

Jesus Our Pattern



Objective for Living - To Do God's Will (Part 1)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again at the beginning of a new week, sharing with you Keys To Successful Living which God has placed in my hand through many years of personal experience and Christian ministry.

My theme for this week is related in a very personal and practical way to the life of each one of us. Its title: Objective for Living.

Let me begin by asking you a personal question: Do you have an objective in life? Are you clear about it? Do you know what it is?—or are you perhaps just drifting?—carried hither and thither by the winds and the waves—the winds of habit and fashion—the waves of circumstances over which you have no control?

There is hardly anything more tragic in a human life than aimlessness. I've often said to people in this connection, "If you aim at nothing, you may be sure you'll hit it." You see, you may have talent, intelligence, special abilities, but—without an objective—you will accomplish very little of permanent value, and you will probably end in frustration.

Herein lies one of the greatest benefits and blessings of the Christian life as God planned it: it provides each one of us with an objective for living. And that's going to be the theme of my studies throughout this Week—Objective for Living—as it's provided for us by our faith in Christ.

For our first picture of the Christian life and its objective, we're going to turn to Hebrews chapter 12, verses 1 and 2:

> "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for you. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (NIV)

There are many important truths there. First of all, the Christian life is a race—a race marked out for us. It's already marked out in advance. We do not have to mark the course

out—that's already been done for us. We have to run the race. And it's not a dash or a sprint. It's much more like a marathon. It's a long race. And the particular quality that's emphasized there is perseverance or endurance. We're going to have to see the course in front of us. And we're going to have to throw off everything that would hinder. It speaks about sins and it speaks about other hindrances. Some things are not sinful, but nevertheless, they hinder us from running the race. For that reason we need to eliminate them from our lives. So that's the first important point to grasp—that there's a race marked out ahead. It's a long-distance race. It's going to take perseverance or endurance to finish.

Secondly, we are to fix our eyes on Jesus. Jesus is our pattern and our inspiration. And if we ever take our eyes off Jesus for any length of time, we will lose our ability to run the race successfully. So in my talks this week, you will see that I'll be focusing our eyes on Jesus.

And then another vitally important truth that's contained there in that passage—it says, "Jesus is the author and perfecter of our faith." The author, the beginner, the one who set it all in motion. We recognize that, but sometimes I think we tend to lose sight of the fact that He's also the perfecter. He not only started it, He's going to finish it. And there's one thing I've seen about God both in Scripture and in His dealings in my life, God never starts anything off that He's not capable of finishing. And so we need to take heart and be encouraged by this fact. Jesus started us off on this race and He's going to enable us to finish it. He is the author, He's the perfecter.

So bear those three important things in mind. The Christian life is a race, the course is marked out ahead of us, it's going to take endurance to complete the race. Secondly, to be successful we have to fix our eyes on Jesus. He is both our pattern and our inspiration. And thirdly, He is both the author and the perfecter of our faith. As long as we keep our eyes on Him, He will not merely set us going, but He'll enable us to keep going and He'll bring us successfully and triumphantly to the finish of the race.

We're looking at Jesus as both our pattern and our inspiration in this Christian race. I want to point out to you now that the key to the success of Jesus was His motivation. Unless we really understand His motivation and enter into it, we'll find this race too much for us.

I'm going to turn to another passage in Hebrews—quite a lengthy passage in Hebrews chapter 10, verses 5 through 10. In this passage the writer of Hebrews quotes from Psalm 40 a certain passage and then applies that quotation to Jesus Christ. So I'm reading now from Hebrews chapter 10, verses 5 through 10:

> "Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: [and now follows the quotation from Psalm 40] 'Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God." First he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them' (although the law required them to be made). Then he said, 'Here I am, I have come to do your will.' He sets aside the first [that's the requirements of the law] to establish the second. [that's the will of God. And then the closing verse, verse 10 says this:] And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (NIV)

I want you to note the place of the word "body"—right at the beginning. The Lord says, "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me." And then right at the end, the comment is, "by that will [the will of God done by Jesus Christ] we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." God provided Jesus with a body that He might have a body to sacrifice on our behalf. And I want you to see that this theme is going to follow all through these studies this week.

Now let's just sum up the lessons from that passage there in Hebrews as they apply to Jesus and His earthly life and ministry. First of all, His supreme motivation is so clearly stated. "I have come to do your will." That's quoted twice there. The supreme purpose of Jesus all through His earthly life was to do the will of God. That was His objective. He was absolutely clear about it—He never swerved from it.

And then it says in that connection, "Here I am —it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God." So I want you to see also, that there was a part written for Jesus to play. It was written before He came. It was written in the scroll of God's Word. He didn't have to write His own part. He didn't have to improvise. It was already written for Him, and He found it out through studying the Scriptures.

And then the third thing I want to point out, God's will for Jesus culminated in the sacrifice of His own body. That's why God gave Him a body that He might sacrifice it. Note those three things briefly—His supreme motivation to do God's will.

Second, there was a part for Him already written in the scroll of Scripture. And third, God's will for Him culminated in the sacrifice of His own body.

Now in the studies that follow this week, I'll be showing you stage by stage that each of these three points needs to have its counterpart in our lives. Everyone of those statements that was true about Jesus needs to be true in our lives. Each one of us needs the same motivation to do God's will. Each one of us needs to discover what is written for us in the scroll, for our lives individually. And in each case the doing of God's will in our lives will culminate in the sacrifice of our own body.

In my talks throughout the rest of this week I'll be sharing with you how this was worked out in the life of Jesus and also how it can be worked out in our lives.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. Tomorrow I'll be sharing with you how the commitment of Jesus to do God's will shaped the whole course of His earthly life.

Radio Program

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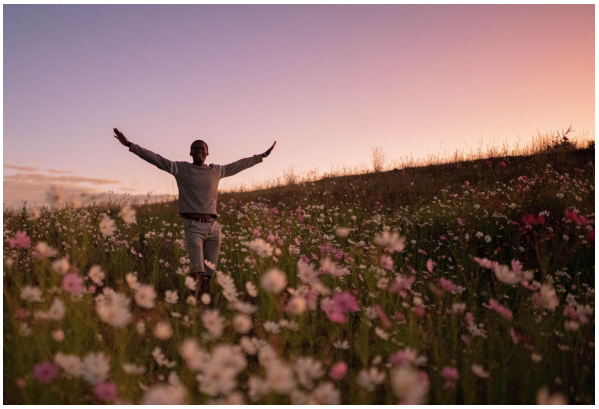

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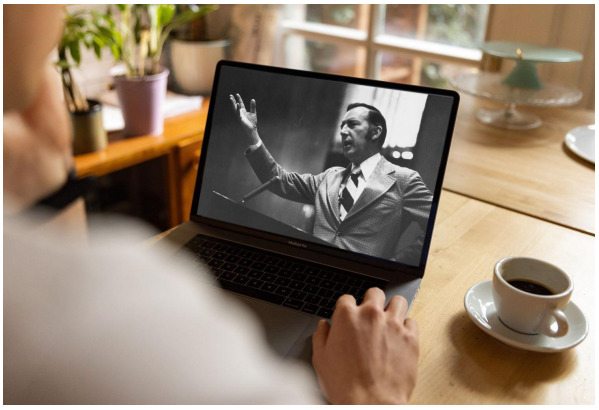

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