways to grow in these different areas that we have been speaking about. I want to mainly dwell this morning on the Book of Acts. Even if someone else touches on the Book of Acts in these days, that is not a problem.

But I want to speak on basic leadership principles gleaned from the Book of Acts. There's 14 New Testament realities that I find in the Book of Acts. There are more, of course.

And I listed these in my Bible after chapter 28 in the Book of Acts. Let me give these to you. And then we're going to go back and see them in their text.

This will be your outline. Number one, witness and world evangelism. We're going to see all this.

I don't know how far we're going to get in an hour. But we're going to see this in the text. And you will see it as you read.

See, sometimes you read something through a few times. Then you list some basic principles you've gleaned from that. Then you go back and read it again.

And watch the principles just jump out of the pages and hit you in the nose. So, number one, witness and world vision. Number two, prayer and the prayer meeting.

Prayer and the prayer meeting. Number three, boldness and readiness to suffer. Boldness and readiness to suffer.

It's good to see most of you taking notes because that is important. We're not here just to have a little challenge. And let's face it, very hard to remember three hours later what we heard, even in the best of messages.

Now, in a challenge message, sometimes if you don't take notes, the main point of the challenge, it hits us and we remember it, maybe even years. But when we're in a training program and we're trying to give you things that you can give others, 2 Timothy 2, verse 2, you need to write it down, you need to study it. Years ago, I always gave exams after these conferences.

I don't know what happened to that. But, as you may guess, in my situation, I get further and further from many things on OM because the whole thing has become so big and things change. Anyway, do write these things down, especially since we're going to go back to the text and just pick up some of them in the flow of the book of Acts.

Number three, I've just given you boldness and readiness to suffer. Number four, the importance of the local church. Love to speak to you for a day on that.

The importance of the local church. Number five, teamwork and the apostolic team. Number six, handling problems.

Yesterday when I spoke to the advance group, we dealt with the whole thing of the major difficulties that we face in OM today. And we started by calling the book of Acts the book of problems and discovered in almost every chapter in the book of Acts, there are problems. And the New Testament church is filled with problems.

Number seven, preaching, the emphasis on preaching and the resurrection. They could be listed separately, I put them together. Preaching, I've actually put resurrection power.

Number eight, flexibility, mobility, and adaptability. We find that in the book of Acts. How important in leadership.

You know, in my reading this morning in Leviticus, I noticed that the Lord allowed people who were poor, instead of giving a lamb, to give a dove as a sacrifice. And I just thought, way back in the book of Leviticus, this is God's alternative. Because people are different.

Some are poor, they couldn't give this one kind of sacrifice. There it is written in God's word, they could give another kind of sacrifice. And we're going to see that in the book of Acts.

That in the way of doing things, it's not always just one way. And in world events, it's not just the local church. But it's the local church and the teams that God raises up in a very often unusual way, who often end up planting the churches.

I was reading something late last night about that in the writings of Ralph Winter, where he talks about the two units that God uses in world evangelism. Okay, let's move on. Number nine, the Holy Spirit.

It is really the acts of the Holy Spirit. You take the Holy Spirit out of the book of Acts, you don't have anything left. Number ten, leadership.

The basic principles of leadership that you'll find there in the book of Acts. Remember when, I hope we get to it, the apostles wanted to get on to ministering the word and prayer. They had all these problems.

They had to appoint practical leaders. Immediately one of them went out and got himself martyred. Number eleven, unity.

We're going to see again and again. They were of one heart and one mind. Unity.

Number twelve, growth. Where's the first book on church growth? Book of Acts. It's amazing how this became such a big subject in the last thirty years.

It's been here two thousand years. Church growth. Book of Acts.

The Lord added to the church. Number thirteen, the supernatural. From one end to the other.

Number fourteen, baptism. Cannot run away from a strong emphasis in the book of Acts on baptism. Okay, let's go now to Acts chapter one.

All this can be this morning is in this kind of study. And I like to have different kinds of messages and different kinds of study. It can only be really some of the highlights to give us the biblical basis of some of these principles of spiritual life and leadership that we so strongly believe.

