

Trusting the Scriptures



Glimpses of the End (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

In 2 Timothy chapter 3 verses 14, 15, 16, and 17. Now we are moving into another phase.

> "But as for you continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures,"

What is our resource? What can we turn to? The Holy Scriptures. That's the source of our victory and our success. Never get moved away from the Holy Scriptures. Paul said,

> "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the Man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped in every good work."

Now I want to say I'm glad that Paul chose to say, the Scripture. He could have said the word of God, and later on her does. But you see The Scripture is a very special something. The Scripture means that which is put down in writing. God has spoken many, many words but they're not put down in writing. But a certain selection of His words have been put down in writing and they are the Scriptures. And we can have absolute confidence in that. This is the source of our strength, our confidence, it's our salvation, it's our hope, it's our victory...the Scriptures. Don't ever get moved away from the Scriptures. You see there's a lot of people today who are getting all sorts of revelations. I don't know whether you have them here, but we have people with what's called Extra Biblical Revelation. That's outside the Scriptures.

I marvel at this because, you know, I've been reading the Bible for fifty-seven years, studying it, preaching it. And I've only just touched the margin. I feel like a small child paddling in the margin of a vast ocean. There is so much more I don't know, that I haven't found, that's still waiting for me. Why should I go to some harebrained preacher and get his extra-biblical revelation? I don't want it. I don't want it. I don't know whether that applies to anybody, but I'm just not interested.

And then having said that about the Scriptures and that's very, very crucial Paul goes on in the next chapter beginning

at the first verse.

> "I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom;"

That's a very solemn charge isn't it? We're all going to face the judgment seat of Jesus. "In the light of that I charge you," and then He comes out with three words,

> "Preach the word!"

And I say to you tonight, "Preach the word." Don't give people your second-hand theories, your half-baked revelations. Preach the word. That's what people need. It's what can build people up. It's what can sanctify people and make them holy and convict them of sin and change their lives. Preach the word! Amen! And then he goes on.

> "Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

Tell me as a preacher or a pastor or whatever you are, do you expect to convince, to rebuke, to exhort? Is that part of your ministry. And if you're a churchgoer, do you go to church expecting to be convinced, rebuked and exhorted? Is that your idea of the Christian life? Because it's right here.

Then Paul ends up his charge to Timothy in chapter 4 verse 5 and I want to say that to each of you individually. I believe this is a charge to every one who is in ministry here tonight.

> "But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, [you're going to have to] do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

Whatever your job is assigned to you by the Lord, do it and do it well and do it thoroughly and do it with all your heart.

Paul says, "Do the work of an evangelist." As I understand it Timothy's calling was not to be an evangelist. He was an apostle and a pastor. But Paul said, "Do the work of an evangelist." I know I'm not called to be an evangelist. I'm called to be a teacher of the Scriptures. It's very clear. But when nobody else will do it, I'll do it. I can do it. I've seen hundreds of people saved under my preaching, but it's not my primary assignment. If somebody else will do it, I'll step back. But I won't let it go undone because people need to be saved. You know that? If they're not saved, they're lost. And the only thing that can save them is the gospel. So do the work of an evangelist. You may be the very, sort of quiet, inoffensive Bible teacher, but brothers and sisters, people need to be saved. People need to be saved. Do the work of an evangelist.

I remember the first time I listened to Billy Graham, because I had a very personal, individual introduction to the gospel and to the Lord. And I stood in amazement. You can explain the gospel to people. I never knew you could do that. I used to tell people what happened to me and it was all rather dramatic and I left them wondering, "Well could it happen to me too?" But listening to Billy Graham night after night, I said, "It can be explained." And I learned to do it and I can still do it. And I'm happy doing it but it's not my primary assignment. So let me give you back the words of Paul.

> "But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

Whatever you're called to do, do it completely, do it thoroughly, do it with all your heart, do it as unto the Lord.

Now I just want to say one more thing on this text, "preach the word." There have been in the last few years all sorts of strange things that have happened in churches. I'm not against strange things. I've been responsible for some of them myself. I'm not frightened of what's strange, in fact I rather enjoy it to say the truth. I get a little tired of coming to church every week and just having the same menu. But we have to be very cautious because some of the strange things that have been happening are not from the Holy Spirit. There's two sources of strange things; there's the Holy Spirit and there's evil spirits. And we have to know how to release the Holy Spirit and restrain the evil spirits. And the answer is "Preach the word!"

I want to point out to you and this I'm going to close with, is God has ordained that signs, miraculous signs, shall follow the preaching of the word. But if we don't preach the word there's nothing for them to follow. You can have a wonderful evening feeling spiritual, getting a vision, a revelation, laying hands on people, seeing them go down under some power. But, if you don't preach the word you really don't know what's going on. It's very dangerous.

There's a lot of people in the Charismatic movement just want experiences. They want something dramatic to happen. Well, I love the dramatic too, but I'm cautious because there's more than one source of the dramatic. There's a good source and an evil source. How can we protect ourselves and protect the people we minister to? The answer is preach the word. Never go into a thing without the word. Because that's your safeguard.

Let me give you just a few Scriptures on this theme. Mark 16, the end of the ministry of Jesus, verse 15.

> "He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. [I'm committed to that. I don't know about you.] he who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. [And again it's very simple. There's no third category. You're either saved or your condemned. Now listen,] and these sings will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.'"

What do the signs follow? The preaching of the word. But if we don't preach the word how do we know what signs we're getting? "These signs will follow the preaching of the gospel." And brothers and sisters, people need the gospel. They need to know how to be saved.

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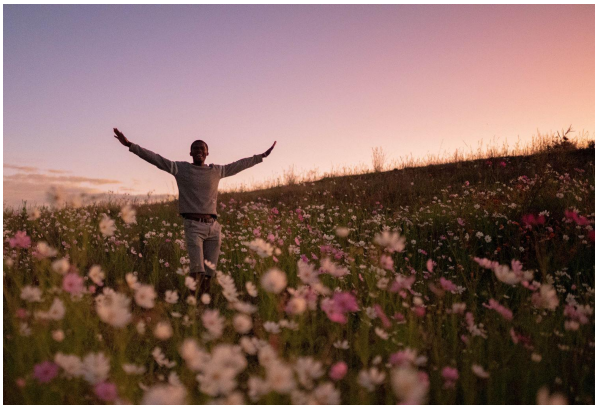

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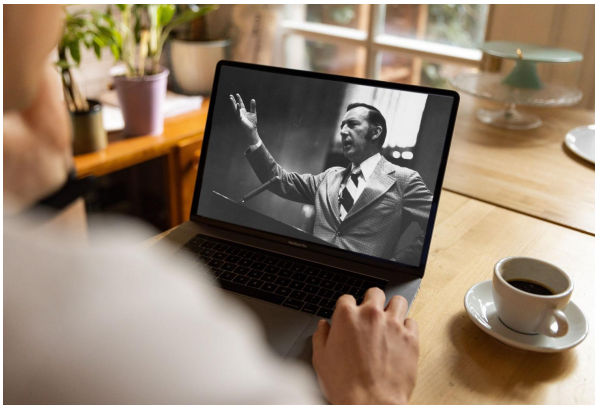

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