

(Om Orientation) Spiritual Reproduction - Part 1

by George Verwer

George Verwer emphasizes the biblical theme of spiritual reproduction through discipleship, prayer, and reliance on God.

Duration: 21:22

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 6:12

Topics: "Orientation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the Great Commission found in the Gospel of Matthew. The two main goals of the Great Commission are worldwide evangelization and making disciples. The speaker emphasizes the importance of not only preaching the Gospel but also discipling new believers. He encourages listeners to follow the example of Jesus, who spent time with his disciples and taught them. The speaker challenges listeners to examine their own ministry and ensure they are truly following Christ's example.

Transcript

Orientation tape on reproduction. Reproduction. The theme of reproduction is found throughout the entire Word of God.

We find many places in many of the books, beginning from early cases in the Old Testament, like Moses, as far on as the Apostle Paul in the New Testament. This theme is one of the most interesting and often one of the most neglected themes in the Bible. Let us look again at the Great Commission.

So often we've looked at the Great Commission and have gotten a challenge for the foreign mission field, but I'd like for us to look at the Great Commission and these moments as not only a challenge for the regions beyond, but as a challenge for wherever we are to reproduce for Jesus Christ. I will read from the Berkeley translation of the Gospel of Matthew, the 28th chapter, in the 19th verse and the 20th. Go out, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe everything that I have enjoined upon you.

And mind you, I am alongside you all the days until the end of the age. In the Great Commission, we see basically two main goals. First of all, we see the goal of worldwide evangelization, to go into all the world

and preach the gospel, which is more succinctly spoken in the Gospel of Mark.

Then the second major goal is to make disciples. One goal, evangelism. The other goal, making disciples.

Now actually, both of these are reproducing, because when you speak to someone about Jesus Christ, even if you do not win him to Christ, you're reproducing some of your thoughts and some of your ideas into this individual. And also, reproduction can be seen in evangelism in this sense. The very heart of evangelism, the very purpose of evangelism, the very desire of evangelism is to reproduce.

None of us go out and try to evangelize someone without wanting deep down in our hearts to see this person come to Jesus Christ. And when that person does come to Jesus Christ, we reproduce. And so, we see this thing of reproduction in both goals of the Great Commission.

But we want to think this evening mainly about the goal of reproducing disciples, man-to-man vision, one person winning one and training one. This is the goal of each one of us that are in this work called Operation Mobilization, or in Send the Light, or Operation Islam, or Operation Communism. Each one of us have the goal of seeing someone come to Jesus Christ and then of going on in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We can look at the greatest life that ever lived, and we see the greatest principles of reproduction that were ever executed. In the life of Jesus Christ, we see a masterful display, and in a powerful way, this theme of reproduction. We all know, of course, that Jesus chose 12 men to whom he would just pour his very heart's beat into.

We all, of course, know that only 11 of those really continued on for him. And yet, just think what those 11 men did. All the value, the wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ in finding out a great mass and hoping that some of his thoughts would rest in those minds, but in the vision of finding just a few and training them and making sure that those men would really produce something.

And this is the challenge on our hearts this evening. But more than those 12, Jesus Christ took three men. Now, I'm not going to mention to you this evening who those three men were, but Jesus took three men, and if you'll read through the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, you will find at least seven times when Jesus was alone with those three men.

Just think of that. Here was the Lord Jesus in his mass ministry, healing people, preaching the good news to people, but he always took time to be alone with the 12. And then he wanted to give some real heart fervor to just three men in whom he saw great potential.

And those three men wrote a great part of the New Testament. Some of the most basic doctrines we can get from those three men as we read what they wrote. And so we see here a challenge in our lives.

Maybe you're one of these people that is very zealous. You like to hold street meetings. You like to do evangelistic work.

You like to be in the great campaigns and see hundreds flocking forward to receive Jesus Christ. Of course, this is a wonderful thrill. This is something that each one of us should have on our hearts.

And yet, how often we've not been able to conserve the fruits. So often we've been eager and just saying we've won another soul to Christ rather than taking some of these that we've won to Christ and really making sure that they're going on for the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ concentrated his effort.

You know what I would like for you to do? Each one of you to read through the synopsis and note every time Jesus was alone with these three men. You find out who they are. And then notice what Jesus was trying to teach these men each time he was with them.

Write that down on a sheet of paper and keep it with you. And every now and then it would be good to just examine your ministry and see if you're really following Christ. Every Christian wants to follow Christ.

We want to walk in his steps. We want to do what he did in the way that he did it. Are you following Jesus Christ in this way? We can read about other great men in the word of God who did this very same thing of just finding one or two others, discipling them, seeing them disciple others.

