

Total Commitment

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of total commitment to world missions and the power of prayer in achieving this goal.

Duration: 54:28

Scripture: Matthew 7:14, Matthew 9:35-38, Acts 1:8, Romans 10:13-15

Topics: "Commitment"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of prayer and spiritual growth. He encourages the audience to commit to becoming men and women of prayer and to allow a spiritual revolution to take place in their lives. The speaker also highlights the significance of being sent by God to preach the gospel and the need for action and hard work in addition to prayer. He shares personal stories and examples to illustrate the importance of discipline and serving others. The sermon references Acts 1-8 and Romans 10 to support the message.

Transcript

Let's get to the scriptures. Matthew chapter 9. What's close to the heart of God? World missions. World missions.

Not token commitment, total commitment. The man who's doing the tapes, that's the title. World missions.

Not token commitment, but total commitment. That's why we're in a crash course for 30 or 40 young people who, within a few days, will be launching out on our immigrant work and to Portsmouth and to Bristol, to work with the church in evangelism. That's why a number of the people who are here by September will be with us in the Netherlands for our international intensive training conference to prepare people for the ship, to prepare people for other parts of the world.

Because world missions is a priority in God's thinking. A lot of the things we do are not a priority with God. It's not against them, but they're not a priority.

We build a lot of buildings. There's no scriptural basis for it. I'm not against it, if it's done carefully.

A lot of them that they built years ago and spent a fortune on are now empty. But there's not much in the New Testament about building buildings. It's not actually a biblical priority.

It's where most of God's money goes, especially trying to keep some of these old buildings going. Major, major problem in some of the denominations. But that which is on the heart of God, people.

Saving people, working in their lives. And when we speak about world missions, we're speaking about people. Let's examine the scriptures and see if these things be so.

Matthew chapter 9, verse 35, we have a picture of Jesus going about all the cities and villages. You know, if I lived here, if I moved to the Quinta, I'd set as my goal to reach every village in 50-mile radius, say, in the next five years. I actually did that in Great Britain, back in 1964, after the big campaign in Europe at 62 and 63, when OM was really being born.

And we reached 90,000 villages throughout the continent. I thought, we've got to do this in Britain. I did research on the villages of Britain.

Many of them are pagan. Did you know that? Many of them are pagan. Some of them are even into witchcraft.

Some of them are demonized. Unbelievable things go on in what's described often as the lovely countryside, where people subscribe to Country Life magazine. And I had this great burden for the villages, and I got every single ordinance survey map, and I launched a plan to reach every village.

And you know, we were young. Many of OM's victories have been recorded, but that was one of OM's disasters. The young men who led that program got away from the Lord, a lot of things went wrong, and that program never became a reality.

But I've never lost my burden for Britain's villages, and a lot has happened in the villages since those days, I can assure you. And it's been an inspiration to me to see a lot of new and wonderful things happening. In my short sojourn here in Britain of 23 years, God is on the move in Britain, you better believe that.

New churches are being born. Thousands of people are coming to know Christ. Think of what God did in Sunderland through Billy Graham, and in London through Louise Pallal, what God is doing through video, through television.

More of the gospel is getting on television. A lot of exciting things are happening. Key people in the sports world, key people in the political world, key people in the intellectual world, coming to know Christ.

Scientists, mathematicians, doctors, engineers, agnostics, atheists, coming to know Christ. You say, well, you know, still a minority of people seem to be true Christians. Well, that's what the Bible says.

The Bible says narrow is the way, and few there will be that find it. I remember when the ship Lagos was in London, I had the opportunity to share the gospel with a whole auditorium, the small Lagos auditorium, mainly members of Parliament, and a number of those men already knew Jesus Christ personally. Jesus had a vision for the villages, and so we read, and Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in the synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion, because they were as sheep, they were faint and were scattered, as sheep having no shepherd. Then he said unto his disciples, the harvest truly

is plenteous, but the workers are few. Then what did Jesus say? And this is exciting.

Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labors into his harvest. You know why the young people are here, preparing to go out to the mission field? Because people prayed. Some of you are new to OM.

We are new to this wonderful part of the country. Let me just share how this work was born. I may have done this last time I was here, so I'll make it really short.

A dear woman of God had a vision, not a technicolor stereophonic vision, just in her mind, of a God who answered prayer, and a vision for the local secondary school near her home, and she prayed for that school for 15 years, that people would be converted to Jesus and sent out to the mission fields of the world. She had a phenomenal vision for world missions. She had missionary prayer letters, she had maps, she had all these pictures of missionaries.

You know, one of these women really committed to prayer. I was not a Christian when I went to that high school. Contrary.

