


# You Must Decide



## The Decision is Yours (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. The title of my talks this week is: "The Decision is Yours." It'll show you how you are the one to determine your life's destiny.

But first, let me say Thank You to those of you who have been writing to me. Before I finish this talk, we'll be giving you a mailing address to which you may write. It means a great deal to me to hear how this radio ministry of mine has been helping you and blessing you. So please, take time to write, even if it's only a brief personal note. Now, back to our theme, "The Decision is Yours."

This is a theme which I intend to apply in a very direct and personal way to each one who is listening. First of all, you need to understand that the decisive element in human experience is the will, not the emotions. Probably many people would accept this as true in the secular realm, in the non-religious realm. In daily living, in areas such as business or finance, people expect to use their will. But for some strange reason, when it comes to religion or spiritual experience, most people seem to have the impression that in this area of spiritual experience here things are different. Here our experience depends upon our emotions and is determined by our emotions. If you hear of somebody in the world speaking about someone who's religious, they tend to give the impression that that person is very emotional and rather unstable. In other words, such a person is ruled by emotion not by the decision of the will. I want to say that this is a complete mistake. The decisive element in genuine spiritual experience, just as in other areas, is the will. This mistake, so commonly made both by believers and by non-believers, explains why the spiritual experience of many professing Christians is often so weak and unstable. They're relying on their emotions, which fluctuate and are unstable and consequently their spiritual experience is as weak and unstable as their emotions. They don't realize that the decisive element is not their emotions but their will.

Now, if you have that attitude about emotion being decisive in spiritual experience (and I'm calling it an attitude but I could call it a problem), I believe that these talks of mine are going to help you tremendously. In fact, I believe they can

revolutionize your entire spiritual experience.

To understand the part played by our will in our spiritual experience, I want to turn, first of all, to some words of David at the beginning of Psalm 103, the first two verses of the psalm. This is what David says:

> "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Now, if you analyze those words at first sight they're rather strange. David is speaking to his own soul. And he's challenging his soul to do something. So, if David is speaking to his soul then it's not David's soul that is speaking. I believe, myself, it's David's spirit that is speaking to his soul. David's spirit is in contact with God. David's spirit is aware of the things of the spirit world, aware of spiritual obligations, but his soul, as often with many of us, is slow to respond. His soul doesn't see things the way his spirit sees things. His spirit is willing, but his soul, if I could say so, is somewhat sluggish. So David's spirit is stirring up his soul. But David's spirit realizes that for things to happen, it's not enough for his spirit to be stirred, his soul has to make the decision.

If I could use a simple illustration: his soul is the switch that turns activity off and on. The current, you could say, comes through his spirit. But the switch is his soul. His soul has to make the decision.

Now, in order to appreciate this more fully, you need to have at least a basic picture of man's nature. Man was created, the Bible tells us, in the likeness of God. The Bible reveals a triune God; that is, one God in three persons. And the fact that man's nature is like that of God, leads us to the conclusion that man's nature is triune. He's one person, but there are three elements in his personality.

This is brought out very clearly by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, where he prays this prayer, or wishes this wish:

> "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly [w-h-o-l-l-y, entirely, completely]; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul is here praying for God's will to be perfectly worked out in the total life and personality of each believer whom he's addressing. And referring to that total personality, he uses this phrase "your whole spirit and soul and body." I personally believe that's a full description of man's total personality. He is a triune being. One person with three constituent elements to make up their total personality and those three constituent elements are the spirit, the soul and the body.

Now, most of us have no problem about acknowledging the reality of our body and I think most Christians, at least, would acknowledge that they have a soul but when it comes to the relationship between the spirit and the soul in the inward, invisible area of man's personality, that is where people begin to have problems. We faced a very important and practical question: If man's made up of spirit, soul and body, how can we distinguish between that which is in his spirit and that which is in his soul? Well, the answer is given first of all, in Hebrews, chapter 4, verse 12, where the writer says this:

> "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."