And that we want to see functioning in your own life. We know that's going to take time. But I don't think it's going to take as long as some people think.

This idea you've got to become, you know, sort of middle-aged before God can really use you in the church. I think it's a mistake. This idea you've got to go to Bible college and seminary before God can use you.

It's a mistake. That certainly in some people's lives will make them more useful. Yes, of course.

We're not against people getting Bible college training. More people are in Bible college as a result of OM than probably any fellowship, at least that I've ever heard of. And many in seminary as well.

Mark Parsons, who was with OM in Austria the last few years, who was working as my assistant for six months, is now off to three years of seminary. OM is not some kind of shortcut. But to think God can't use you until you have all this is a mistake.

Because these people in the book of Acts didn't have this. And I dare to say, from my feeble viewpoint, God was using them a lot more than some of our graduates are being used today. It's not one or the other.

It's both. But if in God's providence you're only able to get one, and that's true of most laymen, most ordinary working people, then you better get this. You better leave that and get this.

Leave the formal, traditional, 20th century education system with its positives and its negatives and get this book, God's Word, into the fiber of your being and you will be in God's leadership training program even if you never go to a leadership training conference or anything else by that name. Now, immediately in chapter 1 we see the emphasis on the Holy Spirit, Acts 1.8. We see the emphasis on world vision, same verse. We see the emphasis, of course, on prayer and on waiting upon God, verse 14, they all continued with one accord in prayer, supplication with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with His

brethren.

And I want to reemphasize our burden to see you involved in memorizing God's Word. Don't wait for the speaker to assign a verse, give you a memory card. You just get going.

And in this conference I would recommend for people all of your ability and intensity to work on a verse a day. When you leave the conference and you have a lot more to do, you maybe can cut it down to a verse every third day, especially after you have to review the verses that you've already memorized. But I just feel that some of these verses will mean so much more to you if you've got them in your memory.

And verse 14 and verse 8 of chapter 1 are two of the verses that I memorized many, many years ago. For me, of course, I know we're all different. Not to have Acts 1.8 memorized, you know, and be an O.M., is a contradiction.

And if you're going to do the 8 first, you might as well do the 14. And if you've got high marks on your A-levels and you're at university, then you might as well just memorize the whole chapter. But there it is.

Already in that first chapter, so many of these emphases are seen. As we go on to chapter 2, we again, of course, see the emphasis on the Holy Spirit, the Day of Pentecost, the miraculous, as God works in a mighty way, the proclamation of the gospel, including the emphasis on the resurrection. But look at the last verses, starting in verse 41 in chapter 2. Here we have a capsule picture of the early church.

There's the emphasis on baptism. And O.M. believes that all Christians, true believers, should be baptized. There's no rule against teaching that in O.M. The policy of O.M., because the church has never been united on it, and because there are great biblical scholars, greater than you and I, on both sides of the fence, that we do not insist on a particular mode of baptism, and the more difficult problem, we don't insist on what to do when a person was baptized as a child.

Some of you will say, I don't call that baptism. Well, just be patient enough and humble enough to at least study a little more before you condemn the person that believes in baptizing children. Because certainly, in my view, there are many mighty spirit-filled great biblical scholars who still lean that way.

In some countries, a majority lean that way. Other countries, probably the states, the majority lean the other way. But they all believe in baptism.

So it's a problem area, and you're going to have to wrestle with that. But when we have the book of Acts, we can't escape the emphasis on baptism. And if there's someone here that's never been baptized at all, and if your conscience, after wrestling with God, makes you feel that you've never been baptized at all, then, you know, you may have something to take care of in the next year.

Anyway, then they that gladly received His Word, verse 41, were baptized. The same day, there were added unto them about three thousand souls. Now, would you call that church growth? We believe in church growth.

And they continued, verse 42, steadfastly in the Apostles' Doctrine. Buck Singh, that great church planter in India who's often spoken at our OM conferences, he says, verse 42, is the four pillars of the New Testament church. They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' Doctrine.