I'd been in trouble with the police. I was in perpetual trouble with the principal or the headmaster. At 16, I was a pornoholic.

A lot of other things that I'm not too happy to talk about. Life is fast outside New York City. I didn't live in a fast lane.

I created my own. But this woman was not intimidated by this little loudmouth, and she prayed for me and put me on her hit list. And she sent me a Gospel of John through the post, and I began to read God's Word.

And my grandfather and my father both came from the Netherlands. Stubborn Dutch background. My grandfather was an atheist.

My father was a materialist, who actually was seeking God in a small way, as I was. He would send me off to Sunday school to a nearby church where there was no real content, no real gospel being preached. So I became somewhat religious, became president of the youth fellowship, assistant to the pastor, taught the kids how to dance, a few other things.

But I didn't know that it was necessary to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. I saw, I thought religion was sort of like this, like the suit coat that I put on on Sunday. You know, the necktie you put on Sunday.

And you take it off on Monday. By Saturday night, you don't even know it exists. And then Sunday morning, you look for it again.

And a young fellow lived down the street from me. I couldn't stand him. I hated a lot of people.

I was a hostile person. I had my own little gang when I was only eight. He was in the opposing gang.

Couldn't stand him. And he had the courage, nobody ever witnessed to me, but he had the courage to ask me to go to a Billy Graham meeting. He didn't realize I had just picked up at the newsstand where I bought pornography, a magazine about Billy Graham out of curiosity.

And I thought because he played golf and sports, he had a wife, he's probably half normal, maybe there was something to this. And so with the invitation of this young man, I went to hear Billy Graham, the author of this phenomenal book, his picture's on the back. I went to hear him preach in Madison Square Garden, New York City, a skeptic, grandson of an atheist.

And I heard something so powerful, so simple, it completely matched up with what I was reading in that Gospel of John. And I thought in my mind, this is true. God loves me.

God wants to change people. God wants to do something in the world. It is not His will that we're all running around killing each other.

It's not His will that we, you know, are arming ourselves with nuclear bombs that can blow the entire planet into the universe. It's not His will that there's so much hatred and envy and jealousy and immorality. I'd already seen it with my own eyes.

And that Christ was the answer. And that night, I'd done something I'd never even hardly heard of. When He gave an invitation to come to Christ, I got out of my seat and I went up forward and I prayed a prayer.

I don't remember it. I let Jesus Christ come into my life. And I went back to that high school.

Christ had changed my life. Of course, that was to be a long-term program that's still going on. But God had changed my life enough through that night that other students, I had been blacklisted by the teachers.

I was supposed to receive an honor for high marks, but for bad conduct, I was blacklisted and refused that honor. And when my life got changed by Jesus Christ, six months later, even teachers that couldn't stand me took my name off that blacklist. And I was given that little honor, not much.

But Jesus Christ can change our lives. The Holy Spirit is real. He entered me that night when I was born again.

And that has been a reality every single day for 32 years. I've given away now my age. I don't look that old, especially if you're sitting way in the back.

That's what my wife says. But God is so real. He's more real than the wood of this pulpit.

And you know, when I go to some of our churches and I see people on Sunday morning with these long tomato sauce faces, I can hardly believe that they know the living God. Jesus Christ is alive. The Holy Spirit is indwelling us as believers.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance. That's self-control. Against such, there's no law.

I've always had a fear of getting in trouble with the law. I guess I first got in trouble when I was about nine, housebreaking or something. I'll never forget, I was there looking through the junk in this house, and the police came up the stairs with a pistol out.

You know, it's always an interesting experience when you're about eight or nine. I blamed it all on my sister. But I've always had this sort of fear of the law.

Praise God, there's no law against bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Unlimited. And I just want to ask you before I go any further tonight.

Are you born again? Do you know Jesus Christ personally? It could be that there may be just one person here. You're like me in religion. You're not like me.

You're a good guy. I was a bad guy. I wasn't in the mafia or anything like that, though they lived up the street.

Probably would have recruited me in a few more years. You may be a good guy. You may be fairly moral.

You don't beat your wife much. You don't lie much. You're not in any big bank robberies.

You know, a little cheating on taxes, but nothing heavy. Religion, you go to church, you may even sing in the choir. But you've never been born again.

You've never been saved by the grace of God. You've got your religious suit coat on. What a wonderful thing.

Tonight, you could be born from above. Maybe somebody listening to this tape. Maybe you're stuck in the motorway in world's biggest traffic jam.

You had no other tape but this one and you put it in. And now you're listening to it and you're getting angry. And especially since the traffic's not moving.

