

Forms of Godliness



Glimpses of the End (Part 3)
by Derek Prince

You may be trying to follow Jesus but aren't meeting the conditions. You can't do it. You'll experience all sorts of frustrations and defeats and you may not even understand why. You say, "Well I'm sincerely trying to live the Christian life." Well, that's good but you haven't met the conditions. There are no exceptions to these conditions. If you want to be a victorious Christian, these are the conditions. And they're absolutely contrary to the spirit of this age. Because the spirit of this age is a spirit of self-love, of self-pleasing, and we have to decide.

I've been shocked because in a certain situation which I don't need to describe, I came up against the effects of contemporary educational system in this country in a young person. And I discovered that the emphasis now is on cultivating yourself, pleasing yourself, becoming the right kind of individual. There is no emphasis now self-denial or even on discipline. You do what you feel like, do what feels good, be free, cultivate yourself. The problem is the self you're cultivating is a rebel. The more you cultivate yourself, the more rebellious you become.

I learned with shock... I read a secular magazine, and this was in the United States. A woman who was an educationist was saying that one of the things the Feminist Movement has done is to affirm that excellence is something men imposed upon us, therefore we don't want excellence. If you don't want excellence it's pretty easy not to achieve it. And we are producing a generation of young people that don't know what excellence is. There are some wonderful exceptions, but they're coming into life lame because they're being misguided as to what the real key to success is.

I want to go back to 2 Timothy now and just pinpoint a few further features of this present age in which we are living. 2 Timothy chapter 3. Incidentally it says about those who, "have a form of godliness but deny its power, from such people turn away." My interpretation of that is don't waste your time on people who are not willing to be serious with God. I'm not interested in ministering to people who are not willing to change. I mean, I may do it but I don't do it intentionally. I think it's a waste of time. I think what Paul was saying is, "Don't waste your time on people who are not willing to change." And I believe that applies to many ministers here today. You are wasting time on people who are only playing religion. And they'll take as much of your time as

you like. The more you counsel them the more time you give them, the more you feed the ego. But you're not accomplishing anything. And it's a subtle trap of Satan because there are others in whom it is worthwhile investing your time and you're being sidetracked from them to the person with the perennial problems. You never have any of those in your church, I'm sure!

You know why the have perennial problems? Because they're not willing to meet God's conditions. Don't waste time on them. That's what Paul says in the "Prince version."

Now, let's notice some of the other features of this time. We go to 2 Timothy chapter 3 verses 8 and 9, and it speaks about the Egyptian magicians, Jannes and Jambres. You might not know who they were, but they were the magicians of Egypt. And it says,

> "Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men or corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was."

So there's going to be opposition from the occult. The magicians were occult practitioners. And in Germany at least there are far more occult practitioners than there are Christian ministers today. It's not an old thing that's passed away. It's very contemporary, it's very up to date. And these magicians were not to be laughed. It staggers my mind, but of the first three miracles that Moses and Aaron could perform, they could do the same. Aaron threw down his rod and it became a serpent. Pharaoh said, "What about you boys? Can you do that?" They said, "Yes. Sure we can." They threw down their rods and they became snakes. Now if that happened in a Charismatic church the people would pay a lot of attention. The exciting thing is. You know what happened? Aaron's rod ate up the snakes of the magicians. So picture those magicians leaving. They left empty handed, whereas Aaron left with a rod that was thicker and stronger than the one he ever had before. But don't be under any misapprehension. The occult can produce various kinds of miracles. The ability to produce miracles is not a guarantee that a person is from God.

Then after that, Moses was told to draw water out of the Nile and turn it into blood. It turned into blood. Pharaoh said to his magicians, "Can you boys do that?" They said, "Sure we can do that." And then Moses was told to call frogs out of the river and he did it. And Pharaoh said, "What about you boys? Can you do that?" They said, "Sure we can." The frogs came up for them too. They got to a point where Moses could do something they couldn't do, and then no magician said, "This is the finger of God." And you need to know that we are in a conflict with occult powers in particular. And if you're not prepared for that you're going to run into trouble. And this battle is not being fought out on the fields of theology, but on the demonstration of spiritual power. Do you have that power? Is it demonstrated in your life and ministry? Can you outdo the magicians? Because that's what it has to come to.

Then a little further on in 2 Timothy 3 verse 13, Paul says,

> "But evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

They deceive because they are deceived. Nobody is so good at deceiving as the one who is himself deceived. But let me offer a little comment from my studies in Greek. Evil men and imposters is not the right translation. The word in Greek means enchanters. People who practice incantation, which is one major form of exercising occult power. And so again we are dealing with occult practitioners.

Some years ago... I measure my life by who was my wife at the time, and it was when Lydia was still my wife. A man came to me and he announced that he was the most powerful wizard in the United States. Well, I didn't necessarily believe him, but he came to me to apologize because he'd got angry with me without my even knowing anything about it, because I apparently hadn't paid enough attention to him somewhere. And he told me that he'd put a curse on my family. Well that was useful information and I decided to deal with it but not deal with him.

But then, he went on. He was one of these people who liked to talk about himself, and he said he'd practiced various forms of the occult including telekinesis. Do you know what that is? Moving objects at a distance. You can't get inside the room but you have somehow you exercise power that changes the place of something in the room. He said he'd succeeded at that. But he said he came to the conclusion that the most powerful tool he had was incantation, which is exactly like these two. And that really taught me something. I thought if Satanic incantation is so powerful, what about our incantation? What about when we sing in the Spirit. Isn't that powerful too? But what I want to emphasize is don't write the occult off as fantasy or... It is very, very real.

You go and tell some African a witchdoctor had no power he'll laugh in your face because he knows full well he does. Isn't that right? That's right. All right.

Now we come down to the practical. What is our response to this situation, the deterioration of human character and the

upsurge of the occult? And it's challenging us. And I want to give you the answer from the Bible.

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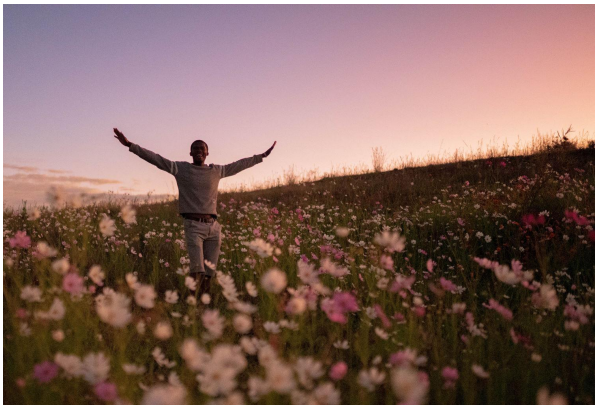

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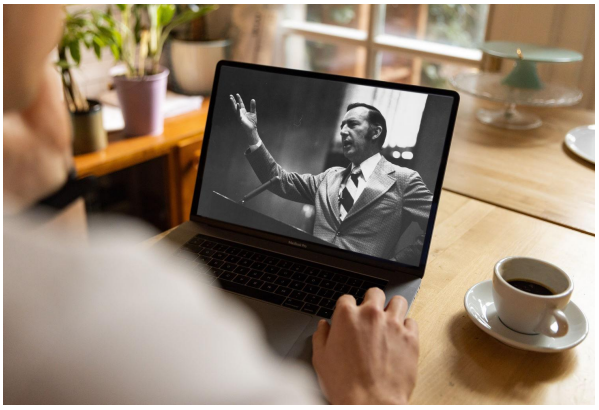

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