

Do not be indifferent!



If You Want God's Best (Day 7)
by Derek Prince

Yesterday we've seen that we need to make a decision to want God's best. Today, I want to illustrate this principle from the story of the twin brothers, Jacob and Esau. I will bring out of their story what I consider to be the key principle. There are some very remarkable statements made by God in Scripture about Jacob and Esau. For example, in Malachi 1:2–3 the Lord spoke to the Israelites, who are the descendants of Jacob, and said this:

> "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? [The answer is, Yes, indeed, his twin brother.] Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated." (Malachi 1:2–3)

Notice that. God's attitude toward the one brother was completely opposite His attitude toward the other brother. He loved one of them and hated the other. This is commented on still further by the apostle Paul in the book of Romans, where he says this concerning these twin brothers:

> "Not only that, but Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she [Rebekah] was told, 'The older [Esau] will serve the younger [Jacob].' Just as it is written: 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.'" (Romans 9:10–13)

This passage from Romans raises two very important questions:

1. What did God see in Jacob that He approved?
2. What did God see in Esau that He disapproved?

In short, why did God love Jacob but hate Esau?

Let me briefly sketch their characters for you, as unfolded in Scripture, starting with Esau. Esau was a "good guy," a "nice chap." He was strong, active, manly, a hunter. He did no one any harm. He was the favorite of his father.

What about Jacob? He was crafty, determined, unscrupulous. He never got the worst of a bargain. That is a quality that

nobody really likes. He obtained the birthright from Esau for a bowl of soup. When his brother was hungry, he persuaded him to sell that priceless birthright for nothing more than a bowl of soup. If ever there was a bargain, that was it! He deceived his father to obtain the blessing, and he gained a fortune at the expense of Laban, who was both his uncle and his father-in-law. By no means would anyone con-sider Jacob a "good guy" or a "nice chap." By contemporary standards, most people would prefer Esau. But God did not.

Why did God prefer Jacob? I am going to offer you one basic reason, which I believe is the key to it all: Jacob appreciated what God had to give, but Esau was indifferent.

In Hebrews 12:15–17, we get a scriptural estimate of what God thinks of indifference. His views of indifference are very different from those of most Christians. Commenting on Esau's behavior, the writer of Hebrews says,

> "See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. 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. Afterward, as you know, 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." (Hebrews 12:15–17)

Take notice of how Esau is described. He is described as "godless," and he is put on the same level with the sexually immoral. He is also de-scribed as godless because for a single meal, a bowl of soup, he sold his inheritance rights. As we are told in Genesis 25:34, "Esau despised his birthright." You must understand that by God's standards, indifference concerning what God has to offer is "godless," and God hates it. If you want God's best, don't be indifferent!

Devotional

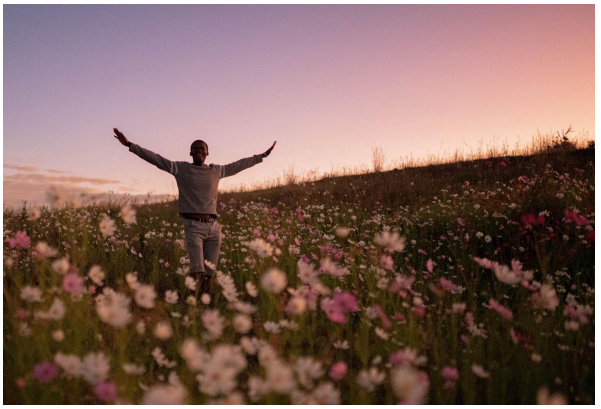
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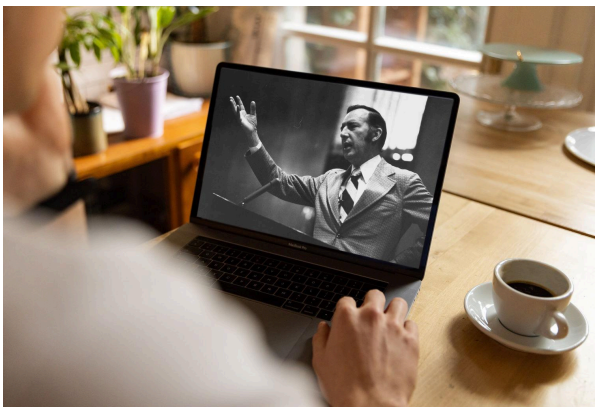
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