Just pull off to the side of the road right now and let Jesus Christ come into your heart. I speak to more people by tape recording than I do face to face. So, I just throw that in as a bonus for anybody who got the tape.

This woman trained that the Lord of the harvest would send forth workers into the harvest field. And the whole ministry of OM, 37,000 of us who have now been trained in this work, some of us still with it, can be traced back to one persevering, praying, unknown woman. And you know, brothers and sisters, prayer is where the action is.

And we have Billy Jones here tonight. He wouldn't want me to have him stand up. He's from this part of the world originally.

He came on OM. He found himself a dazzling darling wife, one of our best bookkeepers. And Billy Jones is very famous.

He's the first person that is officially retired and that's still alive. Captain Paget retired, captain of the ship, and he soon went on to glory. Billy Jones is supposedly retired, not tired, he doesn't believe in that.

And he's just moved back from America. And I hope some of you are going to get to meet Billy, who was a former boxer and who experienced the grace of God in such a great way. The grace of God is seen in most, if not all, who are here tonight.

We wish we could take time just to share testimonies of what God is doing. Paul and I just met today. We had tea together.

Did you say you were converted in Sunderland? Was that the Billy Graham campaign? People who were at the Billy Graham campaign got excited, met this character, and led him to Jesus and he's praying about going on our ship for a while. Well, there are all kinds of celebrities here. We can't introduce them all.

But if you want to get involved in world missions, you don't have to leave Shropshire. Is that how you say it? I've been working on that for a couple of years. About 20 actually.

I used to drive through here on my way to the beautiful mountains of North Wales when I was in rock climbing many years ago. I gave that up after almost being killed. I don't recommend it.

The Welsh just, they're so wise, the Welsh. They just sit over there and watch the crazy English come across and climb these rocks and get killed. Amazing.

Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he'll send forth labourers into the harvest. How many of you are into that ministry? Be honest. I can't remember the hands.

How many of you are in that ministry? You're praying out workers into the harvest field. Raise your hand. Great.

About 25% of you. The rest of you can start tonight. You don't need a membership card.

You don't need to join OM. All you have to do is say, Lord Jesus, I believe your word. You have told us to pray.

We don't fully understand it. Why does God need us to pray to send out labourers? Somebody said, if God wants to send them, let him send them. He's God.

God has chosen to work through people. I'm reading that great book, Quiet Talks on Prayer by that man Gordon. Great Keswick speaker.

I'm back at Keswick for the third time next summer. It takes him three years to live it down. So I get back every third or fourth year.

George Borowick, Keswick. People can't believe it. But I'm there again next summer at the holiday week.

I've never been out the second week, so some of you ought to come there and see what happens at Keswick next summer. But this man Gordon wrote this book, Quiet Talks on Prayer. And I've been reading that.

And he emphasizes, God in his sovereignty has chosen to work through prayer. It's so exciting. It's so motivating.

No matter where you're living. Some of the OM people who have moved here from the city, they've been wrestling with living out here. They feel a bit detached.

And it's taking them a while to adjust to the air. They're getting killed on fresh air. It's too much for them.

Their eyes have started to open. Their hair is starting to grow again. But through prayer, right here, from Weston Wren, you can touch China.

You can touch the Soviet Union. You can have a ministry in Africa. You can have a ministry in India.

You can have a ministry through our two ships as they move around the world. Prayer is where the action is. Don't be deceived to think otherwise.

Pick up one of those maps of the world, or a set of prayer cards. Sign up for the OM prayer letter, the prayer letter of other mission agencies. Take those prayer requests seriously.

Because that's where the action is. Jesus spent an entire night in prayer. Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

I've been reading a book called The Prayer Life of Jesus Christ. It's an entire book that thick, just about the prayer life of Jesus Christ. Even if you're so-called retired, even if you do eventually develop bad health, you can still pray.

Oswald J. Smith, at 96 years of age, in that nursing home where I visited him, was unable to do anything any longer. He wanted to go home, but he was able to pray. And it's only as we pray we're going to see revival in the church.

It's only as we pray that we're going to see doors open. It's only as we pray that labors are going to go forward into the harvest field. That's God's method.

You know, when God gave us that first ship 15 years ago, I've been having fellowship this evening with a friend of ours who was one of the original engineers on that ship. How well we remember how impossible that situation was. That old ship broke loose from a tugboat coming down from Copenhagen.

Then we get in Rotterdam where we've got tensions and divisions and the engine room looks like it's getting worse every minute. All kinds of different problems. God gave us a message from the book of Nehemiah.

That's a great book to study. How many have never read it's true whether you read it back to front or front to back. Raise your hand.

