

Mental Illumination



What God's Word Will Do for You (Part 6)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you at the beginning of a new week sharing out of truths that life has taught me—truths that have made the difference between success and failure in my life and can do the same for you.

Let me begin by saying thank you to those of you who have been writing to me. Before I finish this talk, we'll be giving you a mailing address to which you may write. Feel free to share with us your personal needs, your problems, your prayer requests.

All last week, I shared with you on the theme, "What God's Word Will Do For You," and this week I'm going to continue with this rich and exciting theme each day at this time Monday through Friday.

In my closing talk last week, I spoke about God's Word as His medicine bottle. The means which He has provided to bring healing and health to our entire physical body. The particular effect of God's Word on our lives that I want to deal with today, I will call Mental Illumination. I'm going to explain how the Word of God works in our minds in the same way that light does in the natural, physical realm.

The first Scripture I want to turn to—Psalm 119:130, where the psalmist says to the Lord:

> "The entrance of your words give light; it gives understanding to the simple."

Here the psalmist says that from God's Word we may receive light and understanding. By his alienation from God, man's mind has been darkened. The Word of God, when it gains entrance, is like a piercing ray of light shining into that darkness. It brings light where hitherto darkness has prevailed and through light there comes understanding.

Light shows us the real nature and character of people and things. We can make correct evaluations. When we are in darkness, we really don't know what we're dealing with. We grope, we are aware of certain people or certain things, but we don't know their true nature and character. It's the Word of God that brings light, shows us the real factors in our lives that we have to deal with, and how to deal with them.

There's an important distinction between understanding or wisdom and education. I was engaged in educational work in East Africa for five years, training teachers for African schools and I used to say, half jokingly, to my students, "You Africans have got rid of your old gods of wood and stone but you've replaced them with a new god." I said, "Would you like me to tell you his name?" and of course they would nod and I'd say, "Well, his name is alimu." That's in the Swahili language. Do you know what alimu means? Well, it means education. That really was the situation with the African people at that time. They saw that the white man was able to do many things that they were not able to do and achieve results and make life much easier and they said, "What's the difference between the white man and us?" And they came up, generally, with the conclusion, "Well, the white man has education, we don't. If we had education, we'd be able to do the same." So they would strive, very intensely, after education. They would make tremendous personal sacrifices to achieve education. And I saw that, in a certain sense, they hadn't correctly evaluated education. They thought it would do everything for them and they were going to be disappointed. So I wrote a little pamphlet which circulated widely at that time in that area entitled, You Are Striving after Education, but Are You Also Finding Wisdom?, and I pointed out in that pamphlet that there's a big difference between education and wisdom. In fact, I made a rather controversial statement. I said, "Most of the trouble in the world is being caused by educated fools." It's possible to be very educated and yet very foolish. And I drew this analogy for them. I said, "An educated mind is a fine thing. It's like a sharp knife. It's a wonderful instrument, but that sharp knife may be used for purposes that are either good or evil." One man can take that knife and cut up food for his family, another man can take the same sharp knife and either kill his neighbor or even kill himself. There's nothing wrong with the knife. It's the use that it's put to. Education is like that. It's like the knife, but it takes wisdom to make the right use of the knife.

A former president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, once said this: He said, "If a man is a thief, he may steal a railroad car, but if you educate the same man he'll steal the whole railroad." Well, that's a rather cynical comment, but there's a great deal of truth to it. An educated thief is a much more dangerous man than an uneducated thief. What I'm saying to you is that there is no substitute for light. God's Word is the only source of light in our minds.

Again, my mind goes back to East Africa. I used to challenge my students with this sometimes. I would say to them in the lecture room, "Now suppose this room were full of darkness. How would we get rid of the darkness? Would we open all the doors and windows and let the wind blow the darkness out?" And of course they'd say, "No." Well, I'd say, "How about sending for all the brooms we can find and sweeping the darkness out?" And they would laugh at me. "Well then," I'd say to them, "How do we get rid of the darkness?" and some student would raise his hand and I'd say, "Yes?" and he'd say, "Switch on the light." I'd say, "Quite right." Once you get the light you don't have any problem with darkness, but nothing else but light will deal with darkness. And likewise, nothing else but the Word of God in our minds will bring true light and illumination, dispel our darkness, and show us what things really are and how to deal with them.

I turn now to the words of Paul in Ephesians 5:8–11, where he's speaking to believers who have been illuminated by the Word of God. And he says this:

> "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them."

