

A Discerner Of The Thoughts And Intents Of The Heart



Foundations (Day 24)
by Derek Prince

Yesterday we found that God's Word can produce quite different effects in different people and that these effects are decided by the reactions of those who hear it. For this reason we read in Hebrews 4:12 not merely that God's Word is "alive" and "active," but also that it "is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." In other words, God's Word brings out into the open the inward nature and character of those who hear it and distinguishes sharply between the different types of hearers.

In like manner Paul describes the dividing and revealing character of the gospel.

> "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:18)

There is no difference in the message preached; the message is the same to all men. The difference lies in the reaction of those who hear. For those who react in one way, the message appears to be mere foolishness; for those who react in the opposite way, the message becomes the saving power of God actually experienced in their lives.

This leads us to yet another fact about the Word of God which is stated in that key verse Hebrews 4:12. Not only is the Word of God alive and active; not only is it a discerner or revealer of the thoughts and intents of the heart; it is also "sharper than any two-edged sword." That is, it divides all those who hear into two classes – those who reject it and call it foolishness, and those who receive it and find in it the saving power of God.

It was in this sense that Christ said:

> "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her

mother-in-law'" (Matt. 10:34-35)

The sword which Christ came to send upon earth is that which John saw proceeding out of Christ's mouth – the sharp, two-edged sword of God's Word (see Rev. 1:16). This sword, as it goes forth through the earth, divides even between members of the same household, severing the closest of earthly bonds, its effect determined by the response of each individual.

Devotional

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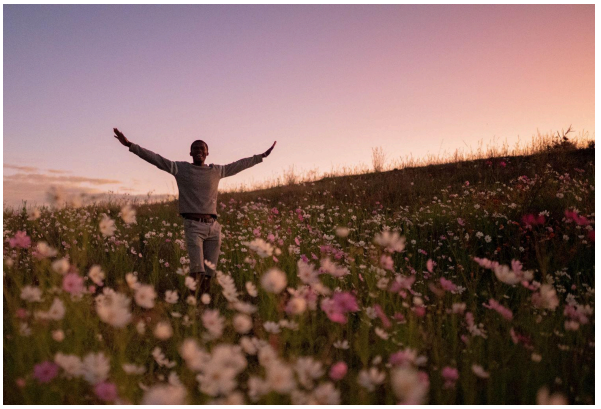

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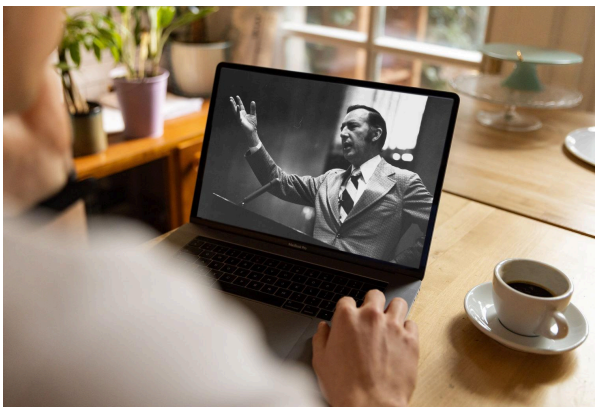

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