You just haven't quite made it yet. The Old Testament. It's neglected.

You ought to do that. You read the Old Testament. You read the book of Nehemiah.

You read about Elijah. There on Mount Carmel calling down the fire of God. Seeing those miracles.

In the next chapter he's under a juniper tree wanting to take his own life. The divine factor and the human factor. What a message.

God is calling his people to commitment with balance and that commitment with balance that we spoke about last night is going to lead us into prayer. Why don't we pray more? What are some of the reasons? First of all, I don't think we have a vision. I have too much vision.

I'm an extremist. Forgive me. I've got to cut down on some of my vision because we can't handle it.

We don't have the money. We don't have the people. We don't have the energy.

My wife looked at me the other day and she said, you know, to be honest, just looking at you makes me feel really tired. I've got a beautiful wife. She's really honest with me.

Jesus Christ. She just sat there and said, I'm burned out. So I've been trying to find the balance and slow down and some of my visions, some of my ideas, I just leave them with Jesus.

I say, Lord, if that's your will, give it to someone else and let them run with it because I can't do it. Somebody thought I was going to get a submarine for evangelism in depth. Some time ago, another man wrote to me.

He said, I'd like you to be partners with me. I want to go and get a jumbo jet for Jesus. We know if Jesus can give you a ship, he can give me a jumbo jet.

It's not the same. I can assure you. And Christians aren't always, you know, 100% when it comes to expertise and excellency and repairing things.

And I can tell you when the ship breaks down, it just stops and floats. It's great. But when one of those things breaks down, I can tell you, at 30,000 feet it can spoil your whole day.

So I'm leaving some of my visions for other people. But I will tell you this, really, it's tremendous to have a vision. What do you mean by that? A vision of what God wants to do with the church, with your own fellowship.

With me, that's OM. With my own life. A Christian is a person who knows where he is going.

He may not know every detail. I don't know every detail. But I know my ultimate destination.

It's to reach men. It's to see them converted. It's to see them disciplined.

It's to see churches coming alive. It's to see workers launching out to the harvest field. In turn, it's to see millions of people giving the Word of God.

God gave me this vision, this burden, when I was 18 and 19 years of age. And though it seemed ridiculous, it was laughed at, it seemed impossible, it became a reality very, very slowly. OM has grown very slowly.

You see it now over 25 years later. We didn't get here overnight. We didn't get here through just dreaming dreams.

Hard work, tears, perseverance, repentance, disappointments, broken hearts, that's the ingredient of seeing a vision become a reality. I want you to pray a prayer with me tonight. Lord, increase my vision.

Another reason people don't pray more is because they're not disciplined. They're not disciplined. They don't know how to get out of bed in the morning.

Alan Redpath, that great British preacher who influenced me when he was in Chicago, said the great problem in Britain is blanket victory. Just to get that blanket off in the morning. I know some people have been on OM.

For a couple of years. They still haven't even learned basic AB1. Just get out of bed on time and get with God.

Let me just tell you, those of you who are joining OM this summer, OM produces no instant spirituality. In fact, you can function on OM as a backslider. We don't have any Gestapo program kicking people out.

Eventually, you may fall out. But spirituality is not created by joining a particular church or by going on OM. Spirituality is linked with Jesus Christ reigning and ruling in your heart.

And it frightens me, as I shared last night, the lack of discipline. Getting up in the morning is only one of 25 or 30 disciplines that we have to develop. Discipline in the area of food.

Discipline in the area of what we think. A lot of people waste time on what they're thinking about. They get into worry, they get into depression.

My friend, if you have gone down a particular road in your life, you've gone down Depression Street, you've gone down Worry Alley, you've gone down Fret Lane, you've gone down Anxiety Path. If you've gone down those streets, you know what's down there. Anxiety, depression, whatever.

Why go down again? I'm amazed at this little town of Western Wren, how confusing it is. Especially this one little spot out here where five roads are all coming in. I haven't got out the right road once right.

Just this afternoon, I was trying to get out to the A5 and somehow I made a wrong turn. I ended up way in a giant wilderness and I thought bears were going to come out and devour me. But I am convinced, if you know what's down a road and you know it's depressing, it doesn't edify, it doesn't encourage, then you, as you enter the beginning of that road, slam on the brakes and go the other way.

The highway of hallelujahs, the pathway of praise, the trail of Thanksgiving, whatever. I had the ability to completely depress myself in a couple of minutes if I go down certain roads. That's why old Dr. Lloyd Jones, the writer, author of this book, is controlling the mind.

He emphasized very much the mind. It's not emphasized enough. The mind, controlling by the Spirit of God, by the Word of God, your mind.

