

Spiritual Survival in the 80s Eph 6

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual survival and perseverance in the 80s, calling believers to be soldiers of Jesus Christ and engage in militant, aggressive, biblical Book of Acts evangelism.

Duration: 52:34

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 17:6, Acts 18:8, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15:15, 2 Timothy 2:4, 1 Peter 4:16

Topics: "Spiritual Survival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of love and relationship in serving one another. The goal is to teach the audience how to apply these principles in their camp ministry. The speaker also encourages evangelism through various methods such as open-air campaigns, evangelizing in homes, and even using vehicles as opportunities for sharing the gospel. The sermon emphasizes the need to enroll in God's army and be obedient to His commands, comparing Christians to soldiers under the leadership of Christ. The speaker references Bible verses, particularly Ephesians 6:10 and 2 Timothy 2, to support these teachings.

Transcript

Ephesians chapter 6. We're following along our general theme of survival in the 80s. The other term, for those who like more spiritual terminology, perseverance in the 80s. How to keep on keeping on.

How to avoid the devil, the devil's minefields. How to maintain the spiritual glow, pressing on. We've seen the importance of spiritual balance.

We've seen the absolute necessity of really knowing Christ is Lord, absolute Lord of our lives. And what it is to be in God's race, with our eyes fixed upon the Lord Jesus, and laying aside every weight and every sin that could possibly hinder us. And we've seen the importance of love and relationship, serving one another.

And we've especially tried to think how we can put some of this into practice in this camp ministry that the Lord has called us into. I hope you will review the material you have received, because really we're here not to just throw out a challenge, but to teach in a way that hopefully you will be able to take these things and teach them to others also. And that's one of the purposes also of making these cassette tapes available.

So, Ephesians chapter 6, verse 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

What strong terminology is that? For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Above all, taking the shield of faith, with which ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance.

There's that key word again. With all perseverance and supplication for all things, and for me. That utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that in this I may speak boldly as I ought to speak.

We've got a crisis. We've got a crisis. We've got a little insect crawling around in this class.

I believe that you can get that insect out of there. Okay, well my voice is giving me a little difficulty. I'm supposed to only be speaking twice a day, but I always say, well Sunday is special.

What a very, very strong chapter in God's word. Have you ever wrestled with this chapter? I wonder if you imagine this as a military camp. Stranger than they seem, as I look out the window right now, you're probably never going to forget this.

It reminds me of a camp I visited in Poland just about one year ago. I was ministering in Poland. It was called Auschwitz.

Now that is an initial impression just from the side of that one brown building. The fact is, once you examine the two camps, there is no comparison. I don't know if you've ever visited one of the concentration camps that are preserved as museums.

If you're ever over in Eastern Europe, by the way, there's a great need for workers in Eastern Europe. The coordinator of our work in Eastern Europe lives in Wales, in Reel, if you want to go see him. What an opportunity there is there, especially for British people, a lot easier than for Americans.

It was just about a year ago I was in the Soviet Union again, and I wish there were time to just share just that experience I had there in the Soviet Union. And I will never forget that visit to Auschwitz. What has happened there can never, never be forgotten.

War is a very real thing. It's a very ugly thing. It's going on right now as we sit here so peacefully.

Iran and Iraq have lost a couple hundred thousand. Many who are fighting in that war are only 16, 17 years of age. It's a holy war.

They consider the Iranians especially the greatest privilege to give their life in the service of Muhammad out in the front lines of the Iran-Iraq war. In Lebanon, we had to evacuate our team a month ago because of the war there. They've now gone back.

In Salvador and Nicaragua, we're having guerrilla warfare, we're having fighting. But when you read about it, it's just, it's overwhelming. We wonder what is going to happen next in South America.

The history of our planet, whether we like it or not, is a history of war. And during the war, there were many places similar to this all over Britain, some for POWs, some before that time for American military, some for British military. And it's interesting to go and visit those camps.

When I lived in England, when I first came here, for a short time, I lived in a military camp in a place called Chigwell in the east end of London. We were the first group, I think, since the war to actually stay in that camp through the winter. And that's where my son was born, my second son, and I'll never forget that particular experience.

