

Choose Life



The Decision is Yours (Part 8)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, sharing on this week's challenging theme, "The Decision is Yours."

Earlier on in these talks, I explained certain basic facts which I'll briefly recapitulate: First of all, in the human personality the soul is the decision-making element, the ego; that part of us which says, "I will," or "I will not"; which distinguishes us from any other person. Because every other person may make one decision but you can make the opposite decision. That makes you an individual.

Secondly, I explained that our decisions determine our destiny. Very, very important to see that. Many people kind of feel they are being carried along on a river which they can't resist, they almost feel there's no choice; their attitude is fatalistic. That's not a biblical attitude. Fatalism is not part of the Bible. It's a part of many cults that have invaded the world today. It's a part of many Oriental philosophies. I myself at one time studied yoga. That teaches a kind of pacifism, but it's not the pacifism of true peace. It's an attitude that lets things happen. That is not the attitude of the born again Christian. There's a tremendous need to free our minds from this passive attitude which is part of the product of many of these cults and philosophies that are invading the world today.

In my previous talks this week, I've dealt with two specific decisions that we need to make. The first one is to forgive other people, to tear up the I.O.U., the second is humility. Yesterday I explained that humility, too, comes by decision. That it's not really scriptural to pray, "God, make me humble," because God says, "Humble yourself." And I took the example of the guests at the wedding banquet, where each guest had to choose whether he would sit at the top table or at the lowest table. And sitting at the lowest table was humility, sitting at the top table is pride. Each comes by a decision. And as we go through life, we have to go into situations with that attitude: Am I going to sit at the top table or am I going to take the lowest seat? That's decision-making.

In my talk today, I'm going to focus on another choice or decision that we have to make between life and death. Perhaps you didn't realize that this, too, is an area where the decision is yours, that you have to choose between life and death.

The choice between life and death was forcefully presented to Israel by Moses in Deuteronomy, chapter 30, verses 15-19 and I'm going to read those words. Moses is speaking to the whole nation of Israel and he says this:

> "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; [Notice there are two pairs of opposites. One pair is life and good, the other is death and evil. And then he explains the choice:] In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: [notice that choice leads to living.] and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land wither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish [that's death], and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, wither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed [or thy descendents] may live…"

Hear those words: "…therefore choose life." Life is a choice.

As I pointed out, but I'll recapitulate, Moses sets before Israel two pairs of opposites: life and good (and the other version of good is blessing, good is blessing) so it's life and good and blessings or death and evil and a curse. And we are obliged to choose just as Israel was. Neutrality is ruled out.

Notice how momentous the choice is. When Moses presented this to Israel, he said, "I call heaven and earth to record…" This was a choice that was made in the full view of the universe. The denizens of heaven were witnesses of this choice. You see, that's so solemn. Sometimes we make choices we don't realize that God and the angels and Satan and his demons are all looking on to see what choice we're going to make.

And then, notice in the words of Moses, the consequences of our choice. Moses said, "…choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live"; thy descendents. You see, our choice does not merely affect us; it affects our descendents for good or for evil. Parents who make the wrong choice bring into the world children who start life, as they say in the American idiom, with "two strikes against them." That's because of their parents' wrong choice. Now, I'm not saying that a child cannot ultimately escape from that wrong choice. Thank God there is a way out. But all of us need to recognize that the choices we make do not merely affect ourselves, they affect others and particularly, they affect our children and our grandchildren and all our descendents.

So here is a choice that's set before you and me today as was set before Israel in those days. It's a choice between life or death, good or evil, blessing or curse. And remember, you have to make the choice.

Not only did Moses present this choice between life and death to Israel, but Jesus Himself also presented it very briefly, very simply, very clearly. Listen to what He says in John 10, verse 10:

> "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

So there you see are two persons put before us: Jesus, the life-giver; Satan, the thief, the life-taker. Jesus says, "If you want life, I have it to offer you. That's why I came, to give you life, life to the full, life in abundance. But if you don't choose Me, the alternative is the thief, the Devil." And Jesus warns us so clearly the motives of the thief. He says this, "…[he] comes only to steal [to] kill [to] destroy." Those are three very solemn words. Bear that in mind, if you admit the devil into your life, that's why he comes. He won't tell you that, he may offer you a lot of lies and a lot of bluff but behind it all that's his motivation to steal, to kill, to destroy.

To steal, he'll take away the blessings which God wishes you to have: your health, your peace of mind, the happiness of your home and your family, the respect of others. He'll take those things away, he'll steal them. Not only that, he'll kill you physically. Remember, he's a murderer. He'll be responsible for your death. But that's not the end. After that, he'll destroy soul and body in hell. That's a terrible option. Remember the thief only comes to steal, to kill, to destroy.

What's the alternative? The alternative is Jesus. "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." It's exactly the same choice that was presented to Israel. In fact, Moses merely prophetically foreshadowed the great Messiah Jesus.

So, we have two persons standing in front of us: Jesus; the thief. We have to yield to one. The only option is: To whom shall we yield? Shall we yield to Jesus and receive life? Or shall we yield to Satan and be cursed with death, banishment from the presence of God? Remember, the decision is yours. Each one of us has to make that decision.

Let me say one more thing: I pray for you that you will choose life. I pray for everyone that hears this message that they will choose life. And let me say one more thing: If you choose life, you need to affirm your choice boldly. I want to give you some words from Psalm 118, verse 17:

> "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord."

If you choose Jesus, and receive in Him eternal life, then you will not be murdered by the thief. God will take you home in His time but you will not be murdered. You can say, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." Remember, you have to make a positive confession. You cannot be passive, you cannot be fatalistic.

Let me recommend to you that you make this confession:

> "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord."

I'm going to say it once more and invite you to say it after me, phrase by phrase. "I shall not die… but live… and declare the works of the Lord."

May God bless you.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. Tomorrow I'll focus on the second alternative, the choice between the blessing and the curse.

Radio Program

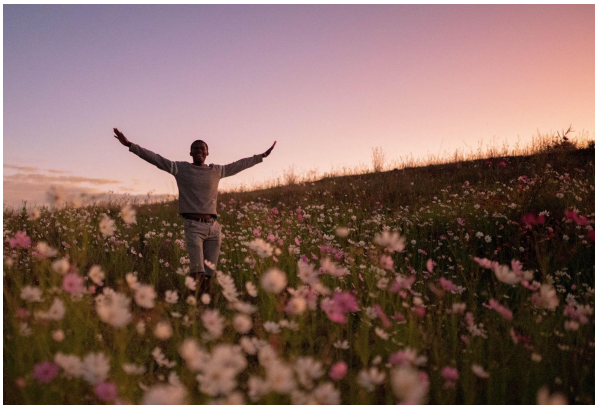
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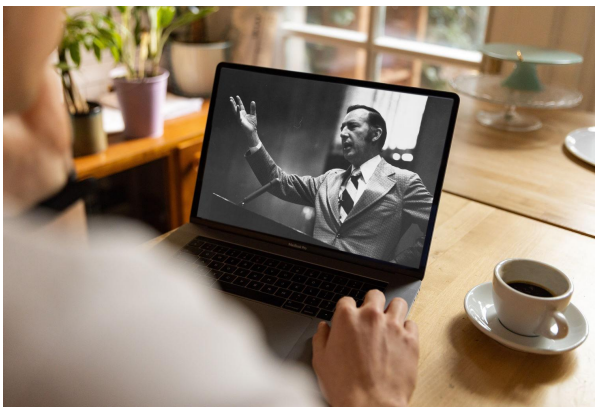
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