



Let Us Go Out to Him



Twelve Steps to a Good Year
(Part 13)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue to follow through with our theme, "Twelve Steps to a Good Year." Each of the steps we're looking at is taken from a sentence in the epistle to the Hebrews beginning with the words "let us." Let me quickly run through the ten steps we've already looked at, as follows: (1) Let us fear; (2) Let us be diligent; (3) Let us hold fast our confession; (4) Let us draw near to the throne of grace; (5) Let us press on to maturity; (6) Let us draw near to the Most Holy Place; (7) Let us hold fast our confession without wavering; (8) Let us consider one another; (9) Let us run with endurance the race set before us; (10) Let us show gratitude. Let me remind you of my suggestion that you memorize these steps in their correct order. I believe that will be a great blessing and help to you.

Today we're going to look at the 11th step. This is found in Hebrews 13:12-14:

"Therefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered outside the gate. Hence, let us go out to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come."

So that's the 11th step, "Let us go out to him outside the camp." This deals really with our attitude and our relationship to this present world. And what it's telling us is our home is not in this world. We don't have any enduring place in this world. The world rejected Jesus. It drove Him out of the city, crucified Him outside the gate. The Scripture always emphasizes the crucifixion took place outside the city wall. He was rejected, He was put out of society, the world didn't want Him. And the way the world treated Jesus, sooner or later, in one way or another, is going to be the way the world will treat you and me as believers. So we've got to be willing to go out to Him, to the place of crucifixion, the place of rejection, the place of shame, bearing His reproach.

Elsewhere in Hebrews it says the reproach of Christ is greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. So His reproach becomes our glory.

And then the writer gives a beautiful reason:

“For here we do not have a lasting city. [Other people may think this is permanent, we know it isn’t.] But we are seeking the city which is to come.”

I like that translation which says, “THE city.” It’s one specific city. The King James version, I believe, says “a city,” but this is “THE city.” There’s one particular city which is the destination and the home of all true believers. That’s where we really belong.

Now, two chapters earlier in Hebrews, Hebrews 11, the writer has given a kind of honor roll of many of the great saints of the Old Testament, emphasizing their faith. And then he says about them in verses 13 through 16 of Hebrews chapter 11:

“All these died in faith without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own; and indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.”

I am gripped by the words that are spoken there, that these forerunners in the faith who are our examples in so many ways confessed that they were strangers and exiles in this earth. They didn’t really belong, the earth was not their home. And then it says, “they make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.” Those words have a poignant meaning for me. It so happened in my life I had to deal with quite a number of people who were classified “stateless,” people who didn’t have any country, people who didn’t have any passport. I thank God that by his grace I’ve been able to help a number. And I know something of the agony of not belonging anywhere. I suppose there are multitudes of refugees in our world today and in the previous generation who went through that agony of not belonging, having no permanent place of their own. But these people that we’re reading about were seeking a place of their own, but they didn’t seek it in this world. It says that if they’d been interested and wanted, they could have gone back to the place they came from. Abraham, for instance, could have returned to Ur of the Chaldees, which is where he came from. But he had his mind set forward, he wasn’t looking backward. It says, “they desired a better country, that is, a heavenly one.”

And then that beautiful sentence, “Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God.” When we identify ourselves with God and His city and His preparation for us, then He is proud to be our God. I think that is beautiful. It says He has prepared a city, for them, for us.

You see, commitment to Jesus requires identification with His cross. We have to go out to Him to the place where He was crucified. And commitment to the cross of Jesus rules out two things. The first is pleasing self, the second is pleasing the world. Let’s look for a moment at what the New Testament says against pleasing self. Let me quote to you the words of Paul in Philippians 3:17 and 19:

“Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.”

It’s clear to me that Paul was speaking about people who profess to be Christians, but he warned his fellow believers against them. He said, “There’s one thing missing in their lives: they claim to be followers of Christ but they’re the enemies of His cross. They’re indulging self, their mind is set on things of this world; the principle of the cross, of death to self and the things of the flesh has never been applied in their lives.” And he said, “Be careful. Don’t follow their example because their end is destruction.”

You see, I think we have today people in the church who profess allegiance to Christ but reject His cross.

