

Interview With Derek Prince (Part 9)



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by Derek Prince

Geoff Buck: I've been watching you minister for many years and I can notice that you've gotten older. However, it seems to me that when you stand in a pulpit, open the Bible and begin to teach you seem precisely the same as when I first laid eyes on you in 1973 and I know that you're a born teacher. What does it feel like when you're operating in that gift and teaching the word?

Derek Prince: It's strange you say that because my son-in-law, the director of our ministry has said the same to me. He said, "When you stand up to preach, open the Bible, years fall away from you." When I preach I'm like a duck in water, you see. That's what God called me to do. He's trained me to do it and I'm doing it. I mean you put a duck on land it waddles around and looks pretty stupid, but you once put that duck into water and it takes off. And I think part of the lesson is that if we are moving in our God appointed ministry we will flow. There will be a release.

I'm grateful for the mercy of God that ... I mean I'm happy. I trained teachers for five years for African schools in Kenya and I came to this conclusion. Teachers have to be born, but they have to be made. If a person is not born a teacher you can't make them a teacher. You can train them, you can give them lessons and so on, but if a person is born a teacher they will not be a successful teacher until you've trained them. And I think that's true, at least in my experience. Being a teacher is a calling. And God specifically called me to be a teacher. But I'm also born a teacher. I mean if I wasn't teaching something, I'd be teaching something else. It's just the way I am. But the Bible does say, "Do not desire many of you to be teachers." I'm really troubled when I see how many people are volunteering to be teachers, especially women, who I think in most cases, not in all cases, but in most cases it's not appropriate. And James says if we do that, "We receive the greater condemnation." If we claim to be teachers and we are not really qualified then we are leading people astray and we're bringing condemnation on our self.

Geoff Buck: Are there any particular Bible teachers that you have especially enjoyed listening to yourself over the years?

Derek Prince: Well, I'll surprise you by one of them is Marilyn Hickey. I mean she is a called Bible teacher. And I've never

heard her without enjoying her. I've heard many, many others. My dear brother Ern Baxter was a called Bible teacher. His eyes sparkled when he was teaching the Bible. Oh, I know a number. I think some of my own you call them disciples are called to be Bible teachers.

Geoff Buck: Did you ever hear A. A. Allen?

Derek Prince: Yes, I did. I don't know where I heard him but I would say he's one of the tragedies of the ministry. I mean, he had faith on a level I've seen few people have. He once took a, what you'd call not more than a Mongoloid child, held him in his arms and prayed maybe ten minutes or more. That child became perfectly normal in his arms. But his problem was success and I don't intend to bring any charges against him, but his end was a disaster.

Geoff Buck: Smith Wigglesworth. Did you ever meet him or hear him?

Derek Prince: No, the people who led me to the Lord were personal friends of Smith Wigglesworth, but that's as near as I came. Now he was a man of total uprightness and integrity. He was fearless. He was not proud. And I think it's so beautiful the way the Lord called him home. You know that? He went to attend the funeral of a brother, sat in the entrance to the church and went to be with the Lord. You see, he'd always preached. "I don't need to be sick." And he wasn't sick. I mean, I believe none of us need to sick but few of us have the faith that goes with that statement.

Geoff Buck: So how would you like to go home to be with the Lord?

Derek Prince: I'll let the Lord plan that. I'm sure He has a plan but I'm also quite well aware that I can forestall His plan by not walking in obedience to the end of the pathway. One of my favorite Scriptures is John 4:34 where Jesus said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work." Now I believe I've been doing the will of the Lord for many years. Not perfectly but I've been doing it. But what really concerns me now is finishing His work. I don't want to go home until I've finished.

Geoff Buck: What do you feel you have left to do?

Derek Prince: I feel I have something to do in Britain, especially for the younger generation. Then I feel maybe I have something to do in Israel. I believe there is coming a real breakthrough spiritually amongst the Jewish people in Israel. I don't think we're right there yet, but if I could be of any help at that time. After all I have years of experience and I know the Jewish people well and I understand the situation in the Middle East. So it's possible the God could use me for that.

Geoff Buck: Any final message that you would like to give to those that have respected you over the years? A word, overall, of exhortation or commendation?

Derek Prince: Well I used to say to Ruth, "When I die," and I never visaged that she would die before me, but I used to say, "When I die, if you want to put up a tombstone—I'm not asking you, but if you want to and you want something to engrave on it—please engrave these words, GOD IS FAITHFUL.

Geoff Buck: So, no regrets?

Derek Prince: No.

Geoff Buck: You don't look back?

Derek Prince: Oh, I regret things I did that I shouldn't have done and people I didn't help that I should have helped. Definitely. But I believe the Lord has forgiven me. I believe I'm in fellowship with Him. I believe I'm in, in what He's called me to do, and I'm so grateful to Him that He's seen fit to give me the calling that He's given me.

Geoff Buck: I know this isn't the word you would normally use, but are you happy?