You determine what you think. You are not some kind of Freudian clone. And I believe we have the mind of Christ.

And according to Romans 12, 1 and 2, our mind can be renewed. Our mind can be renewed. We can use the Word.

We can use prayer. And I recommend them. Just praise.

Some of them have just praise songs without words. Terrific background music. And I find in my own life, Christian music has been one of the greatest sources in combating some of the struggles that I have in my walk with God.

Discipline covers every area of our life. Discipline with money. I'm amazed.

Sometimes God's people are just impulse buyers. Oh, that would be nice to have. We've already got three of them.

But we can have four. They can sit in a line in the living room. We don't need them.

The Bible talks about forsaking all. The Bible talks about it's more blessed to give than receive. Do you know the reality of that? Praise God for Wellington missionary auctions.

I bet there's some interesting antiques in some of these houses around here. You ever heard of Wellington's missionary auctions? It's down in Surrey. And London and all that.

You know what they've done? They've challenged people to sell their antiques for Jesus. And they have put tens of thousands of pounds into world missions through people selling old chairs. It's too rickety even for people to sit on them anymore.

And it's released tens of thousands of pounds for Jesus. Discipline touches every area of our life. Get this book if you possibly can.

Because it's a book about discipline. And of course if we aren't disciplined in redeeming the time, one man of God said the greatest sin of young people today is simple, it's wasting time. It's not immorality, it's not shooting drugs up your arm.

I don't think that's the major problem for most of the young people here. I don't think most of the young people here are sitting planning and scheming how can I break a bank? Is this a big temptation with any of you? No, the sin today among many Christian young people is wasting time. Time that could be used for prayer.

Time that could be used for the meditation of the Word. Time that could be used in sharing Jesus Christ or just helping someone. I don't believe all witnessing has to do with just talking to people about Jesus.

I believe we're called to serve people. We're called to help people. We're called to stop on the side of the road if someone's having trouble with a puncture.

I was with a friend recently. We came into the airport, we were in a hurry but on the way out, a lady had a puncture right in the middle of the airport road. It was a terrible place to be.

And she was wrestling with putting the tire on and a policeman was watching her. This was in America. A British policeman, I'm sure it would have helped her.

In America, the policeman was just watching her. My friend jammed on the brakes, parked the car, ran over there, changed her tire, put it on in about eight minutes. And I talked with him and for the last number of years he has endlessly directed him to people in distress.

Accidents, punctures, and he has a ministry of just helping people at that crucial moment. And you know, if we go out of here all hyper about talking about Jesus and giving literature and we're not ready to serve, we're not ready to go the extra mile to help somebody, forget a meal maybe to go down to help somebody in difficulty, then it's a contradiction because discipline is one of the most exhilarating processes that God can ever bring into your life. It's not bondage.

Gordon MacDonald, the new president of InterVarsity in North America, who was a pastor for 20 years, has written one of the most amazing books ever in print. I don't think it's gone this far yet. It's called *Ordering Your Private World*.

Made a big dent in me this year. I wish I had had it 20 years ago. I had a similar book.

It helped me a lot. *Ordering Your Private World*. What's it talking about? Discipline.

And it shows that discipline brings freedom. More time to pray. More time to witness.

More time to do other things. That may be part of God's ministry to the human factor in your life. I wish I could give you a whole message on this, but I pray that in your desire to be Christ-like, in your desire to go on for God, to be filled with the Spirit, you'll not deny the human factor.

No matter how committed you are, you are a weak, feeble human being. And I have seen a lot of young people hit the wall because they failed to accept their own limitations. I will tell you, in my life, that was a glorious day when I accepted my limitations.

And I realized how human, how earthy George Verwer really was. And I didn't have to try any longer to be a combination of Billy Graham, Hudson Taylor, A.W. Tozer and Clint Eastwood or E.T. or whoever. I'm just George Verwer.

And I pray that you will realize that God is not trying to destroy your personality. He's not going to change the colors of your eyes when you become closer to Christ. I've been watching Billy Jones.

How many years now, Billy? 22 years at least. He came on OM when he was about 12. And I tell you, I've seen Billy Jones grow in grace, become more Christ-like, get married.

That's God's graduate school. But I can tell you, when I was here tonight, I wondered if you'd make a commitment to become a man or a woman of prayer. I wonder if you would be willing to let somehow a spiritual revolution take place in some of these areas.

Vision. Discipline. Really getting down to business with God.

I believe the world would feel the impact of the decision that you make in this meeting tonight. Turn with me now for another passage of Scripture. I've got a four-hour journey tonight, so I'm not going to go long.