The truth is, this is a military camp. And this summer, whether you like the terminology or not, or whatever you may decide to do here, it is going to be and is a military camp. Why? Because every follower of Christ is referred to in the New Testament as a soldier of Jesus Christ.

So if some who come here are believers, and I believe many who come here are believers, according to the Bible, they are soldiers of Jesus Christ. And this emphasis of the believer as a soldier is greatly, greatly neglected in the Church today. I don't know if you've ever read that little poem based on armored Christian soldiers, that's reworded, backward Christian soldiers.

I won't read it now. I think it's in my first book. I find it a little depressing, and perhaps it's too cynical.

You remember, Paul, when 40 men signed a pledge that they would not eat until he was dead? Once he got back home to Birkenhead, Liverpool, a couple of days' time, there's a little note waiting for you, signed by 40 of the people in your neighborhood. We hate you, and we are not going to eat until you're dead. You'd probably think it was a practical joke.

But what if you knew, in the light of your ability to stir up hatred, what if you knew that this wasn't a practical joke, this was for real? How would you emotionally handle that? No doubt you'd probably write and sign up to come on Operation Mobilization and live in London. Or China. You know, when we read these things in the New Testament, because it's so unreal to where most of us are living, we actually relegate it to evangelical fantasy.

We don't really believe that people are going to live this way. We don't really believe there's actually a war going on. We don't really believe there are actually weapons, and there are minefields, and there are enemies.

And so we create a Christian fantasy, and we teach it on the flannel graph to the children at Sunday school. You know, David and Goliath, that's a great story. And we have the little flannel graph figures, David with his sling, knocking Goliath out.

All the little boys and girls sit there at Sunday school. And sometimes, when we're involved in teaching Sunday school, we are telling those children that which is in no way a reality in our own lives. And that is one of the greatest dangers for this camp.

That you will be mouthing off to all these young people, you leaders, you responsible people, that which is in no way a reality in your own lives. You may have a little Bible study on prayer. The importance of prayer, how to pray.

We all should have our quiet time. If you have your quiet time, you're going to grow. If you pray, you're going to be able to accomplish great things.

But can you say that that's a reality in your life? Are you going to be teaching that from experience in front line spiritual combat, or are you going to just be repeating something that you've heard from somewhere else? Keep your place in Ephesians 6, and look at 2 Corinthians chapter 5. 2 Corinthians chapter, I mean, chapter 10, verse 5. Let's read it in its context, starting at verse 3. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare, there it is, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. Total war, casting down imagination, and every eye thing that exalts of itself against the knowledge of God, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

If there's something that the Church has run away from, I believe it is the emphasis on us being soldiers of Jesus Christ. From my understanding, there's a famous holiday camp where quite a few people have wanted George Burwer to come and speak, but as they met and discussed it, they decided it really wasn't appropriate for a holiday camp. People would feel unease if a message of discipleship and spiritual warfare was given at a holiday camp, as if somehow it would be impossible for a Christian to be a soldier and also to relax.

Actually, the contrary is true, that if you're going to be a real soldier, you better know how to relax, because you're a human being and you're going to pop if you just think every minute you can be in one of the more intensive aspects of the Christian warfare. Probably for some of you, the last couple of hours going on the doors is a bit intensive. God doesn't expect you to do that 15 hours a day.

Even in O.M. where some of our teams, only some of our teams, specialize in that kind of work, the maximum they usually can be in front line, face-to-face, door-to-door evangelism is five or six hours a day. Maybe in the evening they would then revisit contacts in a little easier situation. They would have a previous invitation.

That's a little easier than going what we call cold turkey, banging on doors. I've been banging on doors even before my conversion. I was selling things before I was a Christian.

In fact, before the Boy Scouts in America, we had the Cub Scouts. I don't know if you had that over here. What did you have before the Boy Scouts? Cub Scouts.

We sold, for Easter, Easter candy. I went campaigning selling Easter eggs. Then I think I sold flowers.

Before that, when I was about seven, I sold raffle tickets door-to-door. I had my own little raffle set up. I got my mother to bake cakes.

Then I raffled off the cakes. Of course, it was 100 percent profit since my mother paid for the cake. But despite that experience, before I was a Christian, after I became a Christian, going door-to-door with Christian books and witnessing, I always found there was a certain inertia to break through.

