

God's Program of Transformation



Seven Pictures of God's People (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing with you precious truths out of Scripture that have made the difference between success and failure in my life and can do the same in yours. In my introductory talk yesterday I explained that God's word is a mirror—not a mirror which shows us our outward appearance, but a mirror which shows us our inward spiritual condition, a mirror which shows us ourselves as God sees us. And I explained that we were going to be looking in this mirror throughout this week to see what kind of a people we are; not primarily to see what we are as individuals, although that's important, but rather to see what God intends to make of us as His redeemed people. Hence the title of my talk, "Seven Pictures of God's People."

In this connection, I turned to the verse in Deuteronomy 32:9, which says:

> "The Lord's portion is his people."

That's tremendously important. The thing that God is really concerned with is His people. He intervenes in history. He deals with nations, He deals with physical conditions, He's the Lord of time and circumstance, of storm and calm, earthquake and tempest, mountains, rivers and sea—He's in control of them all, they're all part of His total creation. But the thing that He really focuses on in the midst of all that is His redeemed people. That's His portion. That's what He's going to get out of history. When history is closed, God's greatest investment will have been in His people. We need to understand how important we are.

Now, today I want to deal with a very important practical question in this connection. The question is this: How is God going to make us into the kind of people that He intends us to become? And, in particular, how can we cooperate with God in achieving this result? The title I've chosen for this specific talk is, "God's Program of Transformation." Let me recapitulate briefly, the purposes of redemption as they are illustrated in the passage I read from Exodus 19 yesterday, Exodus 19:3–5:

> "And Moses went up to God and the Lord spoke to him from the mountain, saying: 'Thus you shall say to the

> house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now then, it you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be my own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine…"" (NASB)

I pointed out there the two primary objectives of redemption. First of all, God brings us, His redeemed people, to Himself. The primary purpose is a direct, intimate, personal relationship with the Lord. If we miss that, we really miss the center of the whole purposes of God.

Secondly, through redemption God wants to bring forth a people that is totally different from anything the world has ever seen. This people is called "my own possession" or "peculiar treasure" or "a special treasure" or "a peculiar people." There are various translations. The exact meaning of the phrase is not perfectly known, but it means something beautiful, something wonderful, something just a little bit mysterious. That's what God wants to make out of His people.

Now, in order for God to achieve this purpose, there has to be a process of transformation. When God first redeems us, we aren't all that we ought to be. We aren't all that God intends us to be. I marvel at God's faith in even starting on some of us, and I include myself in that. I want to give you an example of how the process of transformation works, very simply. It's an example from Jesus' call of His first disciples. It's recorded in Matthew 4:18–20:

> "As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake where they were fishing. 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.' At once they left their nets and followed him." (NIV)

That's really a very simple scene. There's not a lot of complicated psychology, but it contains the essence of what has to happen. Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." There are two main aspects of that. First of all, Jesus requires total commitment. "Leave it all, follow me, I'm not telling you where we're going, you just have to follow me in faith. Put your life in my hands and let me take care of the consequences." That is essential. God really cannot work His purposes till His people are fully committed. Then He says, "Follow me—I'm not telling you where we're going, but I am telling you what I'll make of you. I will make of you fishers of men." You see, the important thing with every one of us as God's redeemed people is not what we are, but what God wants to make of us. And if we'd only yield to the Lord, He guarantees He'll produce the finished product. First, commitment; then God begins to work on us to make us what He wants us to be.

The same principle is contained in the teaching of Paul in Romans. Romans 12:1 and 2, Paul says this:

> "Therefore I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will." (NIV)

Notice that word "transformed" there. That's the process, transformation. That's what God is working at. Now let's look how it comes about. And you'll see again the first step is commitment, total commitment to God. It's expressed by Paul there in the words, "offer your bodies as living sacrifices." He's thinking in terms of the Old Testament sacrifices which were the bodies of animals: sheep, goats, so on. But those animals were first killed and then placed as an offering on God's altar. But once they were placed on God's altar, they no longer belonged to the person who offered them, they belonged totally to God. They were totally at God's disposal. Well, Paul is saying to us as Christians, "You've got to offer your body to God in exactly the same way. And once you've placed it on the altar, it'll no longer be yours, it'll no longer be at your disposal, it's entirely at God's disposal." He says, "There is only one difference—your body won't be killed first, it will be placed living on the altar." That's total commitment. Commitment leads to thinking a different way. Our minds are renewed. Our values change. Our priorities change. Things take on a different meaning. It doesn't happen till we're committed. It's something God does but He only does it for the committed. And then, when we're transformed in this way by the renewing of our mind, we are able to test, to approve what God's will is. We can really find out what God really wants. See, God doesn't reveal what He really wants to the uncommitted. He has a secret, wonderful plan for each of us individually, for His people collectively, but He only reveals that plan to those who are committed. So you see the order: commitment, then transformation from within, leading to the revelation of God's purpose.

