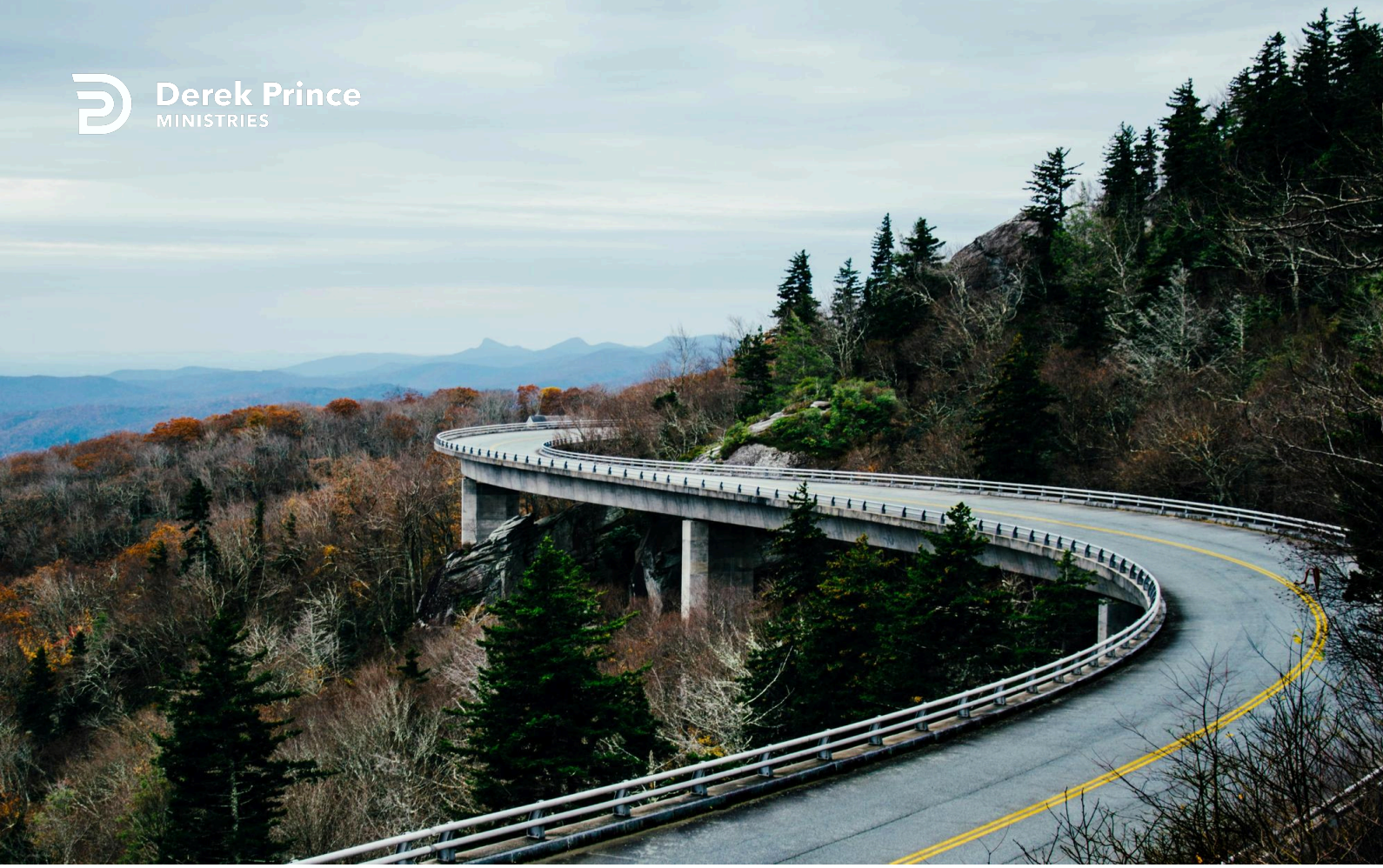

The Spirit Of Faith



Foundations (Day 90)
by Derek Prince

If salvation is not by works but is solely by faith, we may naturally ask, What part, then, do works play in the life of the Christian believer? The clearest answer to this in the New Testament is given by James.

> "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?... For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (2:14; 26)

In this passage James gives several examples to illustrate the connection between faith and works. However, it is in the last verse, verse 26, that James sums up his teaching about the connection between faith and works by the example of the relationship between the body and the spirit. He says, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

This reference to the spirit, in connection with faith, provides the key to understanding how faith operates in the life of the believer.

In week 10 on "The Nature of Faith" we referred to the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:13.

> "But since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak."

Here Paul states that true, scriptural faith is something spiritual – it is the spirit of faith. Through this we are able to understand James's example of the body and the spirit.

In the natural order, so long as a man is alive, his spirit dwells within his body. Every action of the man's body is an expression of his spirit within him. Thus, the actual existence and character of the spirit within the man, though invisible, are clearly revealed through the behaviour and the actions of the man's body.

When the spirit finally leaves the man's body, the body ceases from all its actions and becomes lifeless. The lifeless inactivity of the body indicates that the spirit no longer dwells

within.

So it is with the spirit of faith within the true Christian. This spirit of faith is alive and active. It brings down the very life of God Himself, in Christ, to dwell within the believer's heart.

This life of God within the believer takes control of his whole nature – his desires, his thoughts, his words, his actions. The believer begins to think, speak and act in an entirely new way – a way that is totally different from what he would have done previously. He says and does things which he neither could nor would have done before the life of God came in, through faith, to take control of him. His new way of living – his new "works," as James calls it – is the evidence and the expression of the faith within his heart.

But if the outward actions are not manifested in the man's life – his works do not correspond to the faith he professes – this proves there is no real living faith within him.

Devotional

Transcript: WD-B052-090-ENG
Last Updated: 03 Feb 2025
Website: derekprince.com

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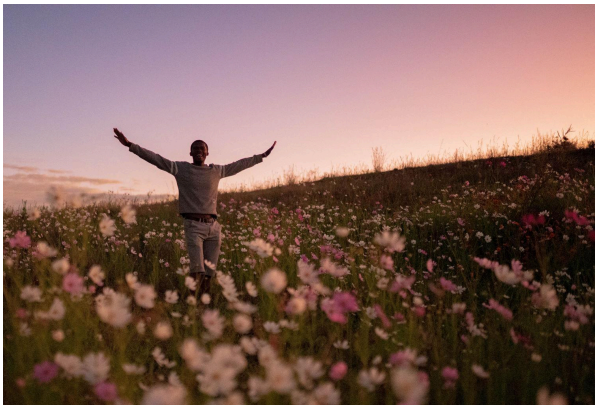

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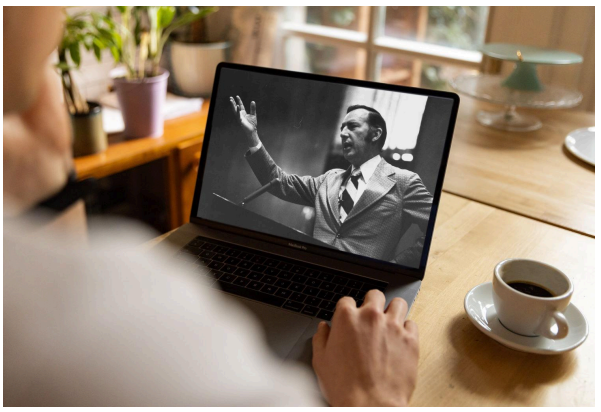

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