There was a certain spiritual law of gravity I had to break through. If you can learn that, you can get the victory in this area of evangelism and witness. Because getting started and getting going and knocking on the first door is the toughest part of all.

I find that variety often has helped me in evangelism. Sometimes if I just don't feel up to banging on people's doors, I go to a park. I actually prefer myself to go to where people are just casually sitting around and just strike up a conversation or give out a piece of literature or say something.

But if we are going to obey the Scriptures in this strong exhortation about evangelism, it is going to take a little more emphasis on this aspect of biblical truth. You know, many of our assemblies used to be known for their emphasis on evangelism. It's always going to be open-air.

Open-air preaching was a mark of the assembly ministry, almost as a breaking of bread. Slowly, slowly, this open-air preaching, first of all, became very stereotyped, where people seemed to do it whether anybody listened or not, whether there was any results or not. No one was ready for new methods, and it just became like an old religious relic.

And, of course, then it just disappeared. Maybe that was good. I don't think something should be promoted just because that's the way we did it a hundred years ago.

I believe you still can have effective open-air meetings. We do all the time. The leader of our work in Belgium, a dynamic Belgium, was converted in an open-air meeting in Austin.

And we have open-air ministry in Belgium. But we use drama, we use music. We could have gone down to the beach today and had an open-air meeting.

People would have listened. If there was, you know, maybe a little music, maybe a little drama, something that would catch people's attention. Open-air campaigners have proven again and again that open-air ministry still works.

Some of you are probably involved in beach missions, and you know the effectiveness on the beaches of Britain and a number of different groups that are involved in that. But there are so many different ways we can evangelize. Your home is a great place for evangelism.

Your vehicle, if you believe in picking up hitchhikers, can be a fantastic place for evangelism. But none of it really continues if somewhere along life's road we don't enroll in God's army and say, I'm going to be a soldier. I'm under orders.

I'm going to go when I don't feel like it. I'm going to go because Christ is my captain. God is my general, so to speak.

And he's sending me. We are sent ones. Look at what Paul wrote to Timothy.

2 Timothy chapter 2. 2 Timothy chapter 2. I wish we could read this whole chapter. Verse 3. Now, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that wreath entangleth himself with the affairs of his life that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a camper.

Is that your translation? No. A soldier. And if we are to be obedient to Jesus Christ, to some degree, this camp has to be a military camp.

Training young people how to use the weapons of their spiritual war. Training them how to witness. Training them how to use the shield of faith to stop the fiery darts of the evil one.

I'll talk about that in a few minutes. In some of the very basic things that we've been talking about today. Survival.

How to survive as a guerrilla soldier in enemy territory. Because we are a minority. Let's face it.

Evangelical Bible-believing Christians in Princeton. We're a minority. The encyclopedia says that.

And I was talking to a believer in that town next to Smithville. I forget the pronunciation. Well, I never could pronounce that town.

What was the brother who took me there? What was the name of the place? And I met a lady there who was actually very familiar with your camps. And she used to come here on Sunday mornings. But now she's involved in the church there.

I think she originally, I think it was the emergency side, no? And she said that actually in those towns, we actually did meet her. Yeah, a little down on the other end. Very few believers in this town.

She hasn't met yet. But here we are. Wales is a mission field.

God has put your camp in Wales. It's not primarily to play games. It's not primarily that you can all come here and have a wonderful, relaxing summer.

There's another purpose to it. And I believe one of those purposes is that you may make an impact for Jesus Christ in this needy, pagan part of the British Isles. That's not easy because the Welsh people don't like the English.

And it's going to take cross-cultural communication. Have you ever met an English person who learned Welsh in order to reach into Wales with a gospel? I'm sure there have been some, but I haven't met one yet. But you know, if you go to another country, you've got to learn a language.

And I just believe that God wants to do something here in your camp very, very special this coming summer. That doesn't mean there cannot be relaxation. We're dealing often with very young Christians.

We've got to give them the right dosage with the right balance. And that's all we've been talking about up to now. But to have a Christian in a training program, in any kind of Bible study, in any kind of Christian situation, and not teach him that he's a soldier is to fail to fulfill basic biblical teaching.

