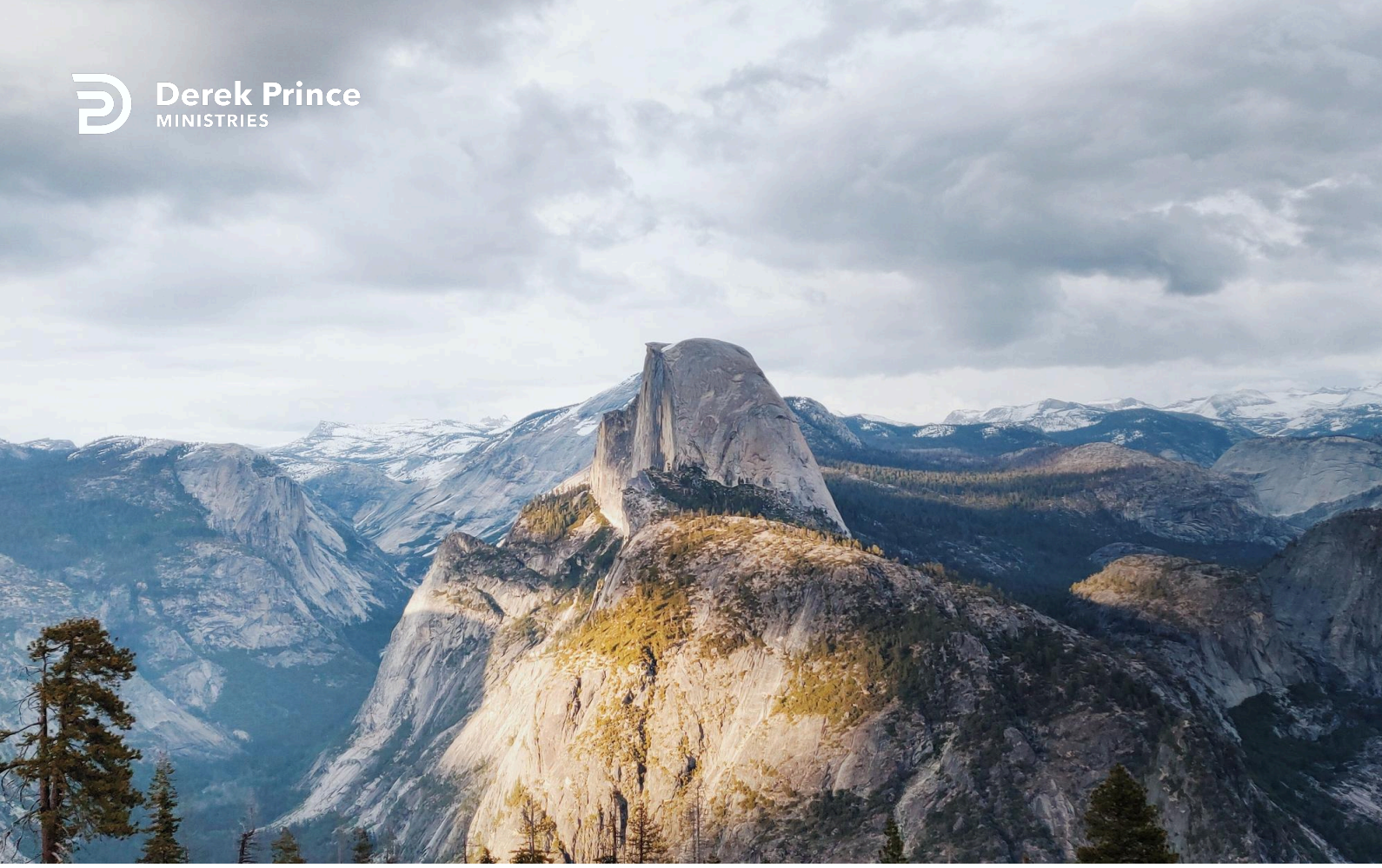

Repentance Is Not Emotion



The Decision Is Yours (Day 14)
by Derek Prince

In the book of Hebrews we have the example of Esau. This is what it says in Hebrews 12:16 and 17.

> "See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. [You see, Esau's sin was that he despised the riches of the promises of God and he just gave it up for a single meal because his stomach was empty. Then the writer goes on:] Afterward, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears."

In other versions, that's translated, "he found no place of repentance." That version brings out the fact that to repent is to change your mind. He could bring about no change of mind "though he sought the blessing with tears." He still wanted the blessing, but he couldn't bring about a change of mind. Why? Because when God does not plead with us, when God's Spirit does not move us and motivate us to make the right decision, left to ourselves we cannot do it. It seems that Esau had gone too far. He'd done something from which there was no way back. He could find no way to change his mind. He wept. He sobbed. He cried. He was very emotional. If emotion would have done the job, he would have got by. But you see, repentance is not emotion. It's a decision of the will, it's a changing of the mind, it's a turning back. And we have to say to God, each one of us, as Jeremiah said, "Turn us, O Lord, and we will turn. But Lord, if you don't turn us, we cannot turn by ourselves."

The lesson that I want to draw from what I've been saying is this: We cannot afford to harden our hearts when God is pleading with us. I'd like to read a passage from Psalm 95, verses 6–11:

> "Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. [Then he continues and this is the vital passage:] Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did at

> Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried me, though they had seen what I did. For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, 'They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.' So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'"

When we come into God's presence, as the psalmist says, "let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker," then very often we hear His voice. And then the psalmist warns us: "if you hear his voice, don't harden your heart"—respond, do whatever the Lord is prompting you to do. Make the right decision.

Devotional

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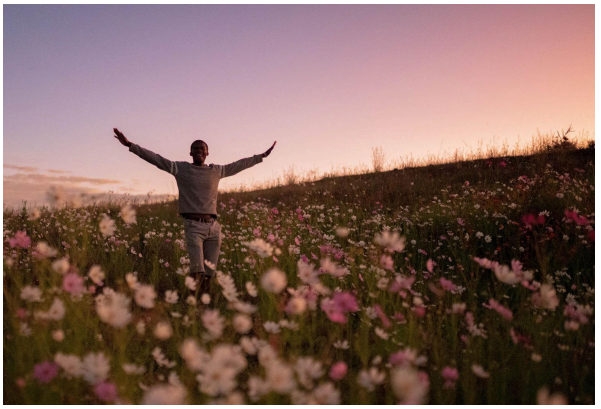

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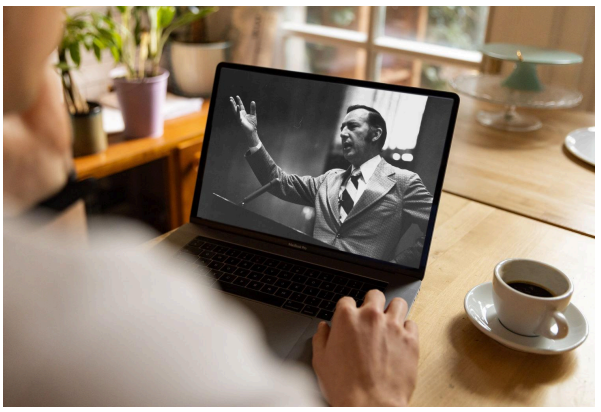

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