



How God Intervened



A New Beginning (Part 8) by Derek Prince

Our studies this week center around the passage in Titus chapter 3 where Paul describes the full and perfect provision which God has made for each one of us to have the new beginning that we need. Today we'll commence by looking once more at this passage which is basic to all that I'll be dealing with this week. Titus chapter 3 verses 3 through 7:

"At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the

hope of eternal life."

Yesterday, we focused on verse 3, which so vividly pictures our need of God's mercy. And you remember that list of words—foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved, living in malice and envy, hated and hating one another.

Today, we're going to move on to verse 4 which describes how God intervened in human history to meet our need. I want to emphasize that word intervene. It's so important to understand that God Himself intervened. He came on the stage of human history to help us in a way that no one else could help us.

Let's look at the opening part of verse 4:

"But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared..."

That's important, that word "appeared." It means it was manifested. It became visible. We could apprehend it with our senses. You see, God's kindness and love are eternal, but they were historically manifested in history in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. We absolutely have to grasp this fact. The whole of the Christian faith revolves around one person—Jesus Christ. That distinguishes it from almost every

other religion. And it revolves around certain simple basic facts in the life of Jesus. In Jesus, God Himself came to our help. He came on the scene of human history.

I want to go through a number of passages—in the writings of John mainly, which emphasize this. We go back first of all to John chapter 1 verse 1 and then verse 14:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [That’s the eternal uncreated Son—the second person of the Godhead. Verse 14...] The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

You see, the Word became flesh. Jesus took on human flesh. He became a man, and He lived for a while among us. That’s how the kindness and love of God appeared in Jesus.

And then in the first epistle of John chapter 1 verses 1 through 4, John returns to this theme which was obviously one that was always close to his heart and in his mind. He says this, it’s somewhat more emphatic and more detailed:

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. [And he’s speaking there about Jesus. He calls Jesus the ‘Word of life.’ And he says this was not theory, some philosophy, just something we imagined, but it’s something that we heard, that we saw with our eyes, that we looked at, that our hands touched. And then he goes on in the second verse:] The life appeared; [Notice again that word ‘appeared.’] we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.”

You see, the apostles handed on to us their first hand experience of God in Jesus Christ. And their purpose was that they might bring us into the fellowship which they had come to enjoy with God and with His Son. That’s really the reason why the New Testament is written. It’s an invitation from the Godhead to share their fellowship through the

revelation of Jesus.

Then a Scripture in Hebrews chapter 2 verse 14—all of these emphasizing the same great truth:

“Since the children [that’s men and women] have flesh and blood, he [that’s Jesus] too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is the devil.”

Jesus shared in our flesh and blood. He wasn’t just an ethereal being. He wasn’t just a philosophy. He wasn’t just a revelation. He was a man of flesh and blood like you and me, and He took upon Himself flesh and blood that He might die our death—that He might go all the way. And that in dying our death He might break the power of the one who had that power over us—that is the devil. So, His ultimate purpose was liberation through identification with us.

And then we can look again at the words of Jesus in John 14 verse 9 where He says something very simple, but very profound:

“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”

So God appeared in Jesus. His kindness and His love were manifested in human history. We’re not left trying to form our own image of God.

One of the things that interests me as a former professional philosopher is that various different philosophers tried to discover by reasoning what God was like. They all based their reasoning on what they considered to be irrefutable logic, but the interesting thing is they all came up with a different answer, which proves to me that mere reasoning cannot reveal God. But Jesus revealed God—not through reasoning, not through speculation, not through philosophy, but through coming to earth, taking on flesh and blood, and living a life like ours.

In closing this talk, I want to reemphasize something that I’ve already tried to make clear, something that distinguishes the Christian faith from any other religion or system that I know of. Christianity is not mere morality or ethics or philosophy. It’s based on actual historical events in a time-space world. It’s tied in with human experience and human history. I believe that makes it different from other religions which are based on some kind of a revelation. Like the Mohammedan religion is based on a revelation which Mohammed claimed was given him in a cave by the angel Gabriel. But it’s not tied in with Mohammed’s life. He could have been anywhere and had that revelation. It could have been given to any kind of a

person. It didn't depend on Mohammed or his life or a religion or a philosophy, whatever you want to call it. Such as Buddhism is based on the teachings and the speculations of Buddha. Likewise with various forms of Hinduism. They're tied in with events of human history. They're not tied in with a life of flesh and blood around which they center, but in the Christian faith that is not so. Christianity is based on certain specific facts in the life of a man—Jesus of Nazareth. The main facts are His incarnation, that He took upon Himself human form, that He was born as a baby, lived on as a man. They're based on His sinless life, His atoning death, and finally, His resurrection from the dead.

And let me say there's one point, one fact of human history, that is more important than all the other facts put together in a certain sense—it is that Jesus rose from the dead. If that's true, then Christianity is irrefutable. If it's not true, then there's nothing to the Christian faith. It is not just a morality or some nice teaching. It's either based firmly in history or it's not valid. I believe it's valid.

Furthermore, let me say one further thing about it before I close. The Christian faith when believed and obeyed produces in the lives of those who believe it and obey it definite practical objective results which could not be produced in any other way. So it's tied in also to human experience in the lives of those who believe it and obey it. It's based on the history of Jesus. And it's tied into the historical experience of all those millions through the centuries who have believed it and obeyed it. Let me say it very simply, it's not just a theory. It works. It does what it claims.

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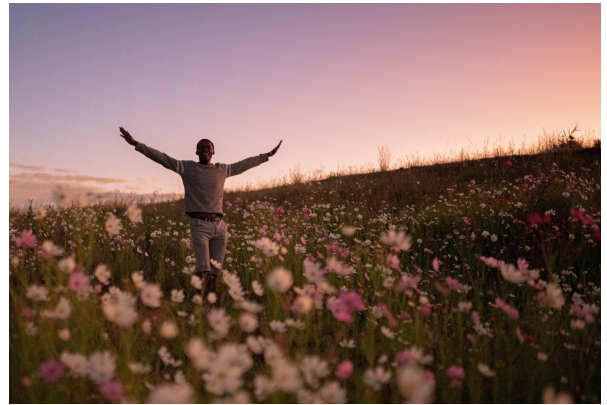
Transcript: TS-R099-103-ENG
Last Updated: 13 Apr 2023
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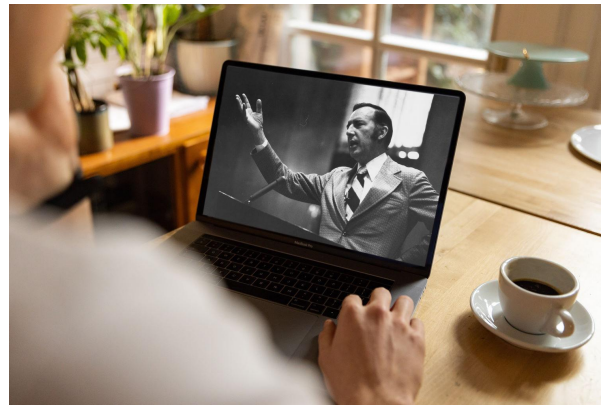
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