

The Weapon of Preaching



Spiritual Warfare (Part 14)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, as we continue with our theme of "Spiritual Warfare." In my previous talks this week I have dealt with two main weapons of attack: the weapon of prayer and the weapon of praise. To be fully effective, we have seen that each of these weapons needs to be combined with God's Word.

Today I am going to deal with another weapon of attack that is related even more directly and specifically to God's Word, the weapon of preaching. Let me add that I have in mind solely and exclusively the preaching of God's Word. What I have to say today in no way applies to the preaching of other things such as human philosophy or political ideologies or even elaborate theology, but only to the preaching of God's Word.

A good point to begin this study of the power of the preaching of God's Word is found in the words of Paul to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-4. This is what Paul says. It is a very solemn charge:

> "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." (NIV)

I want to point out certain important things. First of all, solemnity of the charge. It is given in the presence of God in Christ Jesus, in the light of the fact that Christ will judge the living and the dead and in view of His appearing in His kingdom. It is one of the most solemn charges ever given to a servant of God. The charge is preach the Word.

It implies the accountability of the preacher for what he preaches. The reference to the fact that Jesus will judge the living and the dead indicates that preachers will answer to the Lord for the messages they preach.

As a warning not to accommodate the desires of self-pleasing rebels who don't want to hear the truth and will look for preachers that will preach the kind of thing they want to hear, the warning is do not accommodate these people. There is a warning that not all will receive the truth. Nevertheless, in spite of all this, in spite of opposition and criticism, the charge is preach the Word, the Word of God.

Scripture has much to say about the effectiveness of God's Word. In Isaiah 55:11, God says:

> "It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." (NIV)

Again, in Jeremiah 23:29, God says:

> "'Is not my word like a fire,' declares the Lord, 'and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?'" (NIV)

And then in Hebrews 4:12:

> "The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." (NIV)

So there's tremendous power in the preached Word of God. Its results are guaranteed. It will not return empty. It will accomplish God's pleasure. It is a hammer that will break in pieces every rock that opposes the purposes of God. It is like a sharp sword that pierces to the innermost recesses of the human personality and lays bare the secrets of men's hearts and minds.

I want to give an example of this power of the preached Word of God from the ministry of Paul in Ephesus. I am going to read Acts 19:8-10:

> "Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord." (NIV)

There are three adjectives that describe this preaching of Paul. It was intense, it was continuous, it was extensive. Daily for two years he taught the Word of God. And it was extensive in the sense that his teaching reached out to the whole of the large province of Asia. I think we often fail to realize that Paul spent over two years continuously in the city of Ephesus, every day preaching the Word of God.

Now let us look at the results. To me, the results are rather like throwing a stone into a pond and then watching the ripples go out from the place where the stone fell, extending wider and wider in every direction until they reach the margin of the pond. The first result was supernatural attestation. The Scripture says that God will confirm His Word. He doesn't confirm human theories or philosophy or even denominational tags but He will confirm His Word. So He did for Paul. This is what it says in Acts 19:11-12:

> "God did extraordinary miracles through Paul." (NIV)

I love that word "extraordinary miracles." Do you know what that implies? That some miracles were ordinary but the ones that happened here in Ephesus were extraordinary. I have always asked myself this question: "In how many of our churches today do we have even ordinary miracles, let alone extraordinary miracles?" Then it describes these extraordinary miracles:

> "Handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them." (NIV)

I just want to testify from personal experience, I have seen miracles like that happen in my time. I have been a witness of it. This is not out of date, the key factor is preaching the Word of God.