So the answer is: The only way that we can learn to divide or separate between spirit and soul is by studying and applying the truth of Scripture. The writer of Hebrews says about the Word of God, "...it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit." Those are the hardest things in human personality to divide. Then it also says, "...[and the] joints and [the] marrow." That's in the physical realm, it divides between joints and marrow which are close together. In the inner realm, the invisible realm, it divides between soul and spirit. So, unless we turn to the Word of God and accept its revelation, we will never properly be able to discern between spirit and soul. We'll be in a state of inward uncertainty and confusion.

Again, the Bible also presents itself as a kind of mirror which reveals our inner being. Not our outward physical appearance, but our inner being. This is what James says in his epistle, chapter 1, verse 23 and 24:

> "Anyone who listens to the word [that's the Word of God] but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like."

So, when we look in the Word of God it's like looking in a mirror which reveals our inward spiritual constitual elements and our nature, not our outward appearance, but our inward appearance. So looking in the mirror of God's Word in the light of those passages that we've looked at in 1 Thessalonians, Hebrews 4, and James chapter 1, we find this revelation that man's triune being consists of three specific elements: his spirit, his soul, his body. Very briefly and simply,

we may distinguish between them in this way: the spirit is God-conscious, the soul is self-conscious, the body is world-conscious. Through the senses, the body apprehends the physical world. Man's spirit is the only way he can relate directly to God. Only man's spirit can relate directly to God. In between them, as it were, like a kind of ball and socket or a joint or a gear lever, is the soul which makes a man self-conscious. Now, we're dealing particularly, in these talks, with the function of the soul. The soul, I would say, is the ego. The soul is the part of man which says, "I will," or "I will not"; thus deciding man's destiny. It makes the unique individual because two individuals can be in the same exact situation, one says, "I will do so-and-so," the other one says, "I will not." That's what distinguishes them.

So I want you to see how important and how decisive is the right exercise of the function of the soul which is the exercise of the will, not the emotions, but the will. Our destiny in time and eternity is determined by our soul. Our soul can say "Yes" to God, or it can say "No" to God. Our soul can switch on to spiritual experience, or switch off to spiritual experience. But the kind of spiritual experience we have is not determined primarily by our emotions. Our emotions may influence the decision of our soul, but it's determined by the way our soul responds.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. In my talk tomorrow, I'll be focusing on two important decisions your soul needs to make.

Radio Program

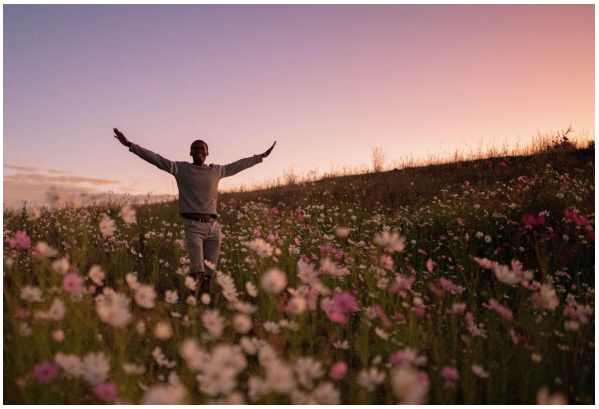
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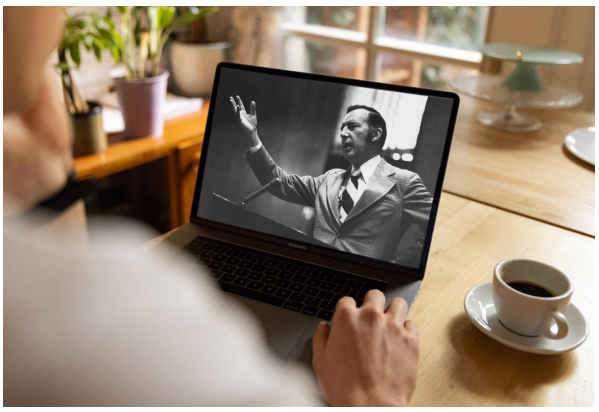
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