The second thing which is ruled out by our identification with the cross of Jesus is pleasing this world. Listen to the stern words of James in his epistle, chapter 4, verse 4. And again, he’s writing to professing believers:

“You adulterous people! Don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”

That’s very plain language, too plain for some people, I think. Why does he call such people ‘adulterous’? Well you see, the spiritual commitment to Jesus Christ that’s required of us qualifies us to become part of His Bride. But the Bride is required to have a single-hearted total commitment and devotion to Jesus. And if that commitment and devotion to

Jesus is infiltrated and adulterated by the love of this world, then we are spiritually adulterers. We are not faithful to the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. So, to try and be friendly with the world is to become spiritually adulterous.

Then listen to the words of Jesus in John 15:18-19:

“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belong to the world, it would love you as its own.”

And when the world ‘loves us as its own,’ that’s a pretty dangerous sign that we don’t belong to Jesus.

“As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”

That is plain language. We need to give heed to it.

What then should be our attitude in the light of these plain facts and statements of Scripture? I believe that a right attitude is expressed in the words of Paul in Galatians 6:14:

“But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through the which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”

Those words make a deep impression on me. Let me never boast, let me never place confidence in anything, ultimately, but the cross of the Lord. Let me not boast in my education, my religion, my denomination, none of these things. The only thing in which I can safely boast is the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, where Jesus won a total, permanent, irreversible victory over all the forces of evil.

But through that cross, “the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.” The cross is an absolute mark of separation between the people of God and the people of the world. When we accept the principle of the cross in our lives, we don’t belong to this world any longer.

Let me close with a beautiful promise of victory given by Jesus, John 16:33:

“I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble; but take heart, I have overcome the world.”

That’s good news, isn’t it? The world is not our friend, it’s our enemy, we’re going to have trouble, but Jesus has overcome

the world! And through Him, we too can overcome the world, if we’re willing to go out to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

Our time is up for today. I’ll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. I’ll continue with this theme, “Twelve Steps to a Good Year.” Tomorrow I’ll be speaking about the twelfth step.

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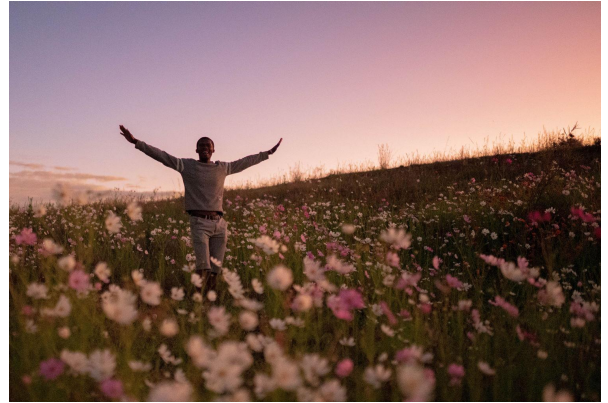
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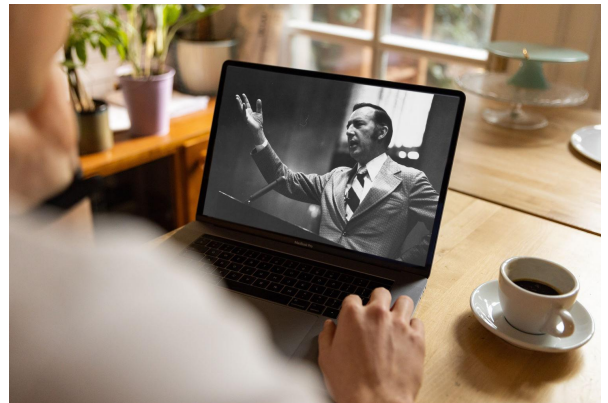
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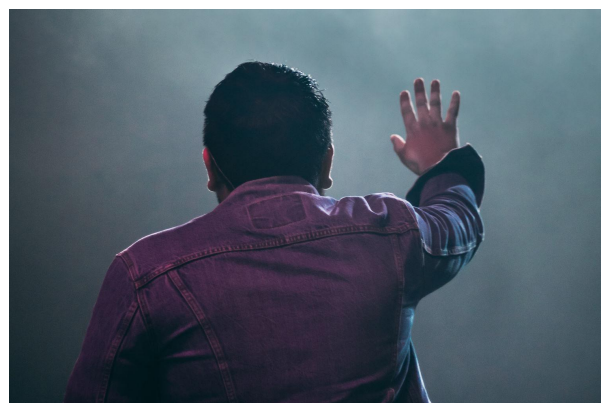
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