

Following the Example of Jesus



Objective for Living - To Do God's Will (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we draw near to the close of another week. Today I'm going to continue and complete the theme we've been studying this week: Objective for Living.

In our studies throughout this week we've been consistently looking to Jesus as both our pattern and our inspiration. We've seen that the commitment to do God's will was the motivation that brought Him down from heaven to earth; that it shaped and directed the entire course of His earthly life and ministry; and that it culminated in the sacrifice of His own body on the cross.

In my closing talk today I'm going to show you how we can apply this pattern of Jesus to our own lives. I want to suggest to you that there are three main steps in applying the pattern of Jesus. The first step I would describe this way: will to do God's will. In John 7, verse 17, Jesus says this:

> "If any one chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." (NIV)

The word there translated "choose" is actually the word "to will." If anyone chooses to do God's will or if anybody wills to do God's will, he will find out.

I think many religious people underestimate the function of the will in our spiritual lives. A lot of people go by impressions and feelings and promptings. But I want to assure you that the thing that will really determine where you will go in life will be the exercise of your will. That is the decisive factor. You can't lead a right life if you don't will to lead a right life. And so Jesus sets before us this challenge, which is also an invitation, to will to do God's will. Without that it will never happen. It'll never happen by just inspiration or by wonderful preaching or by somebody praying for you—there must come a point in your life where you make your personal decision. "Decision" is a key word. You have to "decide"—"I am going to do God's will." Jesus says, "If anyone wills to do God's will, he will find out whether My teaching comes from God."

It's important to understand that we don't find out and then will, we will and then find out. A lot of people have got the order wrong. "God, show me the whole thing. I want to understand first, and then I'll decide to do what you tell me." No! That's not how it works. I've said, more than once, God does not scratch an itching intellect. If you just want to know because your want to know, out of intellectual curiosity, without the willingness to make a commitment, God will not reveal it to you. But, if you will will to do God's will, then understanding, insight, revelation will follow.

Let me put it this way—Commitment leads to understanding; not understanding to commitment. You don't first understand God's will, then commit yourself to do it. You commit yourself to do God's will, and to your committed mind God begins to unfold His will. So there is a point in our lives, for everyone of us, where we have to make a vital decision. My decision is to do God's will—period. Not if, or perhaps. That's not commitment. My decision is to do the will of God. That's the first step.

The second, follows directly from the example of Jesus that we have been studying. The doing of God's will culminated for Him in the sacrifice of His body. And He knew that when He set out to do God's will. It may surprise you to know, but it's very clearly stated in Scripture, that for you and me to do God's will, requires likewise, the sacrifice of our bodies. But there is a difference. The sacrifice for the body of Jesus meant its death. We are told by Paul, to sacrifice our bodies still living. Here's the verse in Romans 12:1:

> "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." (NIV)

So, God says, "In the light of all that I have done for you; in the light of my total provision for you, the response I require from you is that you will offer your body, a living sacrifice. That you'll place your body on My altar. That you'll make your body available to Me without reservation." If you offer your body, a living sacrifice to God, you no longer claim ownership of your body. You no longer decide where your body will go. You no longer decide what your body will do. You no longer decide what your body will eat or what it will wear. You've given up the right to make those decisions. From now on, your body no longer belongs to you—it belongs to God. You've sacrificed it to Him, living on His altar. Whatever is placed on the altar of God belongs thereafter to God. It does not any longer belong to the person who gave it. That's what God requires, that we just like Jesus, sacrifice our body. The difference being, Jesus sacrificed His body through death—we are asked to sacrifice our body still alive. To hand it over to God; to give up our rights and our claims; no longer to be the one who decides where my body will go, what my body will eat, what it will wear. Those decisions are no long ours because our body no longer belongs to us.

Now, that may sound very frightening. I want to tell you, it's very exciting. And it may not end up with you wearing rags and sandals and living on bread and water. God has got all sorts of ideas about what He might do with you and your body. But He's not going to tell you until your body belongs to Him. You've got to commit first, then understand.