I have said that the first result of Paul's preaching in Ephesus was supernatural attestation to his message by miracles. The second result is very interesting, evil spirits were driven out into the open. Reading on in Acts 19:13-16:

> "Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, 'In the name of Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.' Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest,

> were doing this. The evil spirit answered them, 'Jesus I know and Paul I know about, but who are you?' Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding." (NIV)

You see, one of the important things in the ministry is to bring Satan's secret agents out into the open. And demons, or evil spirits, are Satan's secret agents. It represents a great stage of progress in the ministry of God's Word when these evil spirits that work in secret, undercover, are brought right out into the open. And this happened here. I am always impressed by what the evil spirit said. He said, "Jesus I acknowledge, Paul I know about." To me, that is a kind of backhanded compliment when the representatives of Satan have to say about a preacher, "I know about him; he is achieving something."

All right. What was the third result of Paul's preaching? Occult domination over an entire city were broken. Reading on in Acts 19:17-19:

> "When this [that is the incident with the man with the evil spirit] became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas." (NIV)

You see, a lot of people were believers but they had been dabbling in the occult, a situation that is similar in the church today. They had one foot in God's kingdom, one foot in Satan's camp. But when they saw this fearful demonstration of the reality of Satan's power, they decided to commit themselves totally to God and turn their back on Satan. As evidence of this, they brought the books or the scrolls which contained the occult knowledge, the magic, the sorcery, and so on. And all these books were publicly burned somewhere in the city of Ephesus.

It says the value of the books were fifty thousand drachmas. A drachma, at that time, was about a day's wages for a working man. Fifty thousand drachmas corresponds to $1,5000,000. That is a large sum of money. You see what an impact that must have made on the entire city. And I believe the same thing needs to happen in almost every major city of the United States today.

Now let us look at the Scripture's explanation of all this. Acts 19:20:

> "In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power." (NIV)

What was the power behind all this? It was the Word of the Lord. Paul's ministry of the word for over two years produced dramatic, powerful results. Satan's kingdom in that area was rocked to its foundations, his fortresses were overthrown.

Finally, let us look at an account of Paul's own ministry as he gives it himself in Acts 20:20 and following. He says to the people there about his ministry in Ephesus:

> "You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you... [And then again, he says:] Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God." (20, 26-27 NIV)

I sum that up in two phrases: no reservation, no compromise. That's the kind of preaching of the Word of God that accomplishes those effects. We need it today.

All right. Our time is up for the day. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I will be dealing with the fourth main weapon of attack, the weapon of testimony.

Radio Program

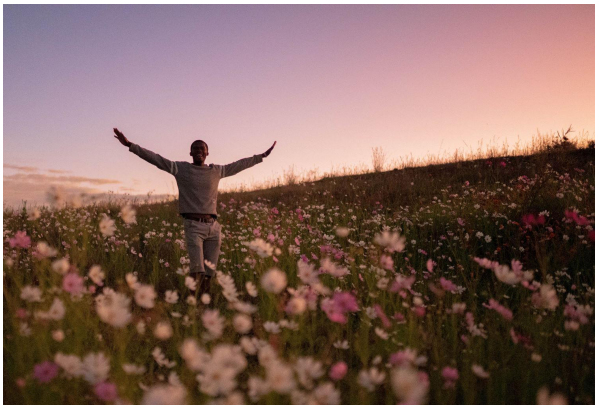
Transcript: TS-R038-104-ENG
Last Updated: 13 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

Bible Teaching Resources



Books

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



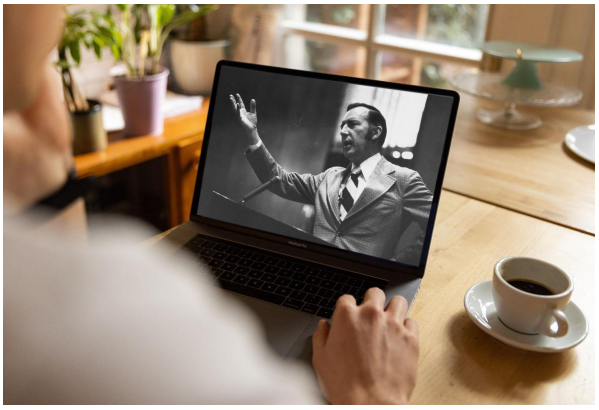
Daily Devotionals

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