

The second barrier to unity with Christ: unbelief



One With Christ (Day 42)
by Derek Prince

There are two great barriers in practically applying the truths of our identification with Christ: ignorance and unbelief. To overcome our ignorance, we need the Word of God, and give ourselves without reservation, in crying aloud, in praying, in seeking God, in letting God write the truths of His Word on our hearts until they're so real that they're more real than the things you see around us.

But it's not enough to know the truth. We must also believe the truth. That's why we need to overcome the second great barrier which is unbelief. This is what the apostle John says in his first epistle, chapter 4 verse 16:

> "And we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us..." (NASB)

Notice, we have come to know - but that's not enough. We have also believed the love which God has for us. There are many people who know in theory that God loves them, but they've never really believed it as a reality for them personally. So, through knowledge we must move on into faith. We must not merely know, we must believe. If I could express it this way - knowledge puts the key into your hand, but it's faith that turns the key in the lock and opens up the treasure house of God's riches in Christ.

So first you need knowledge, but together with that and to make knowledge work, you need faith. When this message of the divine exchange was first given through the prophet Isaiah, in chapter 53 of Isaiah which we studied earlier in this book, the very first phrase of the message is a warning against unbelief. Isaiah begins that 53rd chapter, "Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" Jesus is the arm of the Lord. He's God's strength. He's the way God comes to our help and provides for us. But to whom has that arm been revealed? Only to those who believe. So the barrier there is unbelief. And Isaiah warns us, "Who has believed our message?"

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We need to understand that unbelief is a sin. So many Christians accept the condition of unbelief as if it's something a little unfortunate and regrettable, but they think: "after all I'll get by anyhow." But I want to tell you that God's Word tells you that unbelief is a sin. There are two passages in Hebrews chapter 3 that deal with this. In Hebrews 3:12:

> "See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God." (NIV)

What kind of a heart is unbelieving? It's an sinful heart. It's not just a little weakness that we can accept. It's an evil that keeps us from what God has ordained for us. Hebrews, chapter 3 verse 19, speaking about Israel and the generation that never entered the promised land, sums up the reason why they didn't enter in one very short, terse phrase: unbelief. What can also keep us out of our inheritance in Christ? Precisely the same barrier: Unbelief. We have to overcome that barrier of unbelief.

Devotional

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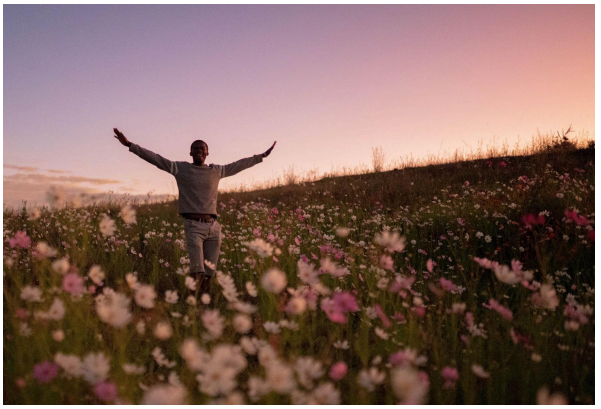

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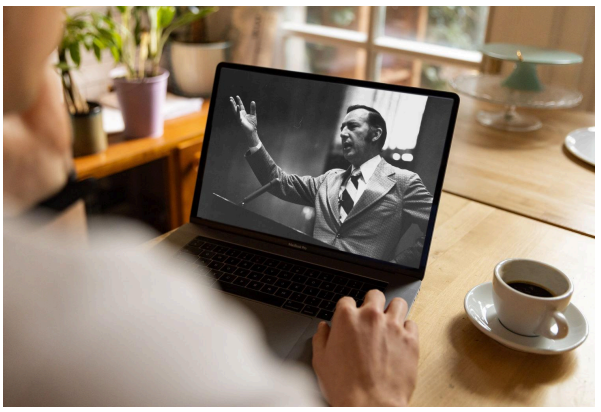

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