Paul here says, there was a time when your minds were darkened, but when you received the Word of God then let it have it's way in your mind, you became light and, as a result, fruit came out of your life—results, consequences of good. He says the fruit of the light is in all goodness, righteousness and truth. Notice that light brings forth good fruit. It changes our lives and it causes us to do things that are beneficial; that bring benefit, not only to ourselves, but to others. On the other hand, Paul also speaks about the fruitless deeds of darkness. Darkness doesn't have any good fruit. It's results and consequences are harmful.

Then again, in Philippians 1:9–11, Paul speaks about how he's praying for the Christians at Philippi and he says this:

> "And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God."

The effect of God's Word in our minds as we expose ourselves to it, is that it enables us to abound, more and more, in knowledge and in depth of insight. We are able to discern what is best. Or another translation says, "Discern between things that are different." The light exposes these subtle differences which are yet so significant between what seems right and what seems beneficial and what will truly do

us good. And, again, Paul emphasizes that light brings forth fruit. He speaks about the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ. So there's an increasing sensitivity toward what is good and what is the will of God that comes as our minds are illuminated by the Word of God.

I think about God's dealings with me in my own life. Jesus Christ revealed Himself in a personal way to me, came into my heart and life and wonderfully transformed me. At that time, it happens I was a soldier in the British Army and, like most soldiers my speech, I am very sorry to say today, was unclean and blasphemous. The moment Christ came in that changed; I never used unclean or blasphemous language again. And I thought, "That's wonderful, now I'm, all right," but that was, by no means, the end.

After a while, as I began to study my Bible, God dealt with other areas of my speech. He showed me that I was guilty of exaggeration. I often said more than was actually true. He showed me that the Scripture said, "Just let your yea be yea and your nay, nay." Don't say anything more than what you really mean, whatever is more comes of evil. So God dealt with exaggeration. And I thought, "That's wonderful, I'm really making progress," then God showed me I was critical, that I was guilty of using unkind and critical language. God dealt with that. And I thought, "I'm really making wonderful spiritual progress now," but then God showed me that many times I would give utterance to statements which were negative. Instead of being positive and glorifying to God, they tied me down in my own unbelief. Then I gave those up, more or less, but then God showed me the positive. He said, in effect, "I've given you a tongue in your mouth to glorify Me and any use of your tongue that does not glorify Me is a misuse." So, there's a challenge—light comes. What are we going to do about it? Jesus expresses the challenge very clearly in John 3:

> "And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. For everyone who hates the light, and does not come to the light, does evil and he's fearful lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as they've been wrought in God."

So you have a choice of either hiding away from the light or coming to the light, exposing yourself to the light and truth of the Word of God.

Now our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow. I'll be continuing with this theme of "What God's Word Will Do For You." I'll be explaining how, through knowing and applying God's Word, that you may gain real victory in your life over sin and Satan.

Radio Program

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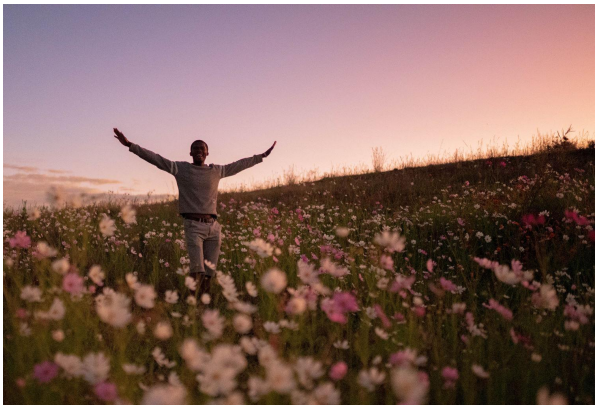

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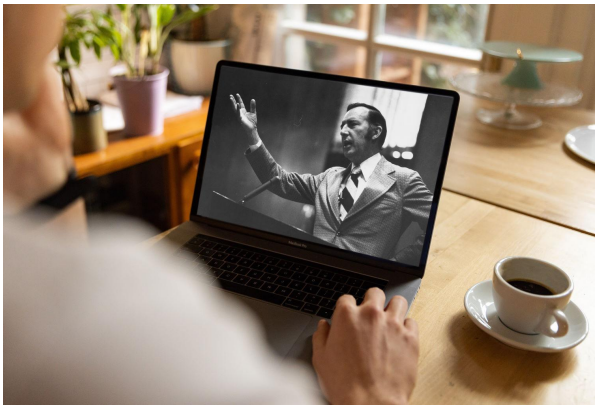

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