

Depending on God



Why Do These Things Happen to God's People? (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

Now I want to tell you just a little incident, some of you have heard it before but it's a very good illustration. In 1990 Ruth was admitted to hospital for surgery. She was in the hospital in bed waiting for all the final preparations for surgery. I don't know how it could happen but she'd been so busy with tests all day that I hadn't been able to read the Bible with her. So toward the end of the day the senior sister, it was in Holy Cross Hospital was going around talking to the patients. She came to Ruth's bed and she saw Ruth's Bible there so she became interested. She introduced herself and she said, "Is there anything I can do for you?" Ruth said, "Yes, would you please read my Bible to me because I can't read it for myself." This sister said, "What shall I read?" Ruth said, "Philippians 2." The nun became excited and she said, "That was the passage that was read when I took my vows." So they felt they were on the same wavelength. She read the Bible and then she shared something. This sister had been to a retreat somewhere where a Trappist monk gave a talk. Now, Trappists are not allowed to speak inside the monastery but every now and then they're allowed out to share with people what they've learned in silence in the monastery. This Trappist monk gave this talk to these Catholic sisters.

I'm really impressed by God's way of getting things done, this is by the way but I have a theory that a word spoken in the Holy Spirit never dies. I can remember things that were said to me more than 50 years ago, before I was a believer, but they've lived with me because the Holy Spirit was in them. I just think that God wanted these truths shared.

So here's a Trappist monk, he's not allowed to speak, but he's let out and he's allowed to speak and shares what I'm going to share with you. But, he only shares it to a group of Catholic nuns. How would most of us ever get to know what Catholic nuns have heard? But this Catholic nun comes and talks to my wife and shares it. And, she happens to be the wife of a preacher! She shared it with me and I share it and it's going to get around the world!

So, this is what he said and he must have been dealing with the theme that I'm dealing with, though we don't know exactly what it was. He said, "Pray to desire three things: not to be esteemed, not to be secure and not to be in control." Well, when I hear those I shudder and think not to be esteemed, that doesn't really matter much to me in this stage in my life. But not to be secure and then not to be in control,

what's your first reaction? Not for me, please! How could I pray that prayer?

But you see what it is? It's just a way of dealing with our basic problem which is, tell me. Independence, that's right. And you see, independence can be so cleverly cloaked with religiosity that it sounds respectable. A lot of people use their religion to avoid depending on God. God has two ways to deal with it, as I've said. He'll keep us waiting. Can you say praise the Lord? That was a rather weak praise the Lord. And, He will bring us to a place of absolute desperation where if God doesn't do it it's not going to happen. "I can't make it happen. I've tried everything, it didn't work, I have no answers. God, I turn to you and I'm willing to let you do it your way. Whatever you want is all right by me." And that's the answer.

Now I'm going to try to give an application to this message. Many, many years ago, about 1962, I was teaching in various churches in Canada. The Lord said, "I don't want you just to teach abstract truth, I want you to give my people a way to apply the truth that you teach." So I tried to change and basically one way or another I try to make it possible for people to make some active response to what I'm teaching. I'm going to try to do that now. I'm going to talk to two kinds of people. Number one, those of you that really are afraid of losing your independence. You may not have much, life may be a struggle but at least you make your own decisions. They may be wrong decisions but they're your decisions. Are you really prepared to let God into the decision making process? Are you willing to be like that girl in the pastor's office, are you willing to put your hand right up and say, "I surrender. I lay down my independence. I don't know what you're going to ask of me but I'm prepared to accept it in faith. I trust you."

Then the other kind of people, and you may be one and the same, are people who've reached the point of desperation. You're here this morning and you have no answers. You're facing situations and you just cannot handle it. There seems to be no way whatever that you can resolve it. What about letting God in? What about giving Him a chance? What does He ask of you? He asks of you what He asked of the Israelites at the Red Sea, "Cry out." Call upon Him. Say, "Help!" Sometimes we're too respectable to pray a cry of desperation. You read the psalms, they're full of cries of desperation. No one uttered them more often than David, that great warrior, that man of God. Time and time again he said in effect, "God, if you don't help me I'm finished. I have no other help. God, come to my help."

Suppose you were drowning. How respectable would you be? There's somebody on the bank who might be able to get to you in time. Are you going to formulate a carefully worded prayer? Are you going to speak in a polite whisper? Or, are you going to say, "Help! I need it now!" Some of you need that. Some of you are here not by accident but because God wants to help you. But He's waiting for you to cry out and you might as well do it now. Don't wait any longer.

So I want two kinds of people. If you want, you don't have to. Those of you who say, "Brother Prince, I never really laid down my independence. I've been religious, I've tried to do good but I've always been in control of my own life. I've never let Jesus come in and make the decisions." And then there are those, you're here this morning and you're desperate, you know you're desperate. I want to offer help to both of you. Nobody is going to condemn you. Jesus didn't come into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved. We haven't got a ministry of condemnation, we've got a ministry of reconciliation. We want you to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.

I'm going to pray for all of you and then I want you to make a move. Don't sit there and wish you could do something, do it.

> "Lord Jesus, we thank you that you're so available this morning, you're so close to us. You really want to help us. You are trustworthy, we can trust you. Lord, I pray for those who need your help, those who need to lay down their independence and those who need to cry out to you in a desperate situation that you will release them to come to you in faith this morning. Let everything that would hinder them be bound, every alien force, all pride, all fear, let them be bound and let the people that you want to come be released right now in the name of Jesus."

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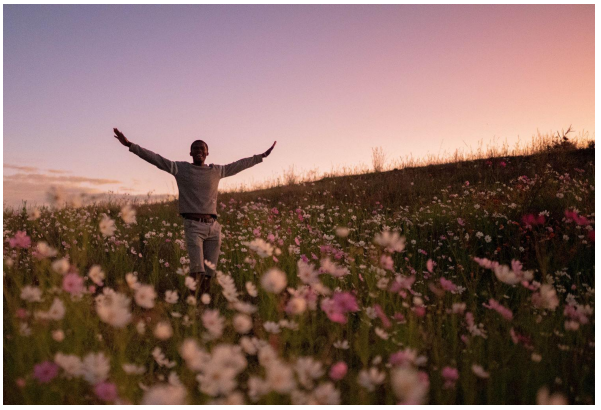
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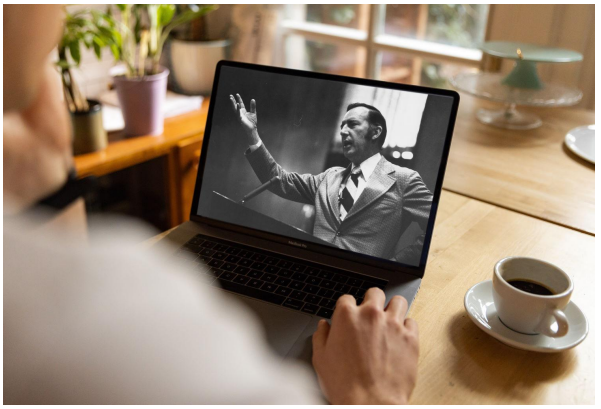
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