Sound doctrine is important. Fellowship. Fellowship's important.

Breaking of bread. And prayer. All four of those emphases.

If I didn't cover all four of those in my list in the beginning, then you'd better add. At the end, go back and add. And if you are going to be a leader in God's work or in the church, you have got to get those four pillars into your life.

Absolutely basic. You've got to have sound doctrine. Biblical doctrine.

Don't be afraid of the word theology. I have studied theology since my conversion because I read my Bible. Systematic theology took me a couple of years before I got into that.

But you can pick up a book on systematic theology. You don't have to wait to get the privilege, the rare privilege of going to seminary. And before I ever went to Bible college, when I was at university, I went through my New Testament listing all the verses under major subjects.

And I was studying theology without even knowing it was theology. In fact, I don't remember the use of that term very much. And I just think it's so important that we in O.M. have an emphasis on doctrine.

And I think this is why some people don't understand O.M. Why don't we just embrace all the Roman Catholics? What's wrong with O.M.? Why don't we just... You know, there's huge doctrinal differences between what the Roman Catholic Church teaches and what we believe as biblical, evangelical Christians. If you don't like the word evangelical, all right. But biblical Christians... You know, I'm not going to argue about your terminology.

And we believe that there are basic doctrines. There's a doctrinal statement that we have distributed to you. Some of your churches may want to see that.

So they continued in the Apostles' Doctrine. It's interesting it doesn't just say Jesus' Doctrine or Church Doctrine or Biblical Doctrine. The Bible, of course, was not complete yet at that time.

But it does use the word the Apostles' Doctrine. So there is value in following the interpretation of Scriptures that has been given by the Apostles. And though now we have the whole Bible, there is nothing wrong with us giving some special attention to the interpretation a great apostolic Christian leader may give to those Scriptures.

Now, ultimately, we have to be convinced in our own heart. But is that a free-for-all? We're not in a church without leaders, without teachers, without people who can interpret and who can help us. Ultimately, we have to decide.

And one of the reasons people get into false cults is they overreact to the established church of the day. It may be a solid, biblical, evangelical church, but they overreact to it in their rebellion, in their times of wrestling with certain questions. They overreact to what they feel is tradition.

There is such a thing as biblical tradition. But there's an awful lot of unbiblical tradition. Anything you're doing regularly in your own life, it becomes a tradition.

You say, but it's biblical. Fine. No problem.

So they continued in the Apostles' Doctrine. Fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. And fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the Apostles.

There again, we have the miraculous. Verse 44, they all believed were together and had all things common. There again, we have the unity, the emphasis on unity.

There's another word I would like to put in there. Unselfishness. If you're selfish, you're disqualified from leadership.

If you're selfish, you're disqualified from leadership. I'm not saying, in the ultimate sense, a leader is never selfish. No.

But when you are selfish, the little red light lights up in your heart, and you deal with it, and you repent, and you put it right. And as a team leader, you have to, at times, share with the team and acknowledge your faults. How somebody can lead a team and never acknowledge their faults is quite amazing to me.

And sometimes, I have had to admit, look, what I've just done is selfish. I was thinking of myself. I wasn't considering you.

I wasn't considering someone else. Now, when it comes to materialism, we've got all of our defenses. And it is a hard area, because biblically, we are commanded to look after ourself.

Caring for ourself is not selfishness. And we are commanded to take care of the temple of the Holy Spirit. And the Lord Jesus was concerned about the physical needs of His disciples.

And sometimes, a bigger problem is pride. And pride keeps us from receiving. When we receive something and we accept something, that's not being selfish.

Now, the last few years, I was wearing a jacket like this that was really becoming bad news. I had two coats. One was this type of little jacket, whatever you call this.

And the other was a coat to wear in the colder weather. Both of them were bad news. I mean, one was 14 years old.

That had been given away and had come back. Then someone took it because they thought it was so ugly and cut up the sleeve for rags. And I had a real attachment to this coat.

And I got it back out of Charlie or out of the rag bag. And I wore it for four more years after that. It was an offense to a number of people.

