

Lukewarm No More - Part 14

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the need for Christians to respond with vision and compassion to global suffering while living out their faith authentically.

Duration: 9:34

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, 1 John 3:16-17

Topics: "Lukewarm"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of not approaching the Bible like a cafeteria, picking and choosing what to believe. He emphasizes the need for compassion and love towards others, especially those in need. The speaker also highlights the example of Nehemiah, who had a comfortable life but was moved by a vision to help others. The sermon touches on the suffering in Angola and the importance of understanding history and its impact on people's lives.

Transcript

One man once was asked why he believed the Bible. What were his many reasons for believing the Bible was God's Word, and he gave one answer, the Jew. We have teams in Israel.

I've been involved with the Jewish people for many, many years, like 35. Some of the greatest converts I ever met, converted Jews. The little lady that does those greeting cards you've seen on our table, converted Jewish lady, one of our main leaders for 20 years now, lives in Phoenix.

I just picked up those cards from her. Both her parents slaughtered in the death mills of Europe. She was bundled off and sent to England as a little child, and there she found Jesus.

Her name is Hannah Miley. I commend her to you, maybe to come even someday and chair at one of your missions conferences. It's a wonderful thing, a beautiful thing.

The Jewish people come to the Lord Jesus. There's that verse about them being scattered, scattered throughout the whole world. Well, I'm aware of that old clock up there.

There's not time to go through this point by point. But we see that Nehemiah was a man of vision. We see that Nehemiah set specific goals.

We see that Nehemiah responded in compassion to the state of the situation, the people. And we see that he responded in prayer. And we see in verse chapter 2 his prayer being answered.

Now, this man had a pretty good job. The last part of chapter 1, you read that Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer. He had a good job.

He had a nice situation. He didn't want to be stirred. And some of you know in your heart, right here in Houston, you got a really nice situation.

You got your home, and you got your job, and you got your children. You got a nice situation. And in one sense, there's nothing wrong with that.

But you see, Nehemiah in his nice, sweet situation started to get a vision. That's why we need missions conferences. That we may get a vision.

A vision of other people, a vision of all the suffering in Angola. How can it be that we have not done more for Angola? Don't you realize that our CIA and our government was involved up to our eyeballs in Angola? Because the Cubans were there. Or don't you like to read history? I love history.

I love to read all different sides of history. And I don't claim that I understand it. But it breaks my heart.

Because I don't like to see people being slaughtered. I don't like to see people gunned down like animals by the hundreds, by the thousands. I don't like to see children crossing the deserts as we have in southern Sudan in packs.

Just like wolves and animals. No parents. No home.

No nothing. They crawl. They dig roots out of the ground to eat.

That they might survive one more day. And the situation of the children of the world is almost beyond understanding. We know there's a lot of powerful verses.

Not just in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament about these things. For example, 1 John chapter 3. I'm sure you know John 3.16. We all memorize that as kiddies if we're in the church.

But not many seem to know 1 John 3.16. What does it say? Just before you get to the book of Revelation. You find the John and the Jude thing. By this perceive we the love of God because he laid down his life for us.

And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. That's strong, isn't it? Verse 17 gets even more unpleasant. Too many people today are into cafeteria Bible study.

This is a big thing in America. You approach the Bible like you do these mega. We got the biggest restaurants I think on planet earth next to Brazil.

Brazil I think has got even bigger than Texas. Unbelievable restaurants. You need to go see that sometime.

By the way, all the rivers in the United States all flow together. It's still smaller than the Amazon. You know, just in case you like to boast about the big American thing.

So go down to the Amazon and take a swim. Whosoever hath this world's good and sees his brother have need and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him. That's strong.

When I saw that as a young Christian, I couldn't believe it. And especially to a nation of rich young rulers. We are a nation of rich young rulers.

There are poor people. And sometimes it's because of their own folly. Not always.

Life is complicated. And I believe with all my heart we're going to stand before the Lord Jesus Christ for what we have done with the resources that the Lord commits to us. I was only a baby Christian.

Just began to read the Bible. I had these three businesses that I owned when I realized there was only one way I had as a Christian business person. I had to give it all to Jesus.

And I didn't sell my businesses immediately. I had to make some money to go to college. And I put those businesses in the hands of God.

Later he told me to sell one or two of them and buy Christian books. And in a sense, when I bought those Christian books, Operation Mobilization was born. He that hath this world's good, sees his brother have need, shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him.

And then, verse 18, My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. That's why this faith promise thing is so terrific. Because it gives us, in a missions conference, the opportunity to immediately respond.

Immediately respond. To make a specific commitment. To take that little card out.

And to pray and say, Lord, I'm going to do something. And I want to encourage you. As you study on your own the book of Nehemiah, and other related verses, I want to encourage you to aim higher in the things of the spirit in 1995.

A.W. Tozer once said about the church, and he's probably one of the strongest, most prophetic Christian writers in our day. He's in heaven now. A.W. Tozer said, If any church needed so much raw material, No, how did he say it? Let me get that straight.

If any secular business needed as much raw material to get so little finished product as the church of Jesus Christ, it would go bankrupt in six months. Now, some of you are business people. And you know that if you operated in your business, the way some churches operate, you'd be out.

I'm very much into business. I read probably as many business magazines as any business person I've met. To operate a mission of this size involves 30 or 40 corporations.

It involves finance, and banking, and shifting money across the planet, exchange rates, pensions, all kinds of things. And we have to stay up on those things. Though, of course, most of it's delegated to better people than myself.

But I'd at least like to know what they're doing. The business world today, it's very competitive. It's so competitive that they are now in the business world going to the Bible to figure out how to survive.

So we have books like Stephen Covey's book, Seven Habits of the Effective Person, or something like that. I've not only read most of the book, now I'm listening to the tapes. Interesting, because he's a Mormon.

No Mormon isn't in that book. Probably one of the top selling business books of all time. And we use that book as part of our training package for leaders across the world.

Because the things in there that are so biblical, so basic, we're willing to take truth from any corner. If a turtle walks down the road and he's got some kind of interesting insight painted on his back, we're going to get out a magnifying glass and see what's written there and see how we can use it. I feel that some of God's people, God's chosen, generally frozen people, are oftentimes trying to make the road actually narrower than it is.

It already is a narrow way. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No man gets to the Father, but by him it already is a narrow way.

The blood of Christ, the cross of Christ. Let's not go make it more narrower than it is. Some little bird head pipsqueak up in Grand Rapids for years, preaching the only Bible is the King James Bible, all these other Bibles of the devil.

He started a King James Bible only church. Only in America could you find such a reptile as that. It's just unbelievable, absolutely unbelievable, that people could be so narrow and condemn people all over the world because the King James Bible is only in English.

What foolishness! And sometimes I'm so embarrassed by our country. Aren't you ever embarrassed by your own country? I love this country as much as anyone, but I'm embarrassed by the stupidity and the foolishness. And you and I as God's people must be different.

We must be different. Our lives must ring of biblical sanity. Our lives must ring with discernment.

Our lives must ring and radiate the fruit of the Holy Spirit. It doesn't mean we can't get excited. It doesn't mean we can't speak out and be firm.

At the end of the day, there is that grace awakening. If we do research, we want to do thorough research.

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