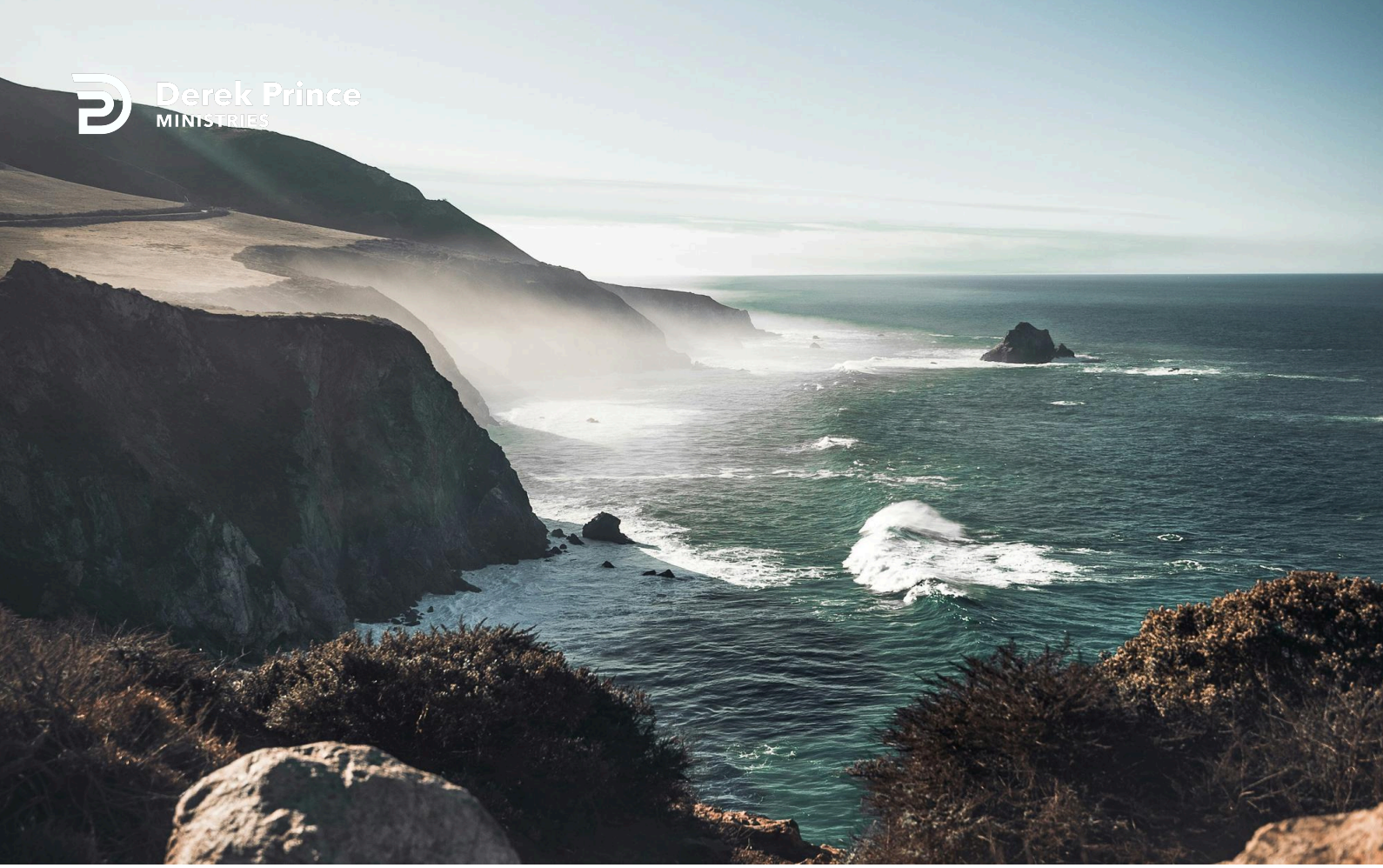


The Promise Fulfilled After Jesus Was Glorified



Foundations (Day 164)
by Derek Prince

The direct connection between the ascension of Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is unfolded in John 7:37-39.

> "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

The first two verses in this passage contain the promise of Jesus Himself, that every thirsty soul who comes to Him in faith will be filled and become a channel for rivers of living water. The last verse of the passage is an explanation of the two previous verses, added by the writer of the Gospel.

In this explanation the writer points out two things:

1. The promise of the rivers of living water refers to the gift of the Holy Spirit.
2. This gift could not be given while Jesus was still on earth in bodily form. It could only be made available to believers after Jesus had been received up to heaven again and entered into His glory at the Father's right hand.

What precisely is meant by saying that the Holy Spirit could not be given at that time? Obviously this does not mean that the Holy Spirit could not in any way be present, or move and work in the earth, until after the ascension of Christ into heaven. On the contrary, as early as the second verse of the Bible we already read of the Holy Spirit at work in the world.

> "And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:2)

From this time onward, throughout the whole of the Old Testament and on into the days of Christ's earthly ministry,

we read continually of the Holy Spirit moving and working in the world at large and more particularly among God's believing people. What, then, was the difference between the way in which the Holy Spirit worked up to the time of Christ's ascension and the gift of the Holy Spirit, which was reserved for Christian believers after Christ's ascension and was first received by the disciples in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost?

Three descriptive words sum up the distinctive features of this gift of the Holy Spirit and distinguish it from all previous operations of the Holy Spirit in the world. These three words are personal, indwelling and permanent. Tomorrow we will briefly consider, in turn, the significance of each of these three features.

Devotional

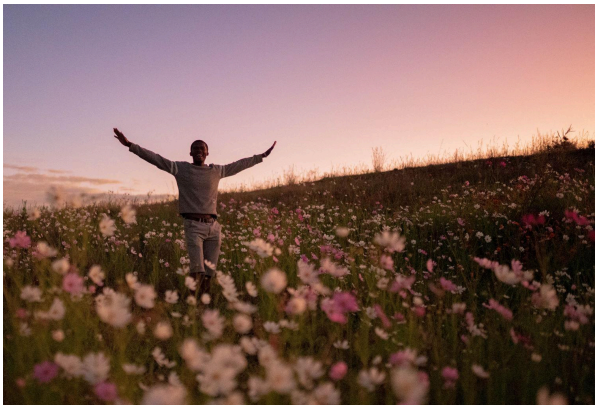
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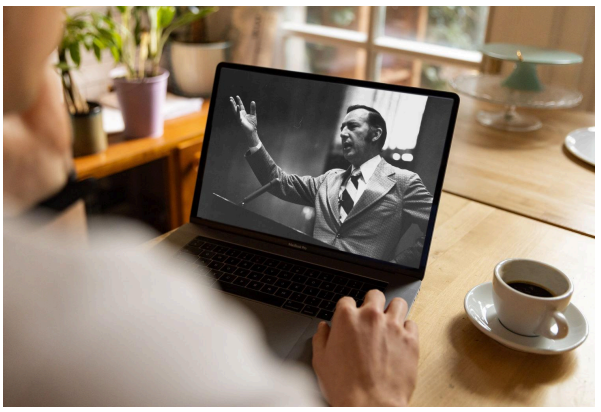
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