In the closing part of my talk today, I want to speak about the use of the mirror in this process of transformation. You will remember that I said yesterday that God's word is a mirror

which shows us not what we are outwardly but what we are inwardly, and that this mirror is an essential instrument in the process of transformation. We have to look in the mirror. I want to say a little more now about the actual way we use the mirror. I want to refer to two passages from 2 Corinthians.

First, 2 Corinthians 3:18:

> "But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."

Notice it's all in the plural. It's not just for individuals. It's for "us all," God's people collectively. As we look in the mirror of God's Word, we behold the glory that God is going to work in us. And as we behold this glory by faith in the mirror, and continue looking in the mirror of God's Word, the Spirit of God transforms us into the likeness of what we see, but only if we look by faith in the mirror. If we don't look in the mirror, the Spirit of God can't work on us. And it's not just one single transformation, but it's from glory to glory. Each time we've arrived at a certain level, God shows us there's a higher level, and it's time to move up, and so on.

But all this transformation depends on two things. First of all, our looking by faith in the mirror of God's word; secondly, the work of the Holy Spirit when we do this. Look also in 2 Corinthians 4:17 and 18 for a moment. Paul says this:

> "For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Again Paul says we are going to have to go through affliction as part of the process of transforming us, but the affliction is going to do us good; it's going to work out God's purposes for us on one condition: that we continue to look, not at the seen things, not at the circumstances and situations around us, but at the unseen things. The seen things, Paul says, are temporal. The unseen things are eternal.

How do we look at the unseen things? How do we look at things that are unseen? The answer is we look by faith in the mirror of God's Word. That shows us the unseen, eternal realities of God's purposes for us.

Let me close by just outlining three steps in this process. First, we look into the mirror of God's Word, by faith. Second, when we look, the Holy Spirit reveals our destiny. It reveals where God has us headed, what He wants to produce in us and out of us. And third, as we continue looking by faith, and do not take our eyes off the mirror, the Holy Spirit continues changing us into that which we have apprehended by faith. And each time we apprehend new truth by faith, we experience a further transformation. It's from glory to glory.

Well, our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be bringing you the first picture of God's people.

Radio Program

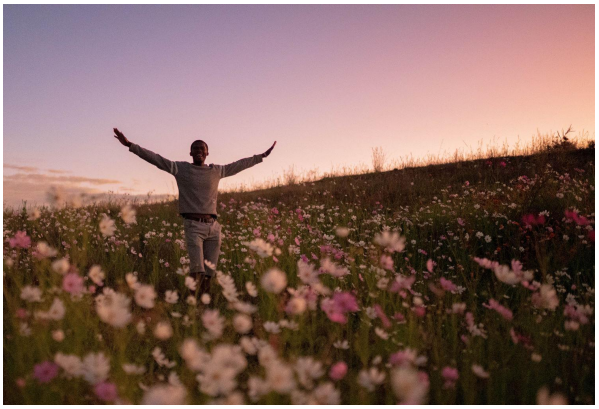
Transcript: TS-R051-102-ENG
Last Updated: 13 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

Bible Teaching Resources



Books

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



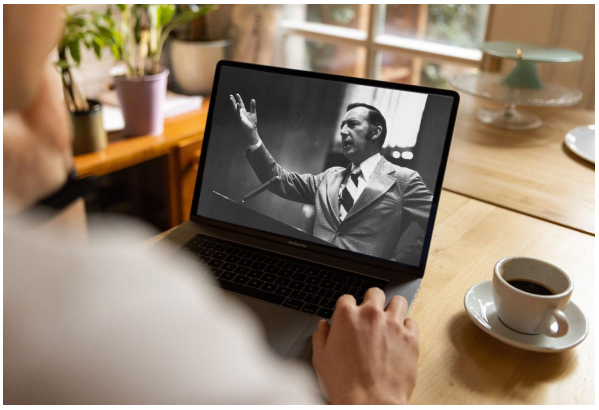
Daily Devotionals

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