It became sort of my holy coat. And it was full of holes. And now it's gone.

I don't know where that thing went. I think my wife hid it. Then I had this other coat for the colder weather.

And that was also coming apart. The lining was just disintegrating. I taped it up.

It cost too much to sew it. So I taped up various sections. And it was an offense to some people.

And so, I think it was my birthday, my wife gave me this. Brand new. This isn't Charlie.

When you see something new on me, you know that the spiritual balance is on the increase. But, you know, it would only be pride that would refuse a gift like this. And we have to learn how to receive.

In our great desire to be unselfish and just to give everything, we also have to learn how to receive. That was hard for me. And in marriage, because of my continual giving away of everything I could lay my hands on, it became a very sore point in our marriage.

My wife would give me something, and within a week, it was gone. I thought, well, he needs it more than I do, especially when I went to India. And I went extreme in this.

I was preaching in a Mexican church, and I saw some of these people that didn't have clothing. My heart was just touched, and I just gave what I had. I didn't have much that night.

And I was so extreme that when I got in the truck, I took off my trousers, and I handed them to a man outside. And I drove home without any trousers or shirt. And my poor wife, I don't know how I got from the truck to where we were living.

We were actually living in a closet in the back of a bookshop because we had given our room away to someone I had met on the streets. This was the first month of our marriage. And, you know, I was just determined, whatever the cost, I was not going to be selfish.

And I was going to give. I had the Sermon on the Mount. I just fed on the Sermon on the Mount with my own little interpretation.

And, of course, this led me into what other people called asceticism. I never thought it was asceticism. I thought I was still living very well.

But there it is. He sold their possessions and goods and part of them to all men, as every man had need. I don't think the kind of semi-ascetic experience that I just described is the greatest problem in the average church today.

If some of you are going too extreme in that area, we'd be happy to arrange counsel. But I don't think that is the greatest problem today. And it would be good for us to go back and to see the unity and the oneness of heart and the unselfishness of these early Christians.

And they continued, verse 46, "...Daily with one accord," there's the unity again, "...the temple breaking bread, from house to house did eat their food with gladness, singleness of heart, praising God, having favor with all the people. The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Church growth. Isn't that beautiful? Don't you think you ought to memorize those last five or six verses? Now, I've been working on those verses for many years and I have about three-fourths memorized, but if I had to stand up with my eyes closed and quote verse 41 through verse 47, I don't think I could do it.

But one of the values of memorizing is also at least you know exactly where to find that. You need, as a leader, to know your way around your Bible. You may not be able to quote verbatim, but you know where it is.

On any subject, you know where it is. Bhaktsingh of India never went to Bible college, never went to seminary. I've never hardly met a man that knows the Word of God better than Bhaktsingh.

They say he's a walking concordance. Any subject, he can take it from Genesis to Revelation, any subject. He dedicated my children to the Lord when they were babies.

And it was a three- or four-hour meeting. Dedication of the children was only the first hour. And he just started taking verses from Genesis to Revelation on children.

Verses I never even knew they were in the Bible. Get to know the Bible. You don't have to wait till you go to Bible college.

If God gives you that privilege, many of you have already been there. Get to know the Bible. And by memorizing sections and by making lists of subjects and knowing where you can find verses on those subjects, someone talks to you about the lostness of man.

You know immediately Romans 1, 2, and 3. Someone talks to you about the sovereignty of God. You know where to find it. Well, let's move on.

Chapter 3, of course, we again have the emphasis on the miraculous, the supernatural. We begin to see the emphasis on teamwork as again and again we find these men in the book of Acts moving out, going out together. And, of course, we also see I don't know how it missed my original list, the emphasis on unselfishness, which I've already touched on, but what seems to be a simple lifestyle among the believers.

The fact that Peter could say, silver and gold have I none, seems to indicate these people were being good stewards of what God had committed to them in terms of this world's goods. That's quite a strong message we have in Peter's second sermon. Peter stands up and proclaims the message.

Look at verse 19. Repent, therefore, and be converted. Conversion.