And for us, who have historically claimed to believe that we are New Testament churches, and not be involved in militant, aggressive, biblical Book of Acts evangelism, is the height of the ridiculousness. Surely both Darby and Mueller must be turning over in their graves. Well, they can't do that.

They're in heaven. Look, for example, at a few passages in the Book of Acts. Did I read that verse four as well? Or did I only read verse three? I think I read verse four.

2 Timothy 2.4. No man that woth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. Go back now into the Book of Acts. If we didn't have the Book of Acts, we would know very, very little about the early church.

Very little. And that's why I believe the Book of Acts needs to be studied. We don't have much time now, but just take a glimpse at these early apostles.

Remember, most of them were young believers. Most of these people were younger in Christ than many of the young people who come here can be. We're always afraid to give the young people, you know, too heavy a message.

I will tell you, it's easier to give the young people a heavy message than it is to give the older people a heavy message. Don't be afraid of telling these young people what it's all about. Let's not paint a false picture of Christianity.

If you accept Jesus as your Savior, you're going to have peace, you're going to have joy, you're going to go to heaven, and, oh, you're going to have a Christian girlfriend as well, and you'll be totally forgiven, and the Lord will bless you, and, well, we now have doctrine coming in from Texas that tells us also if we follow Jesus with all our heart, we can go from a Ford Escort to a Rolls Royce. Prosperityism. And a lot of gospel preaching, to me, only gives half the story.

It's only half the story. It tells about the blessings, forgiveness, joy, peace, total deliverance from any habits that you don't particularly want anymore. But when I read even the teachings of Jesus, to follow the Master is rough and it's tough.

Jesus said even to a multitude, if any man come after me, let him deny his self. That's the beginning of following Christ. Let him deny his self.

Take up the cross daily and follow me. I think it's unlikely that a person can be converted without denying self, because I believe that repentance, which is part of conversion, is a step in the direction of denying self. And it's unfortunate that so often today we don't preach repentance.

And we brought in an easy believism. Barnhoffer called it cheap grace. And that's why the Lutheran Church did so little to resist Hitler, because they were so caught up with easy believism and cheap grace, and they didn't believe that this grace of God would have a practical revolution in a person's life.

Now, praise God, some Lutherans like Barnhoffer, and it's important for us in Britain to know this bit of history, stood strongly against Hitler. Don't think that all German people went along with that. And many of them died.

And many of them, including Gentiles, were put in those same concentration camps, because they stood firmly against Nazism in that day. I think, personally, young people today, many times, are looking for something that's a little more challenging. When we first came to Britain and started to declare this rather, what some people felt was a heavy, unpopular message, we were amazed at the response.

I was here only three months and had 90 British people launching over to the continent. Some of them have been out there ever since. By the next summer, there were 900 British people, 900.

And I believe young people today, deep down, are dissatisfied with this wishy-washy, sort of lukewarm Christianity. I believe many other young people are dissatisfied with just going to some house group or some church and singing a few choruses and getting a bless-up, and then going the next week and getting another bless-up. I believe there are an increasing number of young people who are hungry for God, who are hungry, hungry for something that's challenging and that's real.

I pray that you'll give it to them. And I pray that your life will be a demonstration of that. Look at these early apostles, these young newborn Christians.

They'd just been out in an evangelistic effort. And they got caught by the local authorities. And they were beaten.

Verse 40, Chapter 5, Acts. Verse 40, Chapter 5. And to Him they agreed. And when they had called the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus.

And then they let them go. Now what did they do? Go back to a committee meeting to research less resistant areas. No.

They departed from the presence of the council, first of all rejoicing they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. That was the first thing. Worthy to suffer shame for His name.

I know sometimes it's not easy to witness. In England, I was giving out some leaflets in my present hometown, Westwick, Kent. And one man, oh, I tell you, when he had the track and he saw what it was, he came back to me.

I don't remember what he said, but it wasn't in my dictionary. And I'd been on a train once. I was dictating a letter, perhaps a little too loud.

And I said, you know, greetings in the name of Jesus or something like that into my little dictaphone. And the man sitting a couple of seats down just started, curse! Now, they're a small percentage, praise the Lord. But you will.

You will if you become a witness and are a witness to the Lord Jesus. You will say. Then what did they do? Verse 42.