But I want to just share Romans 10 and bring this to a close. I think most of us know Acts 1-8. Maybe we'll just stop.

On the way to Romans, just stop at Acts 1-8, just in case you missed that. I'm going to be up there tomorrow night with Viv Thomas. Is that in here as well? That's up at the top.

Up in the lodge. And if you're free, you can go up there. Viv Thomas was an Elam pastor for many years, a great man of God.

He's been out in India and Pakistan. And he is going to be ministering up there tomorrow night at about 7.30. So if you're free, go up there and get your passports. Mark them well.

Let them be burned into your heart by a laser beam of God's love. But ye shall receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. You'll never understand, O Em, the burden and vision that God has put on our heart.

The reason we have this British headquarters helping to coordinate over 300 full-time British people Seldom in missions and missionary history have so few been responsible for so many involved in missionary work. You read missionary history, you'll discover that's true. And I'd like to take a moment to thank every one of you from this area who have helped us settle in here and have shown your love.

We are not some great band of apostolic whatever, we're learners. And we need your prayers and we need your love and we need your forgiveness as we battle on, trying to do way, way too much oftentimes. But it's because we believe, this is the word of God, it's because we believe Jesus meant what he said, ye shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth.

And you'll never understand what it's all about if you don't understand Acts 1A. We live and breathe these words of our Lord Jesus Christ. There's not a day with many of us, not a day that passes when we don't think of the past, the fields, the needs, the barriers, the obstacles.

Seldom a day would pass in many of our lives in which we don't give ourselves for maybe fifteen minutes or an hour or maybe five hours of intercessory prayer. At our summer nights of prayer, we had to chase the young people to sleep at three in the morning. They didn't want to go.

We said, you've got to go because we've got to have you up tomorrow morning at seven thirty for the next session. What a privilege it is to work with energetic young people. I'll tell you a greater privilege, working with energetic older ones.

God is no respecter of persons and if you can show me one verse in the New Testament about retirement, as far as retirement from loving, serving, praying, and doing God's work, I'll give you a hundred books. I'm always careful about what I say. And then Romans chapter ten, Romans chapter ten.

We read so clearly here in God's Word that men are saved through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse thirteen, For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him? Verse fourteen, Whom they have not believed.

How shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? How shall they hear without a preacher? How shall they preach except they be sent as it is written? How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things. Would you circle one little word there? Sent. How shall they preach except they be sent? We've spoken largely tonight, though we've touched on many things, about the ministry of prayer, a ministry that every believer should have.

And there's some powerful books that can follow up and tapes on what we've talked about. But as we pray, God is going to lead us to get more and more involved. Prayer is not a cop-out.

Prayer is an open door to hard work, to action. Many times when we have a missionary meeting, the emphasis is on go. But I want to bring this final emphasis tonight on send.

Because if more people don't get a vision to send, many sincere young people who want to go, they will not go. God does not bypass His church. In our very early history, we thought maybe sometimes God bypasses the church.

He doesn't really. And He doesn't bypass people. And there are more British young people today who are willing and open to becoming missionaries than there are sending churches or individuals who are willing to financially support them and send them forth.

It has been the greatest heartbreak of 25 years living in Europe. And for a long time, I didn't fully grasp what it was all about. I thought if we just pray more, if we just fast more, if we just repent more.

I always knew that God's people are involved. I preached that for a quarter of a century. But I didn't understand just how important the ministry of sending people were.

Have you seen that new book, *Relatively Ten Sending Churches*? You can order it if it's not on the book table. We need that kind of church. And I don't know how many churches are represented here tonight.

I know there are some ministers here. But I would beg of you, in the name of Jesus, on the basis of His word, make your church a sending church. Unless we see the Spirit of God and God's people raised up to be some senders, as it was in Acts chapter 12, where they prayed and sent people off into the mission field.

In that case, it was Paul and Barnabas. Unless we see that repeating itself again and again, from London to Glasgow, then the task will never be done. And listen.

Every Christian who disobeys God in regard to the Great Commission, the teaching about prayer, the teaching about evangelism, the teaching about the regions beyond, every Christian who disobeys or who remains lukewarm is a vote of confidence in favor of the evil one. That's right. There's no neutrality with God.

You're either with your hands on the plow, praying, giving, working, spreading the vision, loving others, or you are hindering. There is no neutral ground. Lukewarmness, according to Revelation chapter 3, is an abomination.

Be ye hot or be ye cold, the Lord Jesus said. For if you are lukewarm, I will spill you out of my mouth. One of the most frightening verses in the whole of the Bible.