Another one of the emphasis of the book of Acts. Repent, therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. And He shall send Jesus Christ who before was preached unto you.

He's quoting here, of course, a prophecy from the Old Testament. And we find in the book of Acts that they preached repentance. They preached repentance.

And perhaps that should be also added to your list of New Testament realities, perhaps as a subtitle under number seven. Preaching. They preached the resurrection.

They preached repentance. Chapter 4. Again, the emphasis on the Holy Spirit. Verse 8. Peter filled with the Holy Spirit.

I think most Christians would agree one baptism, many fillings. One baptism, many fillings. Where we wouldn't agree is what is the one baptism? Part of the Church says every believer at conversion is baptized in the Holy Spirit.

That since it happened at Pentecost, since that time, every born-again person automatically is baptized by the Holy Spirit. Another large segment of the Church, generally they will say, yes, the Holy Spirit came in to a person when they're born again, but they need to have a second blessing. They would call that baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We're never going to get this together. They've been trying for hundreds of years. You come on OM thinking we're going to get this one together, you're going to be disappointed.

You've got to study and become determined in your own heart. But you need to understand as leaders it is impossible to hide young people from people or tapes shooting from different sides of this controversy. And even in this pulpit, if someone comes up who seems to be leaning a little bit one way, don't get all hyper about that.

That doesn't mean that that is where we, as the main responsible people for OM, are taking our position because as main leaders we are not all the same in this camp. We are divided on this issue as main leaders. There may be a few more in one camp than in the other.

No one's ever counted it. Do you want us to count? And it's just so important to understand that as you study the Book of Acts, in our view, you don't have to agree with us on this, it's not clear. It's not clear.

And I've been for 28 years reading the writings of both sides. And I have one foot in one camp and one foot in the other. You know, stop trying to figure me out right down to the final detail.

What's my denomination? Where do I stand on some of these issues personally? I believe that I should sacrifice some of my personal convictions for the sake of world evangelism. And I'm not interested in being pinned down because sometimes it's just the indirect method to push my little favorite side. Now, I would never say that I've, you know, never had a slip of the lip in which my personal preference came out.

And you as leaders, you've been slipping at the lip quite a bit because at your stage of leadership, the tendency is for your personal preferences to come out all the time. Well, you know, O.M. says this, but, you know, this is really the way I feel. Of course, they're not interested in what O.M. wants.

They want to know, you know, wow, what do you really feel? And so you are as a leader of O.M. and you've been given an official task by O.M. but you're using it as a platform to push your own thing. The interesting thing is nobody tells us about it, first of all. If you feel so strongly, you must use your O.M. leadership to push your own thing.

Why don't you share that with us? We'll have a little fellowship. What is your own thing? Because you may be completely cockeyed and we don't want you to lead a team at all. If you think I was happy about all the people who led all the teams this summer, obviously you don't know me.

I'm not in control of that. If I didn't believe the Holy Spirit could keep a hand on this and He allows lots of human error, I don't know what I would do. But I believe that we can unite.

That we believe that it is necessary for believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And that means that those who are in this camp and those who are in that camp, basically we're going to be happy because the result, everybody filled with the Holy Spirit. Would that be a great disappointment to you? Those of you on either side of this controversy? That everybody was filled with the Holy Spirit as Peter was here? Peter was at Pentecost.

He had the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had come upon him in power at Pentecost and yet it says here then Peter filled with the Holy Spirit. And verse 31 makes it clearer.

When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Clearly many of those people were already at Pentecost. What do they need to be filled again for? They already had the greatest thing that ever happened in the church.

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the Word of God with boldness. And I'd remind you of the story I gave already to most of you this summer when D.L. Moody was asked why he kept going on about being filled again and again with the Holy Spirit. He just looked at the lady and said, because I leak.

I leak. Some of you were filled with the Holy Spirit back in June and you've been leaking all over Europe. And the need today is to be filled again with the Holy Spirit.

A very beautiful verse that I don't want to bypass is verse 12. Because the book of Acts does emphasize the uniqueness of the Gospel and the fact that Christ is the only way. Look at that verse.

