

The Basic Sin: Unbelief



Faith To Live By (Day 19)
by Derek Prince

The primary sin, of which the whole world is guilty, is unbelief. This is the basis of all other sins. In John 16:8, Jesus said that the ministry of the Holy Spirit would be to convict the world concerning three things: "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment." Then, in the next verse, Jesus defined the specific sin of which the Holy Spirit would bring conviction: "Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me." This is the primary sin, of which the whole world is guilty: unbelief.

The writer of Hebrews reminded us that a whole generation of God's people came out of Egypt under Moses, but they never entered the Promised Land because of their unbelief. Instead, they perished in the wilderness. In Hebrews 3:12, the writer applied the tragic lesson that Israel learned to us as Christians:

> "Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God."

Most Christians tend to view unbelief as something regrettable, but comparatively harmless. But we are told here that an unbelieving heart is an evil heart. Unbelief is evil because it causes us to fall away from God. Just as faith establishes a personal relationship with God, so unbelief destroys it. The effects of unbelief are as deadly for us as they were for them. Finally, the writer summed up Israel's failure and stated its cause:

> "And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief." (Hebrews 3:17–19)

These Israelites had been guilty of many sins, including fornication, idolatry, complaining, rebellion, and so on. But the specific sin that kept them from entering their inheritance was unbelief. Unbelief is the source of all other sins.

Devotional
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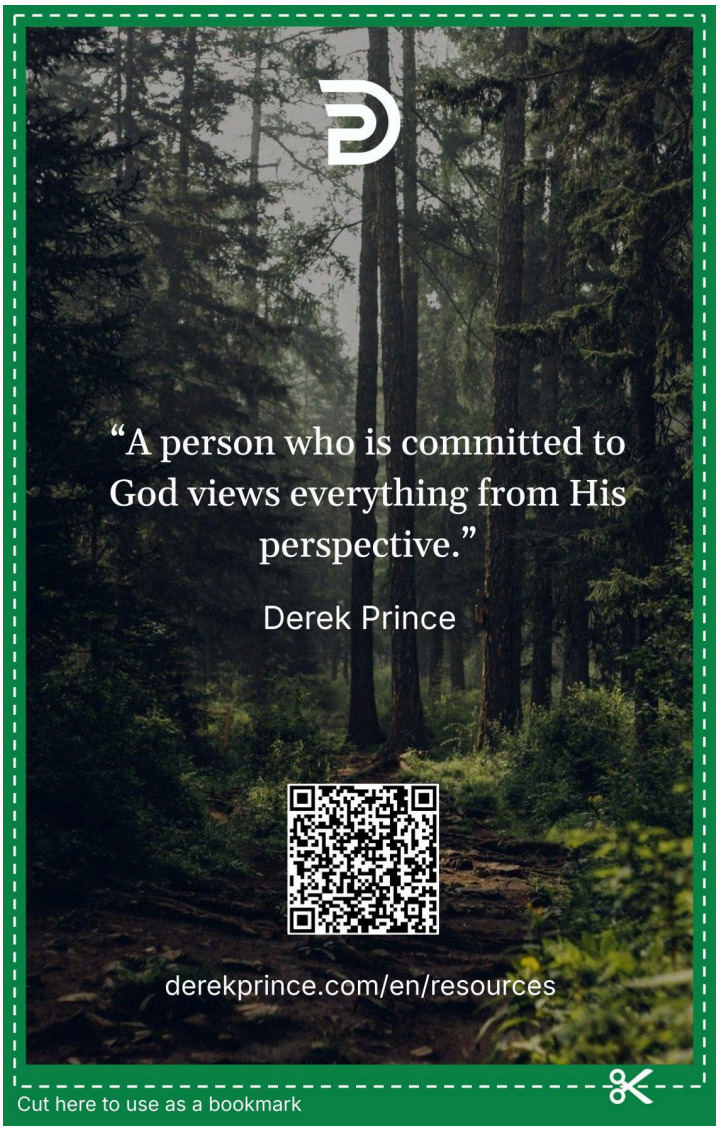
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