You will read the booklets of Born to Reproduce by Dawson Trotman and the booklet Christian Strategy. You will find many examples not only from the word of God but also from modern experience of men who saw the wonderful potential and the realization of this potential and discipling souls for the master. No doubt each one of you who are listening to this tape believe that this is what should be done.

You've read the booklets Born to Reproduce and Christian Strategy. You've seen this taking place in others lives and you've hungered for it. You've thirsted for it.

You say, well this is it. I see it. I see it in the word of God.

But how, how can I go about this? So let us just think, how can we go about finding a faithful heart and discipling them in Jesus Christ? Would you please turn with me to Luke, the sixth chapter, the twelfth verse. Luke 6, 12. Let's see how Christ went about this.

Isn't this the most logical thing to do? We who are following him. Luke 6, 12 from the Berkeley version. In those days he, that is the Lord Jesus Christ, went off to the mountain to pray and was spending the entire night in communion with God.

He spent the whole night with God. Isn't this an amazing thing? Doesn't this verse just rebuke our prayer life? When we think of the blessed son of God, who knew God just as well as God knows himself, because Jesus is God. And yet he wanted to be with God.

He went and he spent the whole evening in prayer. It doesn't say that he planned on this. Maybe he just went and got lost in the love and in the fellowship and in the joy of being with his father.

And it just happened that he just tarried there and the next thing he knew it was morning. We don't know, but we do know this, that the very next morning after he'd spent that time in prayer, he had the power and the discernment to choose 12 men. And those 12 men were going to shape the world.

You might ask yourself, well, why pray? You know, so often I've thought of this. Why pray? God knows all of our needs before we ask. The Lord himself told us that.

Why do we have to get on our knees? He knows. Why pray? You know, the wonderful thing about prayer is this. In prayer, God is not so interested in giving us the answer as he is in giving us himself.

God does know our needs. He is going to supply all of our needs according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus. As far as answers go, God could give that in a moment.

But what God wants is that we learn to spend time in his presence and that we be drawn there, that we have real good reasons to come continually to him. And he gives us these human limitations. He gives us these needs.

Why? So that we can just come again and exercise our dependence on the living God. Some people say, well, I pray actually all day long. I'm in constant communion with God.

And this is a wonderful thing to know that every day, no matter where you are, every moment, you can be in constant communion with the living God. And yet let us not allow this fact to remove us from times when all we do is just get alone with nothing else to do and just be alone in a room with the living God. You know, it's when you love someone, you love to be around them, but you also love to be alone with them at certain times.

I think one of the reasons why God honors evenings of prayer is because after you've spent an evening in prayer for something, and then God gives the answer, you know that this answer came from God. If you were just walking down the street and praying as you go about your normal everyday work, and you didn't set aside time just to get along with God, you might think, well, I'm in communion with God, but God really used my gift. God used my power to bring in these answers.

But God likes to get us alone in the room and just let us spend hours there with him. Hours that will mean nothing if God does not answer prayer, but hours that will mean everything if God does answer prayer. This is faith.

So often it doesn't take any faith to just pray when we're walking around in our normal everyday life. Most of us either talk to ourselves or we talk to God just about all the time when we're going around, we're thinking. And so naturally our thoughts turn into words many times.

But oh my, it takes faith to get on your knees and spend time before him. Because you think, my, I could be out doing something. I could be doing that.

I could be thinking about this. I could be studying that. And yet when we're on our knees and just praying and just getting absorbed with the presence of God, we realize that we're putting our entire dependence on the fact that God does hear and answer prayer.

Coupled with this, the Lord just likes to sometimes see us in humility before him. Why does the Bible speak so much of fasting? I just went through the Bible and counted 57 times in the Bible when people fasted. At least 57 times in the word of God, it mentions that people fasted.

Why? What value is there in fasting? Is there some merit in asceticism? Of course not. The merit, or not the merit, let us not call it merit, but rather let us call it the blessing of fasting is humbling ourselves before God, showing in a very real way our dependence on the living God. When you fast, your strength goes.

You're not able to think or work as effectively as when you don't fast. Usually, usually this is true. And yet when we get on our knees and we're weak and we say, oh Lord, we've not slept, we've not eaten, then all of our weakness is turned into the spiritual strength of the living God.

And if you want to see someone come to Christ, if you want to see someone's life changed, and then to see that life matured in Jesus Christ, you're going to have to learn what it is to lay hold of God. Because God is not going to give this great blessing unless we really get desperate with him. You know, you ask

the question, why is there evil in the world? Why is there sin in the world? Why is God allowed to help? All of these questions tie in with why does prayer work? So many things that to the natural mind just seems to be foolishness.