Neither is there salvation in any other for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. And then the emphasis on boldness. When they were told no longer to preach, what did they say in verse 20? For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

Boldness. Point three. And a willingness to suffer.

And you'll just find this running right through the book of Acts. Christians again filled with the Spirit in verse 31. And again we see that unselfishness in the last five or six verses of chapter four.

Selling their possessions. The emphasis on preaching and the resurrection in verse 33. With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

And today in our preaching there is not enough emphasis on the resurrection. There's not enough emphasis on repentance. And great grace was upon them all.

Neither was there any among them that lacked for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of those things that were sold. If you study this carefully you will see this did not become a rule. It was a sudden burst of reality.

And because there were tremendous needs and the Holy Spirit was working in a very special way, people just started to give lands and sell things. But the very fact that these things were distributed to others or other needs were met by that which is sold is so beautiful. And in wrestling with this passage for many years and seeing it in the light of other passages, I believe that there are cases, biblical cases, where that which one man sells because God tells him this is his guidance for their life in their situation.

Another Christian would be able to buy and use for his glory. We've been discussing this a lot in our field leaders meetings. And I think it's so important from the beginning days with OM to not get a false view of what forsaking all is.

Because it's kept in balance and we've always said this with Philippians where it says God will supply all. As a single young person, let's face it, you don't need very much. You might be able to follow my more extreme way of thinking and doing.

But fifteen years down the road when you've got five children and a wife, the very house you may have sold twenty years ago, the Lord may lead you to buy it back. That's right. And it would be as biblical to buy it back as it would be to sell it in the first place.

I wish I had an hour to talk to you on that. Because if we don't move that way we get into judgmentalism, we get into super-spirituality, we get into things that lead us into Phariseeism. And you know, there's nothing uglier than one aspect of discipleship without other aspects of it.

That's really ugly. You get Acts 2 but you don't have 1 Corinthians 13. It's ugly.

Because Acts 2 has got to grow out of 1 Corinthians 13. You know how to forsake but you don't know how to receive. And you're hung up because of pride.

We don't do things because other people do them. No. We do things because we see it in the Word of God and we believe God wants us to do it.

That's why. If you're doing something because, oh, this is what the O.M. leaders do, forget it. Forget it.

It's not worth it. It's a one-year trip. But if you do something because you see it in God's Word and God, by His Spirit, has witnessed in your heart this is the way you should go.

Amen. That may stand the test of 20 years. And that's the kind of thing that produces real leaders.

Prophets, not mascots. People who are finding through guidance and through the Word their own biblical lifestyle, not attempting to follow someone else's lifestyle. Yes, you can learn from someone else's example.

That's biblical. We see that. But we don't try to make a carbon copy.

I can learn from Paul, but I can never be a carbon copy of the Apostle Paul. And that's so important to understand. We move into chapter 5, of course, and we see the emphasis of point six, handling problems.

What a problem! God seemed to do most of the work in this problem. Both Ananias and Sapphira were taking. But generally today, in this age of great mercy and grace, we have to do more of the sorting out.

It's not just a matter of going into the prayer closet and saying, Lord, take it. I hope you haven't prayed that for any of your team members after you found them stealing the peanut butter. No, it's better to make an announcement not to steal the peanut butter.

Some of the teenagers came to me late last night and confessed they were the ones that throw the cornflake box by the tennis court. We've got to work on these things. We've got to work on these things.

It takes time. Don't be afraid of problems. And as Christian leaders, you have to develop a positive view toward problems because they're going to come in big doses.

Big doses. And we find the same thing in Acts chapter 6. You might take a look very quickly at the remaining verses of chapter 5 because we see the emphasis on boldness. We see the emphasis on willingness to suffer.

We see the emphasis on witness. Point one, point three, verse 40. To him they agreed when they had called the apostles and beaten them.

They commanded they should not speak in the name of Jesus. They let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

And daily in the temple, in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. Don't be afraid to go to people's doors. My method is generally, when I go door to door in England, I do apologize.