This is why I believe every Christian should know the ongoing experience of being filled with God's Spirit. Sometimes we overreact to extremism in the area of the things of the Spirit. We overreact to that and we end up in the deep freeze of that orthodoxy.

Is there no middle ground? Do we think that the fullness of the Holy Spirit is just for a few people who stay up late at night or who go to special conventions where they have big power bands that can turn people on? The fullness of the Spirit is for every believer. It doesn't work out in everybody in the same way. We're all different emotionally, mentally.

We're all different in terms of the gifts that God gives. Roy Heshin, who was ministering here last week, I hope you didn't miss him, he wrote a book called *The Filled Now*. Beautiful.

God's privilege for every Christian to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And if you're not filled with the Holy Spirit, right now you could pray in your heart, Lord Jesus, I love you. I'm not sure if I'm filled, but I love you and I want you to fill me afresh with your Spirit.

I often pray it in the morning. I often pray it when I run. I got up early this morning and ran to the top of the hill here.

Beautiful. Listening to the Word of God. I went through almost the whole book of Romans on cassette tape before I got to the hill and back.

And I often pray, Lord, today fill me with the Holy Spirit. Last week isn't going to carry me through today. It may help.

It can lay a foundation. There may be an initial crisis when you first get started in Spirit-filled living and commitment and reality and the crucified life. But it's an ongoing process.

And it breaks my heart when I meet so many people who tell me about a crisis they had with God ten years ago. Or five years ago when the Lord filled them with the Spirit. Or ten years ago when they had a great experience at Keswick.

Or five years ago when they went forward at Filey. And I say, but brother, my sister, where are you now? They say, well, I don't know, somewhere I lost it. Somewhere this went wrong.

And I tried to do this in my church and, well, some people threw cold water on it. Well, I shared this with my husband and he thought I was a fanatic. Well, I went on OM for a one-month summer campaign.

Well, my team leader, he was a tyrant. I got discouraged. I've been lukewarm ever since.

We've played right into the hand of the devil. I don't believe in discouragement. I fight it almost every day.

I don't believe in it. I don't believe in drinking poison. I don't believe in swallowing bullets.

I don't believe in wrestling with bulls. I don't believe in jumping out of airplanes without parachutes. I don't believe in diving through stained glass windows.

A lot of things, I'm just not into it. You can talk to me about it, I'm not going to do it. My faith is built on a combination of dynamic faith that I read about in the Word of God and down-to-earth common sense.

And without that combination, I'll tell you there would be no ship ministry. And one of the greatest pieces of common sense I could ever share with you is don't tolerate discouragement. Spit at it, growl at it, attack it, hit it with the Bible, hit it with praise, hit it with Thanksgiving, run away from it, dive over it, dig underneath it, blow it out.

But don't tolerate discouragement because as you tolerate a little bit, like a fungus, it grows. And you tolerate a little more and it grows more. And then it sprouts roots.

One root's bitterness, another root's pride, another root's self-pity. Ever been in the self-pity puddle? Oh, nobody understands me. Here I am working so hard.

This spreads through OM, especially around January. Here I'm working so hard, nobody understands me. Most everybody else around here is lazy.

And I can tell you when we get that attitude, there are three cheers in hell. God wants you and me to live every day in personal revival. Jesus reigning and ruling in our hearts, not in the absence of tears and struggles and failures and battles with discouragement, but through it, as we stand on the promises, as we become spiritually stubborn.

What do we read about in 1 Corinthians 15-58? Be ye steadfast. That's spiritual stubbornness. Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Stickability, tenacity. Do you have any of that? That's what God wants to develop in all of us in the coming weeks. And we've got a whole book full of biblical principles on how we can develop this kind of life.

And I could give you thousands of examples from history. I have to do some writing down and some more research, but I know they're there. Of men and women who have followed this way.

They said, my Jesus, I follow you. Come what may. Hell or high water, I follow you.

Each day I will seek your face afresh. Each day I will be filled afresh with your Holy Spirit. Each day, consciously or unconsciously, I will deny self and take up a cross and follow you.

And when I fail, as it says in 1 John 2 verse 1, I will confess my sin. And I know you will forgive me and cleanse me and raise me up again. What a great life we have been called to.

Disciples of Jesus Christ. Kings and priests. Friends of God.

Ambassadors. Imagine if you got a phone call tomorrow from a prime minister. She said she wanted you to be the British ambassador to the United Nations.

Or the British ambassador to the United States. Pretty good salary goes with that as well. Some of you probably would be quite overwhelmed.

We are ambassadors of Jesus Christ. I will tell you. Young people, as you go out into the streets next week, don't go out cowering, shaking.

