

Utilising God's Total Provision



Foundations (Day 187)
by Derek Prince

Yesterday, we've seen that we should put on the whole armour of God, without omitting anything. The same principle applies to the whole of God's provision for the Christian. Epaphras prayed that the Christians at Colosse "may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col. 4:12). In order to stand thus perfect and complete in the fullness of God's will, a Christian must avail himself of all that God has provided for him through Christ. He cannot omit any part of God's total provision and then expect that some other part will serve as a substitute for that which has been omitted.

Yet it is just at this point that so many Christians go astray in their thinking. Consciously or unconsciously they reason that because they know they have availed themselves of some parts of God's provision for them, they do not need to concern themselves about other parts which they have omitted.

For instance, some Christians lay great emphasis upon witnessing by word of mouth but are neglectful about the practical aspects of daily Christian living. Conversely, other Christians are careful about their conduct but fail to witness openly to their friends and neighbours. Each of these types of Christians tends to criticise or despise the other. Yet both alike are at fault. Good Christian living is no substitute for witnessing by word of mouth. On the other hand, witnessing by word of mouth is no substitute for good Christian living. God requires both. The believer who omits either one or the other does not stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Many other similar instances could be quoted. For example, some believers lay great stress on spiritual gifts but neglect spiritual fruit. Others lay all their emphasis on spiritual fruit but display no zeal in seeking spiritual gifts. Paul says:

> "Pursue love [that is, spiritual fruit], and desire spiritual gifts." (1 Cor. 14:1)

In other words, God requires both spiritual gifts and spiritual fruit. Gifts are no substitute for fruit, and fruit is no substitute

for gifts.

Again, in presenting the gospel, there are those who stress only the facts of God's foreknowledge and predestination; others present only those texts which deal with the free response of man's will. Often these two different lines of approach lead to some kind of doctrinal conflict. Yet each by itself is incomplete and even misleading. The total plan of salvation contains room both for God's predestination and for man's free choice. It is wrong to emphasise either to the exclusion of the other.

This same general principle applies also to the baptism in the Holy Spirit. For those believers who sincerely desire to enter into all the fullness of victorious and fruitful Christian living, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the greatest single help that God has provided. But even so, it is no substitute for any of the other main parts of Christian experience or duty.

For example, the baptism in the Spirit is no substitute for regular personal Bible study or for a daily life of consecration and self-denial or for faithful participation in a spiritually minded local church.

Devotional

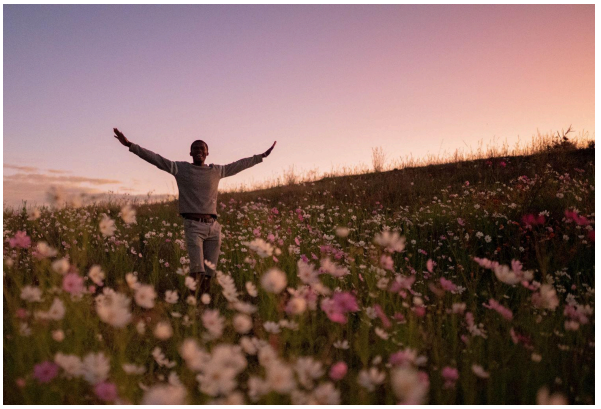
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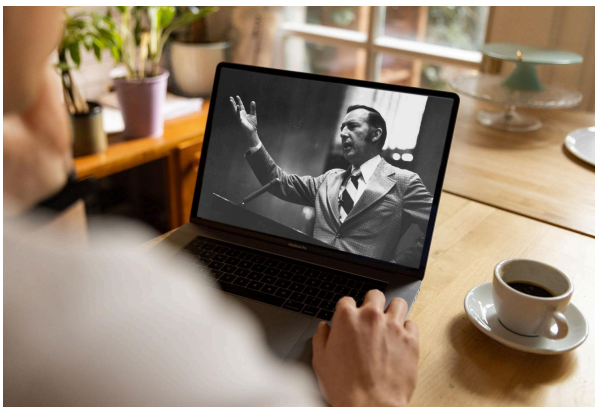
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