And yet we come to the conclusion that God has allowed all of these things so that the environment in which we live may be the most conducive for our spiritual growth in Jesus Christ. The fact that we must pray draws us to God in prayer. The fact that there is sin makes us marvel at the cross of Jesus Christ, which of course was a place where sin was dealt with.

And so everything in life has a purpose. And we're never going to see anything great accomplished unless we learn this purpose of prayer. Now, how are we going to pray as we go to prayer? What are we going to pray for? We're going to pray, we're going to ask God to give us heart.

But what is our attitude going to be? You know, so often we pray and we say, well, now God is going to answer this prayer, yes, or maybe he'll answer it, no. Maybe he'll give me a faithful man, maybe he won't. But you know, as you read in 1 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul tells us that all the promises of God in Jesus Christ are yea and yea.

They are not yes and no, but they're all yes. But the trouble is, so often we pray for something, we don't see it happen, and then we just sit back and we say it wasn't God's will. Rather, what the Lord wants is that we pray for something, we get concerned about something, we find out God's will about it.

And then, after we have found God's will, not before we find God's will, it's no sense to pray about something if we don't know God's will. Ask for God's will on it, and then pray. And pray in boldness, as Hebrews tells us.

Humbly, yes, we must come humbly. But boldly, because he invites us to come boldly. And God loves someone who comes and says, God, this is what your word says, let us obey it.

So what we must do is go to prayer. And we consider, does God want me to have a faithful man or not? Well, we see this in the word of God. We see this in the lives of other people.

We see the potential of this. And we get driven to believe that God wants to do this in my life. So what do I do? I get on my knees and I pray.

Do I say, Lord, if it is your will? Well, we've just found out it is the Lord's will. And then we go to prayer, and we say, God, I'm believing. I'm believing that you're going to give me a faithful man.

Each one of us over this year, year 1963, 64, each one of us who are going to the Muslim world are believing that God is going to give us a faithful man or a faithful lady in the Muslim world. We're believing. Okay, what's going to happen after the first month? We haven't found a faithful man.

What are we going to do? Are we going to say, well, maybe God just didn't want it? No, we're going to start wrestling. This is what it means to wrestle in prayer, because when you've seen something from God, you know it's from God. And even if the devil does come and say, oh, you prayed out of the will of God.

Oh, I think of how many blessings we've lost, how many blessings we've fumbled because we've listened to the devil's lie. Oh, you prayed out of the will of God. No, I think so often God has wanted to give us a blessing and he's wanted us to just cry unto him and just to claim this thing.

And if he doesn't give it to spend that evening in prayer to God, but if he still doesn't get it to set aside some time of fasting and just waiting on him, humbling ourselves, you know, God will not give an answer for something like this until he has you just like a little baby. God wants you to just be so broken of everything, broken of your pride, broken of all selfish desires, and just laid out before him, just saying, God, you promised it and you are going to fulfill it. And whenever you ask of me, I'm going to do to see it come to pass.

I think of so many times in my life where I've asked God for something and he hasn't given that thing until the very last moment. And then when he gives it, it's right after I've spent some real time in desperate crying to God. I think of one Christmas, a group of us went down to Mexico, just the way many of you will be going down to Mexico.

And each one of this little group, as we were going down there, we each one asked God to give us a faithful man. We said, Lord, give us someone that we can disciple in Jesus Christ. And I think of one young man by the name of Greg Livingston, a very good friend of mine.

He had also prayed this prayer. But the very last night that we were in Mexico, he still had not found his faithful man. He was looking all over and he hadn't found a faithful man.

It was midnight and we were going to be leaving in a few hours. We were going to leave around four o'clock in the morning to go back to the state. And he came to me and he said, you know, I haven't found my faithful man.

And you know what my reaction was? I said, well, maybe you have found him and you just don't know him. You see, God doesn't work that way. I was just trying to rationalize.

I was just trying to get ourselves off the hook because we had prayed, we'd claimed it, and now we haven't seen it. I was even thinking of saying, well, maybe God answered this prayer. No.

And oh my, how the devil would have just loved to deceive Greg and get him to fumble the blessing. But he didn't fumble. He went out even at midnight and was looking all over for that faithful man.

Pretty soon he found a man and came running back to me. And he said, you know, I found one. I found a man.

And the man, he led him to the Lord Jesus Christ. And he said that the man wanted to really go on for the Lord. And that fellow has been working with the work in Mexico ever since.

You see what happens? God just postpones the blessing until he sees us get desperate.

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