

By Grace



Foundations (Day 170)
by Derek Prince

What are the conditions which must be fulfilled in the life of a person who desires to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit? As we consider the teaching of Scripture on this subject, we shall find that there is one basic principle which applies to every provision made for man by the grace of God.

> "And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace." (Rom. 11:6)

In this passage, as elsewhere in his epistles, Paul contrasts the expressions "grace" and "works." By grace Paul means the free, unmerited favour and blessing of God bestowed upon the undeserving, and even upon the ill-deserving. By works Paul means anything that a man may do of his own ability to earn for himself the blessing and favour of God.

Paul states that these two ways of receiving from God are mutually exclusive; they can never be combined. Whatever a man receives from God by grace is not of works; whatever a man receives from God by works is not of grace. Wherever grace operates, works are of no avail; wherever works operate, grace is of no avail.

This leads to the further contrast between grace and law:

> "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:17)

Under the law of Moses men sought to earn the blessing of God by what they did for themselves. Through Jesus Christ the free, unmerited blessing and favour of God are now offered to all men on the basis of what Christ has done on man's behalf. This is grace. All we receive in this way from God through Jesus Christ is by grace; the means by which we receive this grace is not by works but by faith.

> "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)

The basic principle laid down by Paul in this passage can be summed up in three successive phrases: by grace – through faith – not of works. It applies in the receiving of every provision made for man by the grace of God. Specifically, Paul applies the principle to the receiving of the gift of the

Holy Spirit.

> "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law... that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (Gal. 3:13-14)

Paul brings out two important and interrelated facts: 1) The gift of the Holy Spirit is made available to man through the redemptive work of Christ upon the cross; it is part of the total provision made for man by the grace of God through Jesus Christ. 2) This gift, like every other provision of God's grace, is received through faith, not by works.

Devotional

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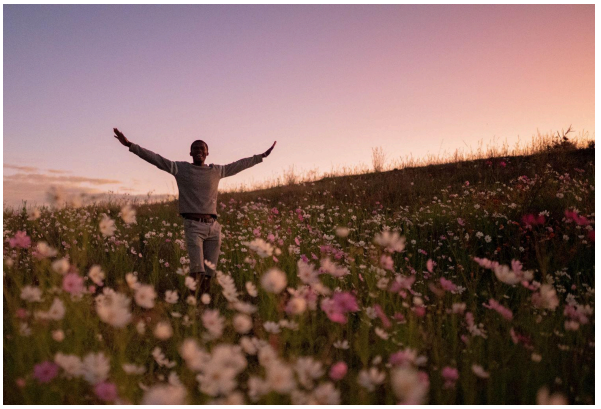

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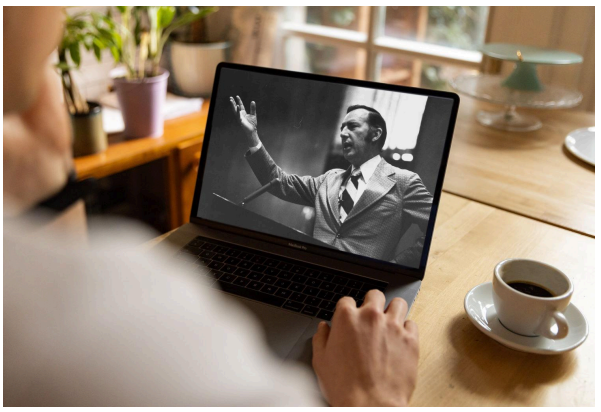

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