Derek Prince: Not always. Happiness is not the ultimate. I mean I go through periods of grief. I also do go through periods, periods of tremendous suffering on behalf of those who are not being cared for, the ones I've listed, the orphans, the widows, the poor and the oppressed. And I can plead their cause passionately because I feel it. And it's not a happy feeling.

For a long while I've understood that God is a self-revealing God. That He desires to reveal Himself to His creatures and especially to us human beings. And I thought that's probably the highest that we can expect is the revelation of God. But just recently because of things I've been through I've realized there's something beyond that. God is a self-sharing God. He wants to share Himself with others. He wants to share His own deep experiences, not all joy, but grief and concern and it's a privilege, but it's a painful privilege. And I've always wondered about the words of Paul. He said, "That I may know Him and power of His resurrection, [no problems, but the next one] the fellowship of His sufferings." Many years I've had to say, "God, I really can't say that. I don't even understand why he said it." But I believe I've come to see that in sharing the Lord's sufferings we come closer to Him, we know Him better than we would in any other way. And I'm not

talking about the sufferings of Jesus in the atonement. I believe those were unique, but I'm talking about the sufferings of Jesus today.

Let me illustrate this by a thing, a thing that happened. A few years ago I was awake about 2 a.m. in Jerusalem and I felt this strange sense of excitement but I didn't know any reason for it. So I kind of verbalized my question. "Why am I excited?" and I felt I got the answer, "Because all heaven is excited and you're experiencing some of the excitement of heaven." I thought, "Well that's wonderful." Then I said, "Why is all heaven excited." And the answer was, "Because Jesus is excited. And when Jesus is excited all heaven is excited." So I had one more question. "Why is Jesus excited?" And this is the answer which I got. "Because He's about to be reconciled with His brothers, the Jewish people." And only then did I realize how Jesus has grieved for nearly two thousand years over His alienation from His own brothers and sisters, and that's not a joyful experience. But I think if you want to be close to Jesus you have to share His sorrows as well as His joys.

Geoff Buck: I've been thinking and even sharing with my kids, that I'm not looking forward to the day that you do go home to be with the Lord. I'm happy for you, but you've been a hero to many of us and we are just grateful that you've not committed adultery, that you've not gotten off on doctrinal tangents, and that you've been faithful. As I travel America, what people now say to me is, "Thank God that Derek is so balanced, that he's stayed faithful and that we know when we hear him that we're going to hear what's safe and yet what's provoking what provokes us to grow." And they actually are, as am I, so grateful that you've been faithful.

So, I just, maybe you could close just by praying for all of us that have loved you and followed you and known you. Whatever your heart would tell you. We don't worship you. We're not "Derek-ites," but we believe what Paul said, and that is that we thank God for the role models that we've had, the fathers in the faith, and we want to imitate you as you've imitated the Lord. There's many people that will never get to sit across a table from you or get your hand laid on them. They would really appreciate any kind of a prayer or a blessing that you might be willing to give.

Derek Prince: "Well, Father, I want to say thank You for the many younger people who have come into my life at various times and been a blessing to me and a challenge to me. And I want to pray for all who have been influenced and helped by my ministry and my teaching, that You would bless them, that You will keep Your hand upon them, that You will keep them faithful to the end. And that one day we shall all share a joyful reunion with you in heaven. Keep us all, Lord, each of us and every one of us. Keep us with Your good hand upon us. Protect us, guide us, bless us and make us a blessing. For Jesus' sake. Amen."

Radio Program

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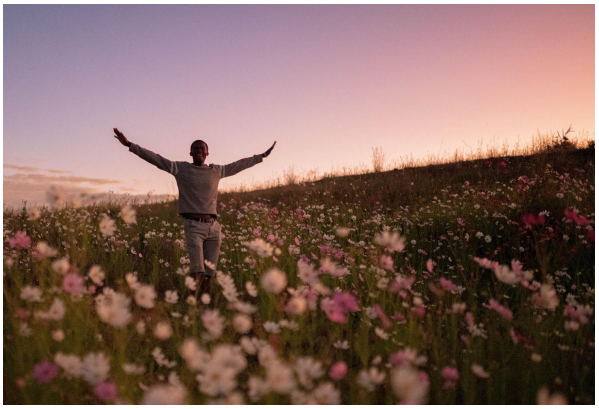

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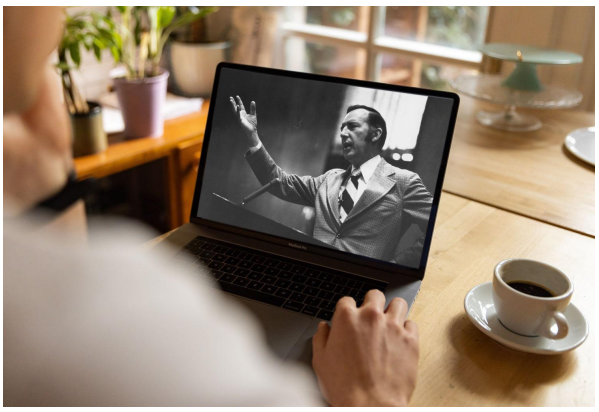

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