

Life or Death?



No Neutrality (Part 4)
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.

I'm continuing today with our theme for this week, "No Neutrality." I've been sharing that in the spiritual life there is no room for compromise or neutrality. The Bible sets before us a series of opposites. In each case we are compelled to choose between them. We may have one or the other but we cannot have both.

Here are some of the opposites we've been looking at: with Jesus or against him, gathering or scattering, serving God or serving mammon [or money], the true God or false gods, actions that are either good or bad but never indifferent, the choice between obedience and lawlessness.

In no case does the Bible leave room for neutrality or compromise. That's a kind of false religion that has somehow crept into the thinking, I think, of the majority of Christians. I think actually as I've observed people—and I travel widely and meet multitudes of Christians from different backgrounds—I think the majority of Christians have fallen into this trap of believing that there's some kind of neutrality, some kind of third possibility which is good, which is bad, it isn't the true God but it isn't a false god, it isn't gathering but it isn't scattering. There is no such thing. We need to turn away from this deception of Satan. We need to remove our foot from this snare.

Today we're going to look at another set of mutually exclusive alternatives, alternatives which Moses presented to Israel more than 3,000 years ago, but which apply as surely to us today as they ever did to Israel. This list of alternatives and the choices that we are required to make are found in Deuteronomy 30:15B20 where Moses says this:

> "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I have command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply: and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. But if

> your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, I announce to you today that you shall surely perish: you shall not prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live: that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days." (NKJ)

You see there, God through Moses commands us to choose. And when God says, "Choose," we have to choose. We cannot decline the option. Not to choose is to choose wrong.

The choice that Moses presented to Israel—and which God presents to us today—is so solemn that heaven and earth are called to be witnesses. I want to tell you that we, too, today make choices that are watched by heavenly hosts: hosts of angels and hosts of demons. The unseen world watches as we make these vital choices.

Moses set before Israel three pairs of opposites. Life or death, good or prosperity on the one hand or evil and adversity on the other hand, and blessing or curse. Let me just say those again. Life or death, good or evil, blessing or curse. And it must be all in one column or the other. We cannot switch from one to the other. If we want life we must choose good and blessing. If we do not choose life and good and blessing then we are doomed to death and evil and the curse.

And notice—and this is very important—ultimately the choice revolves around the person. Moses said to them at the end of that address, "He [the Lord your God] is your life, and the length of your days." Oh, what truth there is in that! Ultimately, God is our life. He Himself is our life. You see, we look just at the superficial, the visible and the material and we see things. But when our eyes are opened by the Spirit of God and the Word of God, behind these things we always see two persons, two invisible spiritual persons. I call them the life givers and the life takers. And that's ultimately where the choice lies. Not just between things, it's between two persons.

Jesus made this issue very, very clear in John 10:10. He said:

> "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (NKJ)

There are the two persons. Jesus the life giver; and the thief which is one of the many titles for Satan, the life taker. And every one of us is shut up to one or other of these two persons. If we choose Jesus the life giver then on the positive side there is life, more abundant life, more and more. It's always increasing, it's not static. On the other hand, if we submit to Satan the life taker, on the negative side there are three things he will do. He will steal, he will kill, he will destroy. We will have less and less and less.

I believe there's a specific meaning to each of those three actions: stealing, killing, destroying. First of all, Satan steals all the good things that God desires us to have. Our innocence, our health, our peace of mind, our family, our children. He takes those from us. Then he kills. He brings us ultimately to physical death. Remember that millions of people die every day murdered, murdered by the life taker, murdered by Satan. They wouldn't have had cause to die. If they had lived for God they could have probably lived many more years. They die murdered by Satan. But after death there's destroying. I believe that's the eternal. The Bible speaks much about eternal destruction. Remember, physical death is not the end. The life taker, once he grips you and holds you and has you in his grip, not just for time but for eternity. You see, there are always just these two alternatives.

In John 3:16 it's stated so simply, so clearly:

> "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (NKJ)

There are the alternatives again. You can choose Jesus the life giver and in Him you can receive eternal life, everlasting life, life that will never end, life that is the very life of God Himself, life that will endure as long as God Himself endures. But if you refuse life, the alternative is to perish. And I believe again, that's more than just physical death. It's physical death but it's also eternal banishment from the presence of Almighty God in a place of torment. Those are the options. It's tragic that very, very few churches today are really confronting people with these options, but they've never changed. God's word hasn't changed. The choices are still just one or the other, nothing in between, no neutrality.

Perhaps you who listen to me have already chosen Jesus, you've chosen the life giver, you've made a commitment to Him. But as you've listened to me today there's some doubts and some fear has come into your heart. You need to make a

fresh commitment of your life to Jesus. I urge you to do this right now wherever you are. Or, perhaps you've never committed your life to Jesus. You're confronted for the first time with these simple choices: life or death, good or evil, blessing or cursing. I want to urge you while the thought is in your mind, while you're confronted with these issues; don't temporize, don't delay, make your decision. Say very simply, "Lord Jesus Christ, I thank you that you died for me on the cross. That I can commit my life, that I can receive you. And in receiving you receive eternal life. That is my choice, Lord Jesus. Today I choose life." Will you do that? And if you've made that decision or reaffirmed it, write and tell me because it will strengthen you greatly to share that decision with somebody and it will encourage me. Please remember, even radio preachers need to be encouraged sometimes. Write and tell me what this has done for you.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. The theme of my talk tomorrow will be "Only One Direction—Forward."

My special offer this week is my book, Repent and Believe. It describes the first two steps you have to take in order to escape from the snare of neutrality. It will open to you the way of a life of fruitful and effective service. Also, my complete series of talks this week on "No Neutrality" is available in a single, carefully edited cassette. Stay tuned for details.

Radio Program

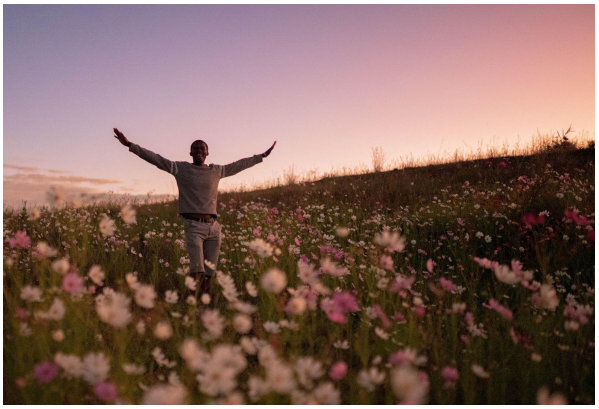
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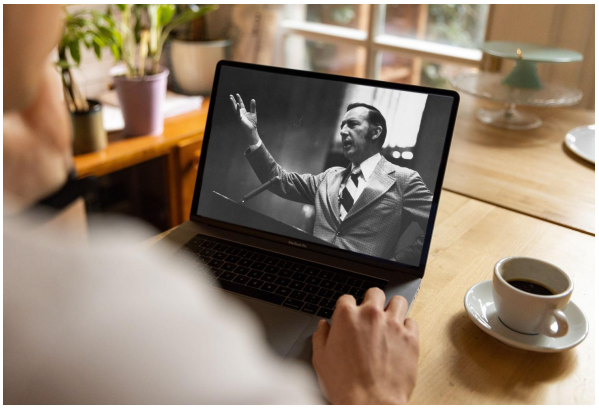
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