Look at that. Daily in the temple and every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. And what happens? There's no chapter divisions in the original Bible.

You go right on and read in those days when the number of disciples was multiplied. That's our goal. I'm sure that's your goal here in this camp.

Not decisions, but disciples. That's why you planned this training weekend, that you may be a little more effective in what you're going to do this summer. Not decisions, but disciples.

How exciting. Think of the testimony of this one brother here who met this blind lady. Bitter, cynical.

Locked her out of her own house for 18 months. Willing to come, even to say she's willing. Even if she doesn't show up, I think you're going to go pick her up and see what happens.

Some people change their minds. But, she's a precious soul. She needs Jesus Christ.

She's no teenager anymore. How old is she? About what? 80. This could be it.

The final chance. And if that brother had faithfully decided to go out and talk, well, I don't want to be overly dramatic, but we are dealing with eternal issues. And personally, I'd rather meet an honest agnostic than a person who claims to believe in heaven and hell and all this that we go around preaching and preaching Sunday after Sunday and very little of it is a burning reality in our own hearts and lives.

It's dishonesty. It's religious game playing. It's politics.

Oh, it frightens me what's going to happen at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. Because the Bible teaches, and we as brethren have been thrown to empathize with that, that Christians will be judged for what they have done in the flesh after conversion. The judgment seat.

Faithful. And the goal is that the Lord will be able to say to us at that time, Well done. That's good.

That's faithful. We can take a lot more time looking at the book of Acts and seeing the compassion, the spiritual yet balanced aggressiveness of those early disciples in shaking the world of that day. Just look at Acts 17.

When the apostle Paul and his team rolled into Bethlehem on Isaac. Acts 17 verse 6. It reads different in different translations. And when they found them not, they drew Satan and certain brethren unto the ruins of the city crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come here also.

Is that the testimony of your assembly? Is that the testimony of your prayer group? Of your witnessing group? Wherever you're living? These that have turned the world upside down. It was the testimony of Darby. It was the testimony of many of those early brethren, like Chaplin and Anthony Norris Gose.

Have you ever read his writings? It's interesting how we don't particularly like the writings of some of our founding fathers. And Anthony Norris Gose's book, called Christian Devotedness, tougher than the book True Discipleship, is pleasantly left out of print and out of circulation. And yet he was the first mission to launch out from the assemblies.

He went to Baghdad, way back when this was being born. Look at an interesting passage of scripture about that. I think it's 1 Corinthians 4. I sometimes get it mixed up.

I got on a little side road here, but it's worth it. 1 Corinthians chapter 4. Yep, that's it. Very strong passage of scripture about the Apostle Paul.

Verse 10. We are fools for Christ's sake. Ye are wise in Christ.

We are weak, but ye are strong. Ye are honorable. We are despised, even unto this present hour.

We both hunger and thirst and are naked and buffeted. We have no dwelling place. And labor, working with our own hands, being reviled, being blessed, being persecuted, we endure it.

Being defamed, we entreat. We are made as the filth of the world and are the out-scouring of all things unto this day. Perfect description of Darwin and Groves.

I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sense I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet had not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me. Isn't it interesting that the Apostle Paul, who we would tend to categorize as a sort of special person. We don't expect the average Christian to be like the Apostle Paul.

We put our great Christian leaders in special categories and relegate them to the flannelgrass. But Paul wouldn't allow that. After giving these strong words, he said, even in his Corinthian church, which was a New Testament church with a lot of problems, including immorality, he said, be ye followers of me.

And as you come to have responsibility in this camp, though you may like to be all very, very spiritual and say, oh well, just follow Jesus. Don't follow me, just follow Jesus. You can't biblically say that.

Because these young Christians are going to follow you. And it is biblical as Christian leaders to be able to, in a particular sense, say, follow me as I follow Christ. Not copy me.

We're not talking about carbon copy. But we're talking about what Paul mentions here. The interesting thing in thinking of our own spiritual roots, is this little verse 15.

For though ye have cancelled instructors in Christ, in the past fifty years, the Brethren movement effectively shifted from evangelism to teaching. And we need teaching. Praise God for every teacher.

