

The Danger Of Materialism And Indifference



Foundations (Day 237)
by Derek Prince

Paul gives a prophetic picture in 2 Tim. 3:1-5 of the main moral features which will characterise the human race at the close of the present age.

> "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"

Paul here lists eighteen major moral blemishes that will mar human life and conduct as this age draws to its close. The first two such moral blemishes in his list are "lovers of themselves" and "lovers of money." The last in the list is "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." By the unerring insight of the Holy Spirit, Paul has pointed out three major marks of our contemporary civilisation: "love of self," "love of money," "love of pleasure."

In between these are fifteen other features of moral decline, all of which have been manifested in the twentieth and twenty first centuries more openly and on a larger scale than at any previous period of world history.

Yet the most challenging aspect of this whole situation is that, in the midst of this universal moral decline, there is no absence of religion. After listing these eighteen moral blemishes, Paul adds, "... having a form of godliness, but denying its power."

In other words, the people guilty of these moral sins are not people without religion. They have a form of godliness – a form of religion – but it is a religion in which there is no room for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. As a result,

there is no sensitivity to spiritual things; no awareness of basic spiritual realities; no conviction of sin, righteousness or judgement.

It follows from this that to preach the gospel without the accompanying influence of the Holy Spirit is a totally useless endeavour. It is presenting a remedy to people who have no consciousness of a need; a cure to people who have no consciousness of being sick. The only reaction this can produce is indifference or scorn.

The greatest enemy of evangelistic activity is not communism or false cults. It is materialism and indifference. The only power that can break down this barrier of materialism is the power of the Holy Spirit. “When He [the Holy Spirit] has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement” (John 16:8).

It is not mere preaching that the world needs; it is preaching like that of the early Church – preaching by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Devotional

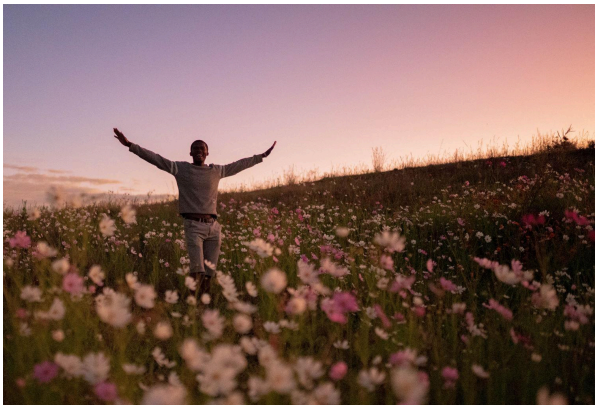
Transcript: WD-B052-237-ENG
Last Updated: 04 Feb 2025
Website: derekprince.com

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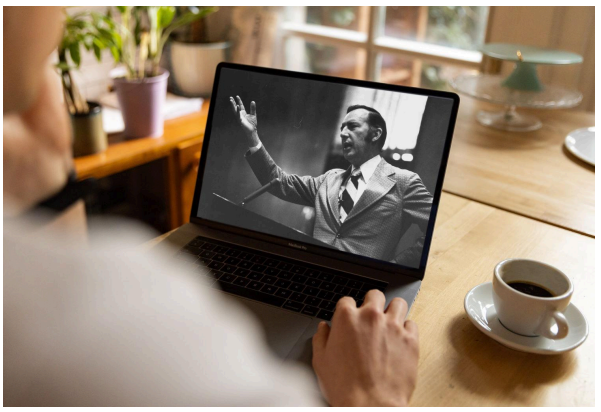
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