Now we come to the third step. You've offered your body as a sacrifice to God. What follows? Paul describes it very clearly in the next verse of Romans—Romans 12, verse 2:

> "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (NIV)

So, once you've made that decisive step of handing your body over to God as a living sacrifice, something happens in your mind. It releases something in your mind—you're renewed. You no longer think the way the world thinks. People of the world always are self-centered in their thinking—"If I do this, how will it affect me? If I say this, will I get a raise, will I be promoted, will people like me?" It's all centering around me. But the renewed mind doesn't center around me—the renewed mind centers around God. Will this glorify God? Is this God's purpose in my life? "And with that mind thus renewed," Paul says. "Then you can find out the will of God." You see, God will not give that revelation until you've made the commitment. But the commitment leads to the renewing of your mind, and with the renewing of your mind, then you can discern the will of God. You can find our the path that God has for you in life. And I want to suggest to you, in most cases it will be very different from what you think it might be. The devil will be right there at your elbow telling you it's going to miserable, it's going to be hard, you're going to spend the rest of your life washing dishes or living somewhere in a desert—that maybe so, but most probably it won't be so. But you won't know till you make the commitment.

Now, I want to suggest to you in closing this series of talks that the outworking of this surrender of your body to God in your life, to do the will of God, will be the same—in essence—as it was in the life of Jesus. There were five results in the life of Jesus that we looked at. I want to just recapitulate them and point out to you that you can

anticipate the same results in your life. First of all, there was supernatural, physical restoration. Jesus was not limited to His own physical strength—nor will you be if you're committed to the will of God.

Second, there was proper vision. Jesus saw things the way God sees things and so will you begin to see things when you are committed to the will of God. Third, there was just judgment or clear discernment. Jesus was not fooled, He wasn't deceived—He saw things in people the way they really were. Fourth, Jesus became a channel of life to a dying world. And you and I can be likewise channels of life when we're committed to do God's will. And fifth, Jesus said, "I've glorified You on the earth. I've finished the work You gave me to do." If we will commit ourselves to God and His will and to finish it with all our heart, we too will be able to glorify God on earth.

Now, if my messages this week have touched you, you've got a new vision of what it means to do the will of God, may I ask you, may I suggest to you that you make a personal commitment yourself. And then if you'd like help or prayer, write in to us.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Next week I'll be sharing with you on another inspiring and challenging theme from the Word of God.

My special offer this week is my book, Faith to Live By. This book puts in your hand the essential key to a successful Christian life. It explains what faith is; how it comes; what it will do for you.

Also, my complete series of talks this week on Objective for Living is available in a single, carefully edited cassette.

Stay tuned for details.

Radio Program

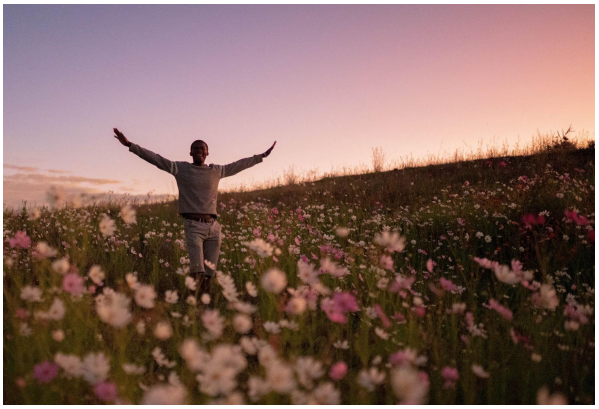
Transcript: TS-R096-105-ENG
Last Updated: 12 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

Bible Teaching Resources



Books

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



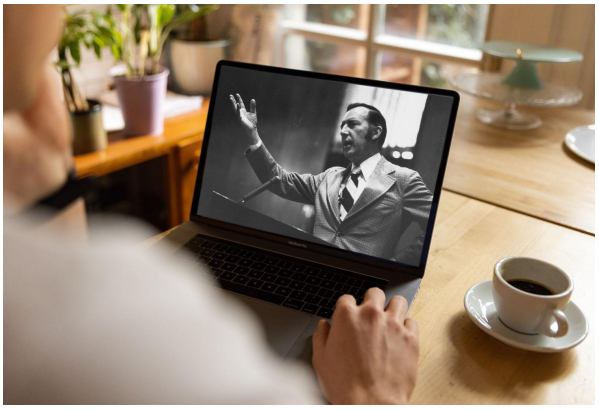
Daily Devotionals

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