But we now have so many teachers. So many teachers. And some of them, what they're teaching, well, I won't get into a big discussion about it right now.

But I'd like to go back to this verse. Probably today in our assemblies worldwide, we may have thousands of teachers. But we don't have many fathers.

And men like Darby and Mueller and Chapman and Groves and others, they were our fathers. And it's good once in a while to look at their lives. To look at their zeal.

To look at the emphasis they had on being a soldier in Jesus Christ. To look at their evangelistic spirit. To look at their pioneer spirit.

Brothers and sisters, we need to see a rebirth of the vision and the compassion and the discipline of the founding fathers of our movement. And if we don't, we will be relegated to the periphery of what God is doing in Britain today. We have many, many teachers.

We can't be carving copies of them. And we're in a different generation. But oh, how much we can learn.

Yes, we're in a spiritual warfare. We're soldiers of Jesus Christ. There's a real enemy, we're told in Corinthians, not to be ignorant of Satan's devices, and therefore we cannot afford to go out at any time without that armor described there in Ephesians chapter 6. As we do go out, we can be sure, as it was in the book of Acts against the Apostle Paul, so it will be against us.

A conspiracy. A conspiracy. Maybe not 40 men who get together and agree that they're not going to eat until you're dead, but there will be other subtle forms of conspiracy.

Have you read C.S. Lewis's amazing book, Screwtape Letters? Oh, his writings are so relevant, even in this day. What are some of the fiery darts that we can expect as we go forward in this great spiritual warfare? And even as we, by God's grace, attempt to be involved in this camp, and to see this camp really used for God's glory, and to see people really coming in to greater reality in their spiritual life, let me just list a few of the fiery darts that you can expect against your own personal life. Number one, the fiery dart is unbelief.

Unbelief. Don't be afraid of doubt. Great faith is not made in the absence of doubt.

It's made as you battle through. And I find that often when I begin to move out in evangelism, my doubts become greater. I'm standing out somewhere in the street, giving out literature, and the devil sort of, you know, buzzes in my ear, you have the audacity to believe these people are lost.

You actually believe you're better than these people. Especially hard when you're out among thousands, surrounded by thousands of Muslims. Did a lot of evangelistic preaching just recently in Pakistan.

I found often I was struggling with doubt. Doubt is normal. It's part of spiritual growth.

Don't be frightened by it. There are answers to the toughest questions. That book, Evidence that Demands a Verdict, more Evidence that Demands a Verdict, I could point out ten other books on that table that will answer some of the hard questions about whether what we're preaching and teaching is really the truth.

We're not a sect. We're not just off in some kind of, you know, religious cult. We have found the basic historical truth that has been passed down since Pentecost.

Beware of the fiery darts of unbelief. And remember that old expression, don't get off the train when it's in the tunnel. I was on a train in Switzerland some time ago.

I've never been in so many tunnels. I didn't have a desire to get out of the train at all when it was in the tunnel. I waited until it came out to the station.

If you're in a dark period, if you're going through doubt, don't do something foolish. Don't do something foolish. Study, pray, get along with God.

The second fiery dart, we're going to have to just bring this to a close, is materialism. We live in a society that is manipulated by materialism. It has become God.

John White's written a book called The Golden Cow. You're in that little book. Wow.

Wow. In many ways, men like Anthony Norris Gould in his day had the strongest anti-materialistic message the church in that day knew. Andrew Murray wrote another similar book.

His book was called Gold. And as all the other Andrew Murray books about prayer and the spiritual life were kept in the print, Gold was left out of print. It is unfortunate that often the church has settled in to the sort of middle class, bourgeois, easygoing crowd with lots of money to put into church buildings, with lots of money to buy nice cars.

And sometimes you can go to a little tiny assembly where they hardly give any money to world missions. And when you look at the cars parked around the assembly where they have this little offering of maybe 50 pounds on Sunday morning, you wonder what in the world has gone wrong. The assembly missions, through echoes of service, is barely keeping up with the debt rate.

Now, praise God, that's not the total picture of Brethren missionary work. Because Brethren young people go out with OM, they go out with other groups, some go out just from their own assembly, are not listed in echoes. You know, everything the Brethren do is always a controversy.

