

The Life-Giver and the Life-Taker



Victory Over Death (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again today as we continue to deal with the one problem that is common to all of humanity and yet it is the very one so many people fail to face until it is too late, the problem of death.

Let me remind you once more of what I said at the beginning of my talk yesterday. If the mention of death makes you want to switch to another program, that's a sure indication that you, in particular, need to stay tuned to this program and to listen carefully to what I have to say.

I pointed out yesterday that one thing that distinguishes the Christian faith from all other religions and philosophies is that it has a proven, positive answer to death. In medical terms, it provides diagnosis, prognosis and remedy. The diagnosis says the sting of death is sin. Death came through sin. The prognosis says that death follows three successive phases.

First, spiritual death, that's alienation from God. Second, physical death, the separation of the soul from the body. Third, the second death, that is the final, eternal, irrevocable banishment from the presence of God but not with the cessation of consciousness.

Only after we've accepted both the diagnosis and prognosis can we begin to understand, to apply, the remedy. The remedy is what I'm going to be talking about now.

I want to begin by explaining more fully the nature of the spiritual world and the spiritual forces that are at work both in life and in death. Some people don't realize that there is a spiritual world. They think everything begins and ends in this world and there's nothing beyond. Other people acknowledge the reality of a spiritual world but they think of it as something vague, amorphous, abstract. But the truth is that the spiritual world is a real and objective as the physical world and it's peopled with both things and persons far exceeding in number and variety all that we are familiar with in the physical world. The really important difference between the two worlds is that the physical is temporary and transient, the spiritual is eternal and unchanging. Paul expresses this in 2 Corinthians 4:18. He says:

> "So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." (NIV)

So the unseen world is eternal. Now let's see what the Bible shows us about the nature of this unseen world. If we trace life and death back to their source, we come face-to-face with two persons, two persons whom I have entitled the Life-Giver and the Life-Taker. This is expressed very clearly in the world of Jesus in John 10:10. He says:

> "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (NIV)

So we have the two persons: the thief and Jesus. Each of them is equally a person. Of course, the thief, his name is Satan. So many people today find it difficult to realize that Satan is a real person. I saw this in a book once that gripped me. It said, "Evil is not something, but someone." When we realize that, our eyes are beginning to be opened. So the thief is Satan or the devil. Listen to what Jesus told us about him also in John 8:44. Certainly Jesus spoke the truth with tremendous frankness when it comes to telling us the nature of our enemy, the devil. He said to the religious people of His day:

> "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." (NIV)

So there Jesus tells us that Satan is a liar and a murderer. Put that together with the other passage in John 10 and we find out that Satan is thief, liar, and murderer. The Bible has nothing good to tell us about him.

A well-known evangelist once summed up the difference between God and the devil in this simple phrase: "There is no badness in God and there is no goodness in the devil." We need to bear that in mind. We don't want to be blinded by philosophy or sentimentality or human theory. We're dealing with two persons: the Life-Giver, Jesus; the Life-Taker, Satan, the devil.

Let's turn back again to John 10:10, where Jesus says this:

> "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy..." (NIV)

We need to keep this always in mind. The devil never comes into our life to do us good. He has three purposes. Each is worse than the one before. His first purpose is to steal, his second to kill, his third to destroy. Let's look at the meaning of those three words for a moment.

Satan comes into our lives to steal, to take away everything that is rightfully ours from God, every blessing that God wants us to enjoy, Satan comes to take from us. What are some of those blessings? The blessings of innocence, of a good conscience, of peace of heart and mind, of right relationships in home and family, health prosperity, the provision of all our needs. Those are some of the blessings that the devil comes to steal. And then Jesus said he comes to kill.

To kill is to take a life physically, to murder. Remember Jesus said the devil is a murderer. He actually comes to take our physical lives. He does it through sin, through sickness, through all sorts of pressures that he brings against us. If you accept that statement of Jesus as being correct, we're brought face-to-face with an astonishing and terrible fact: in a certain sense, every one who has ever died in the history of the human race has been murdered. Everyone has been murdered, because the devil is a murderer and he's behind the death of every person who ever died. But that's not the end.

The third purpose of the devil is to destroy. You may say, "Well, what can he do beyond killing?" Killing ends physical life but destroying goes on eternally. Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 10:28:

> "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell." (NIV)

Who is that one? I believe that's the devil. His destructive work against us does not end with physical death, it continues on into eternity. He's a murdered, a thief, a liar. The fact that he's a thief and a liar should warn us of one thing: he deceives us. When he comes to us, he does not tell us who he is or the purpose for which he comes. A thief does not walk up to your house, knock on your door, and when you open say, "I'm a thief. I've come to take your possessions." He comes in the dark, he comes at a time when you can't see him and you don't expect him. Or if he's a different kind of thief, he may be what we call a "con man." He'll come and misrepresent his motive, suggest to you that he has

something tremendously valuable to impart to you but really he's come to take and not to give.

