

God's Love Cannot Be Earned



The Love Of God (Day 17)
by Derek Prince

Let me suggest to you today that you should never try to earn the love of God. Never look for reasons in yourself because you'll be disappointed. The more you look, the less you'll find. Just be willing to know and believe. Rely on the love that God has for you.

I want to illustrate this from an incident in the ministry of Jesus found in Luke 7:36-50. It is a most beautiful story:

> "Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.
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> Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, 'This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner.'
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> [...] Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.' Then He said to her, 'Your sins are forgiven. [...] Go in peace.'" (NKJV)

I want to point out to you in which way the woman was different from the Pharisee. The Pharisee, of course, was

religious. He was a man who didn't see himself as being in any sense sinful. But this woman knew she needed God's love. She knew that it would be no good appealing to God on the basis of her righteousness or her good deeds, or her religious practices. She knew that she just couldn't even begin to approach God and Jesus on that basis. But she just knew she needed love.

She also knew she could never earn God's love. There was nothing she could do to qualify. On the other hand, it seems to me that the problem of the Pharisee – and of multitudes of good living people today – is self-righteousness. He thought that somehow he could qualify for the love of God by being good. I respect people who live that way, but there is just one important thing that such people need to realise – that all of us need to realise – that the love of God cannot be earned. No matter how good we may be, we don't deserve the love of God.

And so this sinful woman entered in, and this righteous, good living man apparently was excluded. What excluded him? Not God, but his own righteousness.

For reflection and prayer

The love of God can never be earned, but it is freely given.

Devotional

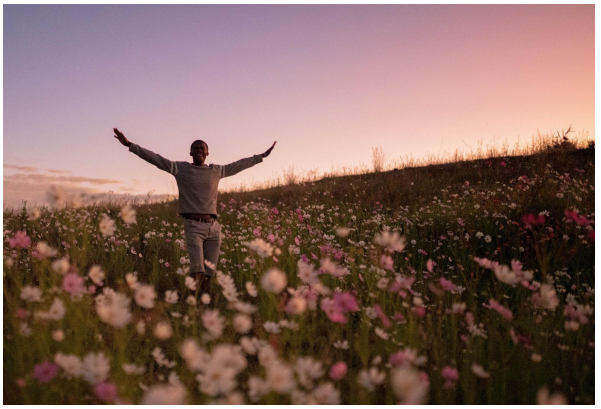
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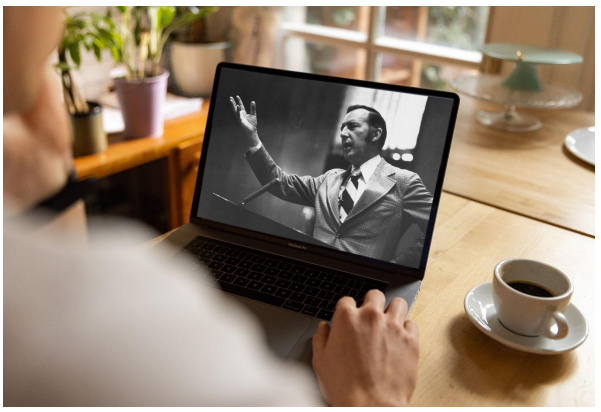
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