You never get Brethren assembly's degree on anything. But the fact is that we are not, we are not seeing very many. And I was looking at all the retired missionaries in the back of the echoes book just a couple days ago, on the way here.

Amazing number of retired missionaries. I wrote to one of them. My heart really went out to all these great soldiers who are in retirement, and many of them are still serving the Lord.

It would be a tremendous thing if you could sponsor a project here in the camp, this center. I'd be happy to. Pray with you about it.

To do something from this camp to encourage all those retired missionaries around here. Maybe cost a 15-pence postage stamp. Think about it.

Who's going to take their place? Who's going to take their place? It's a challenge. And I think one of the reasons so many are not going is the pressure of materialism. We find more young people want to go than churches and assembly want to send.

And oftentimes they're not really honest. They're saying, well, we don't really believe this brother is ready. We don't believe he's really gifted enough.

We don't believe he's really called to missionary work. What they really mean is we don't have any money to commend him and support him. It always encourages me when people speak with honesty and simply say, well, it might be good if he did go.

Praise the Lord, but we don't have any money here. We certainly can't support him. Praise the Lord.

If the Holy Spirit hadn't raised up alternative ways to see God's workers supported, I just don't know where we'd be. And you know the alternative that George Mueller emphasized. It's one we've sort of forgotten about, you know.

Believing God. Believing God could supply money. Do you think God could do that? My, oh my, we've drifted a long way.

We've drifted a long way from what it once stood for. We had many teachers, but we've forgotten what our fathers had said. And materialism has cost us our true spirituality in place after place.

Beware of it, because the enemy will use it against you personally. Thirdly, impurity. Paul wrote Timothy and he said, flee you full of lust.

I had a struggle with this. Can you believe it? This afternoon. I was giving out tracts and there was a woman I could see from a distance who didn't have any clothing on, from here on.

And of course there was that temptation just, you know, little eye gate exercise. Somehow I thought, you know, I'm going to give a tract to her husband. I mean, you know, I was giving tracts.

And I was coming right by there and I just, I just, you know, I gave a tract to the husband and just walked away. Now maybe you think that's puritanical. Maybe you think it's pharisaical.

But I personally believe that if there's going to be a ministry to nude women, then I'm going to let the sisters handle that ministry. I'll take the nude men and you can take the nude women. But don't let me project my problems on you.

Thank the Lord for that little victory this afternoon. Impurity seems to come from every side, doesn't it? You're sitting late at night, you feel well, I just want to relax, put my feet up, you turn the television on, and within ten minutes, there are people having sex right in your living room. And now we're told by this generation, what's wrong with looking at that? Do you really think that's God's will, that we sit watching other people have sex on television? You really think that can be justified in the name of art? Personally, I

don't.

And I think we should have more hatred and righteous indignation for that which is being pumped through our TV screen and write a few letters once in a while and turn it off or walk out of the room. Impurity, of course, is far more subtle than that. Far more immorality than I have to be involved in counseling comes between two Christians.

It all started quite platonic, just nice feelings. There was no big, heavy sexual overtones until a few months later when the mood changed and the weather changed. And then what started as a purely platonic friendship, and there's nothing wrong with platonic friendship between boys and men, men and women, boys and girls.

And we know the ancient Phariseeism and Puritanicalism of yesteryear did not necessarily produce a dynamic generation. It's an area where we need balance. But we need wisdom and discernment each step of the way.

I wonder if there's anybody here who's involved somewhat in depth with an unconverted person in a social relationship. And you're going to come into this camp to counsel young people about relationships, about not being unequally yoked. And yet you yourself have a relationship that's not really God's way.

It's only something you can decide. But how my heart breaks when I meet men and women who in a weaker moment of their spiritual life got into an unequal yoke and are now paying heavily for it. The fourth fiery dart is extremism.

I've written here, convictions without love turn to bitterness. I'm a man that discovered over the years I have too many convictions, especially about small things. I think this is part of our American culture.

Or maybe we copied it initially from Britain. But we get so many convictions. You meet people in the States who have deep convictions about vitamins.

Vitamins, I think you say. Everybody must be taking vitamins. And wherever you go around the States people are laying some heavy finger on you about this, about that.

All these different convictions. You have a group now, they won't drink any water directly from the fossil. It must all go through a purifier.