You see, God works in the light, God is light. When we're related to God, we know to whom we're related. We're aware of what God is doing. We're not groping, we're not fumbling, we're not uncertain or insecure but the devil, Satan, works in the dark. And many, many times when he's at work we don't see him. We don't recognize him. We don't know exactly who he is or why he's there or what he's doing. That's because he works in the dark. You see, when God is in our lives, we recognize Him. But when Satan is in our lives, many times we fail to recognize him. He's a deceiver, a liar.

I remember once, when I was the principal of a college in Africa for training teachers, one of my African teachers under me had tremendous problems about the reality of the devil. He had a little group of ducks that he was cherishing in his back yard. He was very proud of his ducks. One day he came to me so forlorn and disappointed. Someone had come in the night and stolen all his ducks. I said to him, "Mr. Odawa, did that person come to your door and tell you that he was coming to steal your ducks?"

He said, "No. No, he came in the dark and I didn't see him."

I said, "Mr. Odawa, that explains your problem with the reality of the devil. He doesn't come to the door in the light and knock and say, 'I'm the devil. I've come to steal.' But he does just like that thief that took your ducks. He comes in the night. He doesn't tell you who he is or when he's coming. You don't see him, you don't recognize him, you don't know what you're dealing with. That's the way a thief works."

Remember what Jesus said, "The devil is thief, liar, and murderer." He never comes to do us good. He has three purposes: to steal all the blessings that God wants us to enjoy; to kill, to take our physical life; and to destroy, to torment us forever and ever in a lost eternity.

Thank God for Jesus, who's so faithful to tell us the truth. Thank God also that Jesus is the remedy.

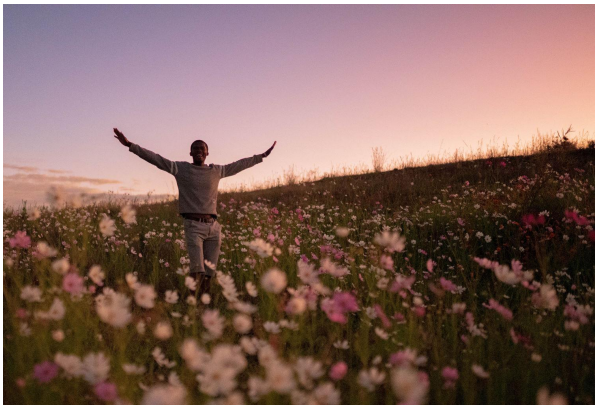
Tomorrow I'm going to start to speak to you about the remedy that there is in Christ. I'm going to speak to you about the nature, the purpose and the work of Jesus on our behalf. I'll be speaking about Jesus as our kinsman-redeemer, applying one of the most vivid and beautiful pictures of Him to be found in the Old Testament.

Bible Teaching Resources



Books

Illuminate and expand your understanding of the Bible with the Derek Prince collection of Christian books.



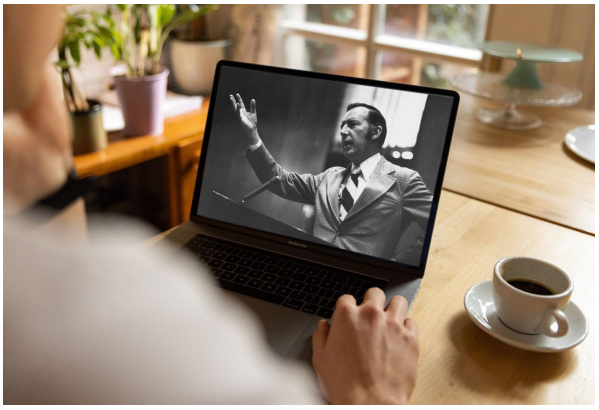
Daily Devotionals

Browse free biblically inspired daily devotionals by Derek Prince for practical teachings to uplift your Christian faith.



Legacy Radio

Listen to inspiring 10-minute messages and connect faith to life with the Derek Prince Legacy Radio podcast.



Sermons

Watch original and digitally remastered sermons by Derek Prince. Includes full message transcripts (free download).



Official App

Available free, download the official Derek Prince Ministries app and equip your faith, anywhere, anytime.



Proclamations

Declare life and experience the transformative power of God's Word with our bible-based Proclamations.

Copyright © Derek Prince Ministries