I say, look, I'm sorry to bother you. I have something important I think you're interested in. And then you can share.

If immediately you notice they're upset, you, of course, can say, look, I'm really sorry that I disturbed you. Maybe come back some other time or I'll go. Could you just take this piece of literature? And I think that door to door work is still a great way to go about evangelism.

You know, a lot of methods of evangelism today, we seem to have to spend an awful amount of time in preparation and very little time actually, you know, shooting the gun. Now, that's great. It fulfills our creativity and we have a lot of fun.

And I'm not against new methods of evangelism. You can be sure. But I believe this door to door go right where they live or shop to shop or park bench to park bench, where the people are and sharing with them.

They don't buy a book, I have six phrases, bang, you can pop them out just like that if they don't buy a book. You know, I understand you don't want a book. Most people aren't reading these days.

Do you watch television a lot? And have you seen anything good? I refer immediately to something I may have seen. Or do you go to the cinema as much? I just saw Blue Thunder. Did you like that film? It's pretty new for most of you.

But there's so many ways to strike up a conversation. I think sometimes people on OM are conversational imbeciles. We don't know how to talk to people.

This is no big thing to talk to people. You open your mouth and you say things, you ask people. Is there a way you can help them? To me, any nation I've been in, I've been in about 60, there's unlimited opportunities for personal evangelism.

But it takes New Testament. It takes getting out of bed in the morning. It takes prayer.

And then it takes a little bit of this biblical boldness. And I want to tell you, if you think you've been baptized in the Holy Spirit or filled with the Holy Spirit and you don't have any boldness in your life, something's wrong. Something's wrong.

That doesn't mean it will be easy. That doesn't mean your human factors will disappear. I still have struggles with fear.

I still at times on a train would rather read a book than talk to the man sitting next to me. The Holy Spirit does not destroy the human factor. The Holy Spirit does not destroy the need to deny self, take up the cross and follow Jesus daily.

The Holy Spirit doesn't destroy instantly all shyness. But the birthplace of boldness takes place in conversion and it continues as the Holy Spirit takes more and more control in your life. And that is overwhelmingly evident in the New Testament.

And may we, if we're in that area, failing and not appropriating what God has, may we not just listen to this message this morning, but may we do something about it. Well, in chapter 6 they have these problems, murmurings, people complaining about the food. The Grecians, these were Grecians, Greek, Jewish people, murmuring against the Hebrews because the widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

You know, we really get uptight when we feel our family is not, you know, not being taken care of. The whole family thing is an emotional thing, isn't it? And most of you aren't married yet. But I tell you, later on, you're married, you have children, and we feel our homes or our little sacred sanctuaries and our little children, they're super special, and of course they are.

And when anything goes wrong that affects our family or our children, we often get very upset. Now, let's just be honest. It's normal, but it's also carnal.

It's normal, but it's carnal. We can be more concerned about our one little child missing one little thing that we feel is important in life. And the fact that four million children will die this year of malnutrition won't bring a ripple on the end of a spoon.

And my plea is always for balance. And I believe these New Testament Christians were working for balance. And so when there was this problem and there was this murmuring, they appointed some men, seven men of honest report, verse 3, to be responsible.

And God raised up a practical team of men to do that work. Well, our time is gone. But as you go on through the book of Acts, you've got that outline.

We've built it up to about 17 or 18 New Testament realities you'll find in the book of Acts. I think you will see the biblical direction in which we are trying, by God's grace, to lead you. The biblical foundation you need for leadership.

There are so many books now coming out on leadership, especially secular books. There are so many voices. I would beg of you before you listen to too many other voices.

I'm not against that. Make sure this is your foundation. God's Word.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this terrific example in the book of Acts. Unselfish biblical living.

The boldness, the witness, the reality, the church growth. The local church, which comes later on in some of the other chapters. The team life, the love.

Thank you for a biblical basis for our lives, for church life, for teamwork and team leadership. Grant us the grace to really appropriate these things and to work them into the fiber of our lives, even though there will be failure and there will be heartache in the process. Father, we ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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