And they're on a crusade against impure water that comes out of the fossil, out of the tank. Incredible! And there seems to be every form of extremism. And people get very, very strong convictions about minor issues and ten years later they're almost always bitter.

Bitter against the church. Bitter against others. We get something that we're crusading on.

We're crusading on. And I hope you won't leave here as some kind of extremist crusader taking some little thing out of context that we've said in these days. That's not the way to do it.

It takes time to build a spiritual foundation. Another fiery dart is the fiery dart of humanistic ideas. We're bombarded by humanism.

We're so bombarded by humanism we're not sure anymore what's what. What's coming from the Bible? What's coming from the church? What's humanistic? Praise God for the message of Dr. Francis

Schaeffer. You may not agree with all of it.

But it's a needed word in our day. Humanism. False ideas.

Every form of compromise is coming on us from every direction. Sixthly, the fiery dart of ignorance. And seventh, the fiery dart of laziness.

Eighth, the fiery dart of intellectualism. Elitism. Middle classism.

I don't know if you like all my interesting terminology. But our time really is gone. The fiery dart number nine of disunity.

I'll repeat that. Six. Did I have ignorance? Seven, laziness.

Eight, intellectualism. Nine, disunity. Failure to build relationships, which we talked about.

Ten, prayerlessness. Oh my. Praise God for that time of prayer we had yesterday morning.

I pray that somehow, even if they're voluntary sessions, or only a few turn up, we'll not neglect corporate prayer as taught in the Book of Acts. Eleven, the lack of the power and the emphasis of the Holy Spirit. Twelve, bitterness.

Overreaction. This is a great problem in my life. I overreact.

When you have the difficulty, somebody says something to you, heals a bit, overreact. Gets us in a lot of trouble. Thirteen, legalism.

False ideas about sanctification and holiness, judging by outward appearance. Fourteen, perfectionism. I hope you will read Dr. Seaman's Healing for Damaged Emotions.

If you haven't got the money to buy it, borrow it from somebody, put it in your church library. I hope your churches have libraries. So important when people don't always have the money to go out and buy all these great books and cassette tapes.

We have a whole cassette tape library. I'd be happy to provide. It includes many, many of the great Brethren Bible teachers combined with the O.M. Bible teachers.

Because the founder of that library is actually a man from a very interesting Brethren assembly in a place called Flixton over near Manchester. Then fifteen, the good. So often the good becomes enemy of the best.

I've seen that again and again. And sixteen, false motivation. Boy, that's a tough one, isn't it? In my little book, Revolution of Love and Balance, there's incorporated another little booklet called Pseudo-Discipleship.

I've had people read that and decide they weren't even converted. I thought maybe I should withdraw it from print. It is a bit strong.

Got motivation. God is concerned why we do things. But I was reminded by William MacDonald who's written many of those Emmaus correspondence courses.

Correspondence courses are another source of blessing and ministry in my life. And I would commend you to those Emmaus courses. They're right here in this country, not far from here.

You can study them and get so much from the Word of God. But I remember William MacDonald writing to me and saying, look, beware of getting extreme in this area of motives. Sometimes we just have to cast our motives on the Lord, repent of that which isn't right, and then press on and do what we were planning to do, knowing that it is right, and we should do it, even if some false motivation crept in in the process.

Don't throw away the lovely baby with the dirty bathwater. I washed some dishes today there in our little motorhome. And when I was done washing the dishes, I threw away the butter, not the dishes.

I get in real trouble with my wife when I throw away her dishes. We have to deal with false motivation. But some of the things we were planning to do in which there was false motivation still need to be done.

Don't overreact. Get yourself into a more difficult situation. Well, I know this is a hard message for some people, this whole thing of spiritual warfare, being a soldier, enduring hardness, evangelism, being on the attack for God, using the weapons.

We don't like the terminology. You want to know something? I don't like it either. I don't like it either.

And if this message wasn't in the Bible, I'd never preach it again. I'm no natural soldier. I'm a natural coward.

I'm also naturally lazy, and I don't want to get in all my other natural problems which you've already had an overdose of, in dramatic form as well. But if it's in here, then whether I like it or not, that's the way I go. Because I want God's will, and I want God's way, more than anything else in all this world.

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