

Keys to Dependence



Why Do These Things Happen to God's People? (Part 3)
by Derek Prince

I want to tell you this, when God has finished what He's doing right now there will be nobody left in heaven or earth that is independent of God. The people that will hold on to their independence will end up in outer darkness. There's going to be no room in this created universe for anything or anybody that wants to be independent of God.

There are only two kinds of creatures that I know of that have desired to be independent of God. One was some angels and the other was the human race. The whole of the rest of the universe is happily dependent on God. The stars don't want to be independent of God. The animals don't want to be independent of God. It's just silly people like you and me. And the more you meditate on it the more ridiculous it is. It's amazing that God just doesn't put His foot on us and stamp us into the ground! Little insignificant insects that we are. But God—this is the most amazing—God has got a special love for the descendants of Adam. I mean, I spend time just thinking how could this be? It's extraordinary. In a way we're one of His unresolved problems. We've been a source of problems for thousands of years and we've got nothing to commend us. We're not that beautiful, we're not that strong, we're not that intelligent. And yet God loves us.

I'll tell you one thing the Bible never explains, it's the love of God. You can look in vain from the first page to the last, it never explains why God loves people. But, He does. It's the great unexplained mystery of the universe. But I want to assure you it is true. God loves you and me. He loves people like us. He loves people that have made an awful mess of our lives. We have nothing to commend us and we've been unthankful and unholy and rebellious and stupid. And amazingly He loves us. It's amazing!

So we have to lay down our independence. That's the issue I'm going to be dealing with this morning. I'm warning you in advance.

And then we have to believe the Word of God more than our senses. We have to reverse Eve's mistake. She looked at the tree and thought, "Well, that looked good. No matter what God's Word says about it, I'm going to partake of that tree."

Let me just give those three steps again because their very important. First of all, we have to trust God's goodness. Second, we have to lay down our independence. And third,

we have to believe the scripture rather than our senses.

I want to focus on this issue of laying down our independence. I want to suggest to you that one of the central thrusts of God's dealings with every person He ever deals with is to bring us out of our independence and back into a joyful dependence on God. Because after all, God is the only dependable factor in our lives. It's absurd that we'll trust anything else but not trust God.

There are two ways—I mean, there are more than two but there are two main ways I want to point out to you that God uses to get us out of our independence. The first one is waiting. A kind of stillness descends from that word waiting. Nobody enjoys waiting, least of all contemporary Americans. As I think Billy Graham said once years ago, an American feels frustrated if he misses the swing on the swing door and has to wait for the door to revolve the second time. So it's totally contrary to our present cultural slant to wait. But nothing will come to you in your Christian walk sooner or later until you learn to wait, because God insists on it.

I want to talk about just two great men of God who had to wait. They're one of the patterns of scripture. The one is Abraham and the other is Moses. God had a destiny for both of them. He knew what they were going to do, He chose them, He set them apart. And the very center of God's whole program for Abraham was that he was to have a special son by his wife Sarah. This was promised him early on when he was 75 years old. He had to wait 25 years for that son. Why? Why couldn't God give it to him immediately? Because He had to bring Abraham to the place of total dependence upon God. You know the story, after 12 years he said, "I've waited long enough." His dear wife Sarah gave him some bad advice, she said, "Go on, have a concubine, I'll agree. My servant Hagar (which means a stone), I'll let you have a child by her."

It's very interesting because Sarah gave him two pieces of advice. The first time she said, "Go on, have a child." The second one was, "Cast out the son you have had." When you get carnal advice it contradicts itself.

What was the result? Ishmael. I don't want to go into a lot of what could be controversial, political issues, but I have to say basically one main problem of Isaac and his descendants for thousands of years has been Ishmael and his descendants. So that's a warning against taking things into your own hands. Because, if you do, what you'll produce will not be an Isaac but an Ishmael.

If I were to ask you, and I don't want to, but how many of you have produced Ishmaels at some time in your life, a lot of you, if you were honest, would put your hands up. Why? You were not willing to wait.

So, Abraham had to learn to wait. What was the result of waiting? He came to the place where he was totally dependent on God. He had no alternatives, nothing. He'd exhausted every other possibility. When he was at that place God met him and he had the son that God had promised.

It's interesting if you go on, God tested Abraham in a way that He wouldn't test all of us. Here's Abraham, he's got the son and then God says, "Now, offer him as a sacrifice." I mean, He tested Abraham in a way that He wouldn't be able to test most of us.

So once again Abraham was totally dependent on God. He was prepared to kill the son and depend on God to raise him up, as the scripture indicates.

What was God aiming at? One thing, dependence, total dependence on God.

Now we'll take Moses. Moses had a very privileged upbringing. He was brought up in the court of Pharaoh, he was instructed in all the wisdom and the culture of the Egyptians who were the leading cultural empire of the day. Then he realized that he was really a Jew, an Israelite, and his brethren were suffering. He thought, I'm the one, I'll go out and deliver them. Age 40. It ended up in a fiasco, he had to flee for his life and he spent the next 40 years in a rather barren wilderness, looking after a little flock of sheep belonging to his father-in-law. That's not a very exalted position, is it?

Incidentally, have you ever looked after sheep? Some of you may have done it. I did for a little while. That takes patience, too.

So now Moses has reached the age of 80, retirement age, his life is gone, he has nothing to show. All his education, all his ability, all his strength have produced nothing. God says, "Now Moses, we can begin." And for the next 40 years Moses was, in my opinion, the most powerful human being that history has ever recorded. I mean, if you consider what he did, it is astonishing. Shall I tell you one reason? Do you want to be a man of power? I'll tell you one of the secrets. It's in Numbers 12:3:

> "Now the man Moses was the meekest man on all the earth [or the humblest]."

Can you see that God cannot trust power to anybody except the humble.



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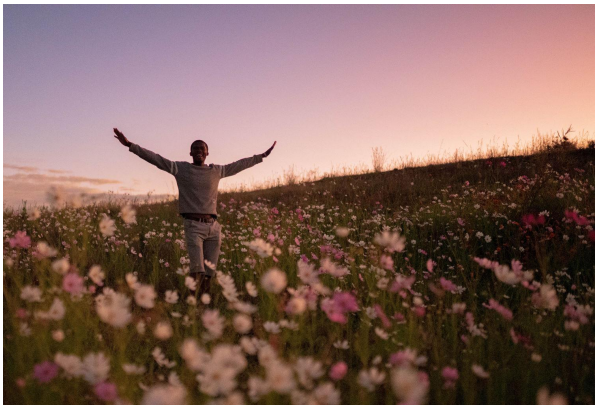

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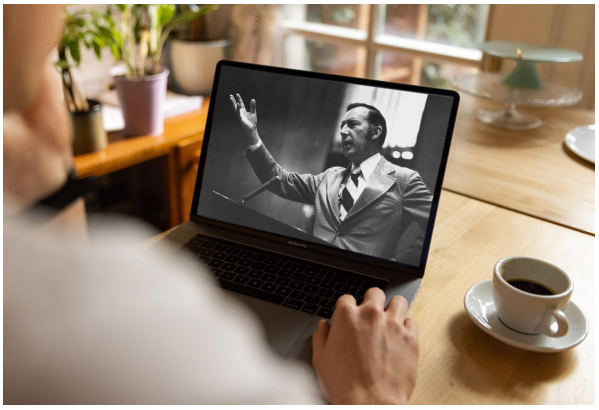

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