

Faith Without Works Is Insincere



Foundations (Day 348)
by Derek Prince

Last week we examined the passage that speaks about the Christian whose works are rejected and burned up in the fire of judgement, yet he himself is saved (see 1 Cor. 3:11-15). On the other hand, in the parables which we have now considered, it appears that the unfaithful servant is not only deprived of any reward, but he himself is rejected and cast out forever from his lord's presence.

This naturally leads us to ask an important question: what is the difference, in God's estimation, of these two cases? Why should it be that, in the case described by Paul, the man's works are rejected but he himself is saved, whereas in the parable of Jesus the unfaithful servant not only loses his reward but is himself also rejected and cast out?

The difference appears to be this. In the case described by Paul, the man actually did try to do something active for his master; in fact, the examples of wood, hay and straw suggest that he did a great deal. However, his work was not of the kind or quality that would stand the test of fire. Yet this activity of his – though misguided and unrewarded – did at least serve to prove that his actual faith in Christ was genuine. For this reason the salvation of his soul was assured even though his works were burned up.

On the other hand, the unfaithful servant with the one talent did nothing at all for his master – either good or bad. This failure to act at all showed that his profession of faith and service was vain and insincere.

> "Faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26)

A faith that does not result in activity of any kind is a dead faith; it is empty, worthless, insincere. Not only does it fail to produce any works of service which can be rewarded; it even fails to secure for the one who professes it the salvation of his own soul. A person who professes faith in Christ without ever seeking to serve Christ actively is a hypocrite.

For this reason, the judgement of such a person is to be cast "into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." A careful examination of passages concerning similar judgements (see Matt. 24:51 and Luke 12:46) shows

that this place of outer darkness, with its weeping and gnashing of teeth, is the place reserved for the hypocrite and the unbeliever. The unfaithful servant who does nothing at all for his master must take his place in this same category; he is in reality a hypocrite and an unbeliever. The place appointed for him is outer darkness.

Devotional

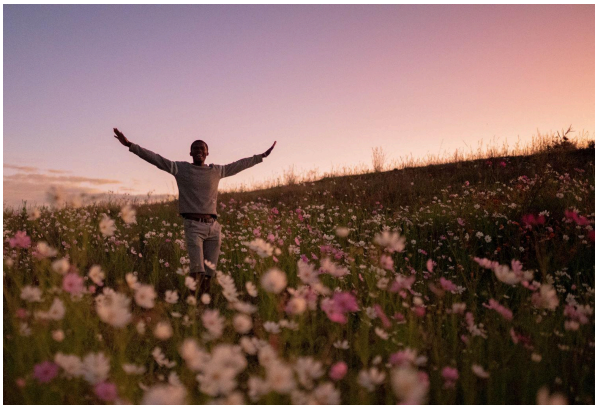
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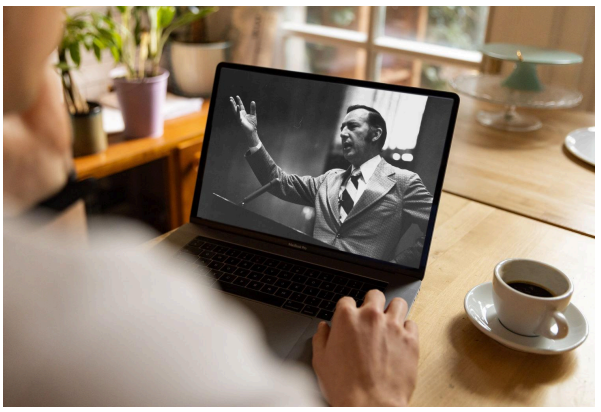
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