I've got a gospel track. Could you take this track? You are an ambassador for Jesus Christ. You may not want to emphasize that openly on the doors each time.

You know, you knock on the door. A little old lady comes. I'm an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

You know, God wants us to exercise wisdom. But in your heart, as you stand on that door, you will know who you are representing. It's not O.M. It's the King of Kings.

Let's pray. Let's just have a moment of silent prayer. I want to give you an opportunity to recommit your life to Jesus Christ.

I know that some of you have done this perhaps a number of times. Maybe you feel that you've been a failure. God works in different ways in different people.

But I want you to make a recommitment of your life to Jesus Christ, to ask Him to fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit, and to make a decision that you will be a man or woman of prayer. That's my invitation. That means daily death to self.

It means a constant, ongoing commitment to Him. It's not an easy road. It means wearing the whole armor of God.

Especially to stop those fiery darts of Satan. Be they discouragement or lust or pride or self-pity or whatever. And if you'll make that deeper commitment of your life to Christ, and believe in your heart, that by His grace you're going forward in the spiritual warfare.

And I'd like you just to quietly where you are, just to stand up and remain where you are. And I want to pray for you that this will be real. It's just a step.

We've been talking about a lifetime process. There's no substitute for what you're going to have to do seven days a week. But sometimes there has to be a starting place where you turn away from laziness or pride or spiritual dullness or fog or discouragement or prayerlessness, which we've been dealing with so much tonight.

And by faith you put your hands on the plow afresh and you say, God, by your grace I will not turn back. A fresh liberation, a refilling with the Holy Spirit. Give whatever terminology you want.

But I believe there are some of you who will be helped by making this step of faith an outward expression by standing up of an inward transaction with God. If He's spoken to you and you want to make that outward commitment, then you just do that right now. And I want to pray a prayer of dedication for you.

God bless you, you, you. God bless both of you, you, back, side. God, make this real.

Just pray your own prayer. Thank Him for His cleansing, His love, His grace, and receive fresh His fullness, His Spirit who already indwells you, taking over greater territory in your life. To bring in that vision, that reality in prayer, that discipline in giving and going and doing and being the person you ought to be.

He is able. I made this kind of commitment a number of times in my life as a growing Christian. It wasn't the total answer, but it was one more milestone in my spiritual pilgrimage and I never regretted it.

God bless you. Anyone else before I pray? Many are praying for this little meeting tonight. God is hearing and answering their prayers.

Praise Him. God bless you. Praise Him.

Just a moment more. Some just may have a little struggle. You know God can meet with you right in your seat.

No problem. You don't have to stand, but some of you will be helped by this outward expression of an inward transaction. Not a lot of emotion.

We're not even playing any music. Not against that, but we know this is an act of the will. You're mine.

You choose to follow Him. You choose to renounce those things that are injuring you and to recommit your life to Christ as King. Be filled afresh with His Holy Spirit.

Praise the Lord. Anyone else before I pray this prayer of dedication? God bless you. God bless you.

Wish I could talk with each one of you standing for an hour. I can't, but the Holy Spirit will give you unlimited fellowship. God bless you.

Praise the Lord. May He meet your special need. You know a verse just comes to my mind.

Casting every care upon Him, He cares for you. That verse has helped me so long. I start to get under the burden of worries, my inadequacy, my fears.

Casting every care upon Him, He cares for you. Hallelujah. Anyone else? Praise the Lord.

Father, you see each person standing before you. We are weak, feeble, very human beings. We accept our humanity tonight.

We're not frightened by it. Some of us are quiet. Some of us are not so quiet.

Some of us have too much energy. Some don't have enough energy. We accept ourselves, but more than that, we receive your grace and your forgiveness in our hearts tonight.

To be the men and women you want us to be, to go where you want us to go. Oh, living God, fill us afresh. Cleanse out the cobwebs of unbelief.

Cleanse out the sewerage of pride. Cleanse out the old and bring in the new with a mighty flood into our hearts. We thank you, our blessed Lord.

We praise you, and we receive by faith that which you have for us, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Let's all stand and let's sing that chorus together.

He is Lord. I don't know if our musicians can rush up here, grab these guitars, and lead us in that chorus. He is Lord.

He is Lord. He is risen from the dead. He is Lord.

Every knee shall bow. Every tongue confess. He is Lord.

Everybody, with all our hearts. He is Lord. He shall come.

Father, you know each one of us now. Help us to contemplate the decision we've made to refuse any subtle intimidations that may come, even through something that may happen this very night. To be able to fall asleep with our head on that pillow, knowing that we are in your grace, we are in your love, and you have a hold upon us in a miraculous way because of Calvary.

Lead us now, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen.

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