

David's First Two Decisions



The Decision is Yours (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing with you precious insights out of Scripture that have made the difference between success and failure in my life and can do the same in yours. 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.

In my introductory talk yesterday, I explained 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 daily living, in areas such as business or finance. But 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. Yet 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 explains why the spiritual experience of many professing Christians is often so weak and so unstable, being based on their emotions and not on their will, it fluctuates just as their emotions do. It's natural for people's emotions to fluctuate. That does not mean that our spiritual experience needs to fluctuate with our emotions if it's based on our will. But if you have that attitude and I could call it that 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.

The example of the application of this truth which we looked at yesterday was in the words of David in Psalm 103, verses 1 and 2, where he says this:

> "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."

We saw there how David's spirit exhorted his soul to do what David's spirit knew he ought to do but what only David's soul could actually make the decision to do it. And we went on to look briefly at the revelation of Scripture of the triune nature of man. That man is one person with three constituent

elements: spirit, soul and body. And I suggested this simple distinction: The spirit is God-conscious, the soul is self-conscious, the body is word-conscious through the senses. And the spirit knows what ought to be done in relation to God, the body knows what ought to be done in relation to the world around it, but in each case it's the soul that makes the decision to do it. Whether the prompting comes from the spirit or whether it comes from the body.

Well, in my talk today, I'm going to go back, once more, to Psalm 103 and I'm going to show you two specific decisions which David exhorted his soul to make. They're very relevant to the spiritual experience of each one of us and not just for David. He's a pattern. Let's read those words again in Psalm 103, verses 1 and 2.

> "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."

Did you pick up the two decisions there which David's spirit exhorted his soul to make? The first was positive: "Bless the Lord"; the second was negative: "forget not," don't forget. But each alike is a decision.

Let's consider briefly what's involved in that first decision to bless the Lord. We need to understand the background of the Hebrew word for "to bless," which is very interesting. Without quoting Hebrew, that word "to bless" is derived directly from the Hebrew word for the knee, K - N - E - E. So, it suggests a transaction with God on our knees. What happens when we come on our knees before God, turn our hearts and minds to Him, look up to Him, and adopt a right attitude? Well, we offer to God our devotion, our worship. That's how we bless God. But, as we offer to God in this right attitude and posture we also receive back from God His blessing, His approval, His favor. So, the decision to bless God is a decision to adopt a certain attitude to God literally, a physical attitude. But, beyond that a spiritual attitude of humility and reverence and bowing before God and then, as we make that decision, to bow before God, to acknowledge Him as God, to give Him the preeminence, the majesty which are His due, then in return God blesses us. So, you find all through the Bible there's a two-way transaction in blessing. First, the human personality turns to God, offers God what is His due and then, in turn, God offers His favor, His blessing, back to the person.

Now, it's very interesting, I think, to understand that this word for blessing primarily describes an attitude. It's not so much what we say as how we adopt our attitude toward God. You see, it's very close to the word for "worship." And the same is true of the word for "worship," both in the Hebrew of the Old Testament and in the Greek of the New, every main word that's translated "worship" is a word that describes an attitude.

So, what David was telling his soul was, "Adopt the right attitude toward God." What is that attitude? Humility, reverence, acknowledgment, bowing before Him. That's a decision. Have you ever made that decision? Has your spirit ever given that direction to your soul? And, if so, how did your soul respond?

Now I'm going to turn to the second decision that David's spirit challenged his soul to make. That was contained in the words "forget not," don't forget. I'd like to translate that in a positive form this way: focus your mind on. If you decide not to forget something, then you're deciding to remember it. You're focusing your mind on it. And I want to say it's tremendously important in the spiritual life what we focus our mind on. We cannot think right and live wrong. And we cannot think wrong and live right. One part of the book of Proverbs says, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." So this decision to think on the right things is critical.

What was it that David decided he would focus his mind on? He says, "...the Lord's benefits." In the next three verses, he enumerates six specific benefits of the Lord which he was determined to keep his mind focused on. Listen to these benefits: the Lord...

> "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities (it's addressed 'thine' because David is talking to his soul); who healeth all they diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Let me just briefly recapitulate those six benefits. The first one: the Lord forgives all our iniquities, all our acts of rebellion. Secondly, He heals all our diseases. Thirdly, He redeems our life from destruction; that is, the pit of corruption. Fourth, He crowns us with lovingkindness and tender mercies. The Hebrew word means He surrounds us and also He treats us like royalty. Fifth, He satisfies our mouth with good things. There's a question as to how that word that's translated mouth there should be translated. There are various different ways of translating it but let's say He satisfies something in us with good things. And sixthly, as a result of this, our youth is renewed like the eagle's. Now I used to say, "There was a time when I could settle for the first two benefits: He forgives all my iniquities, He heals all my diseases. I've reached that stage in life where I have to claim the sixth benefit as well, that my youth is renewed like the eagle's. And I want to praise God publicly that He's very

faithful to do that.

Now, I want to point out to you that the way we focus our mind in this matter is going to determine our experience. Not our emotions, but the decision of our minds. Forgetting is the way to lose the benefits. Focusing on them is the way to enter into them. If you forget them, you won't experience them. You see, focusing our mind, I want to say once more, is a decision of our will. Listen to what Paul says in Philippians 4:8:

> "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if [there's] anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things."

That's the same principle. You can determine what to focus your mind on. Here's something that's very important for all of us to remember. Listen carefully. Our mind should be our servant, not our master. I want to ask you this: Does your mind dictate to you what it thinks about? Or do you dictate to your mind what it thinks about? You see, that's a decision that the will has to make.

What were the two decisions that David asked his soul to make in that passage?

Number 1: to bless the Lord

Number 2: to focus his mind on the Lord's benefits

Let me recommend those two decisions to each one who hears. Decide to bless the Lord. Decide to focus your mind on His benefits. That's how you'll experience them.

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 dealing with another related decision of the will which we all need to make.

Radio Program

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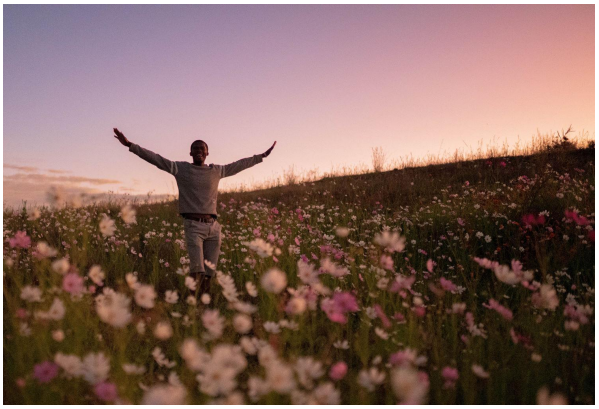

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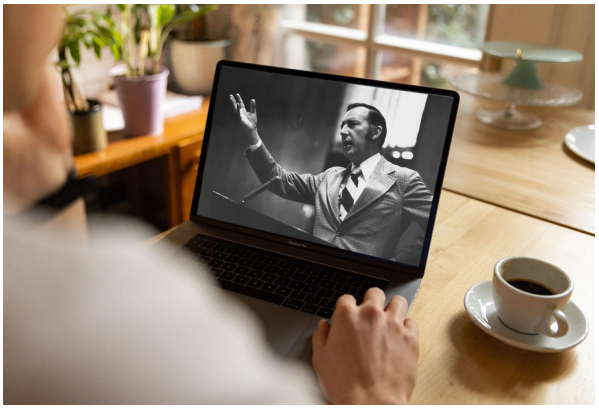

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