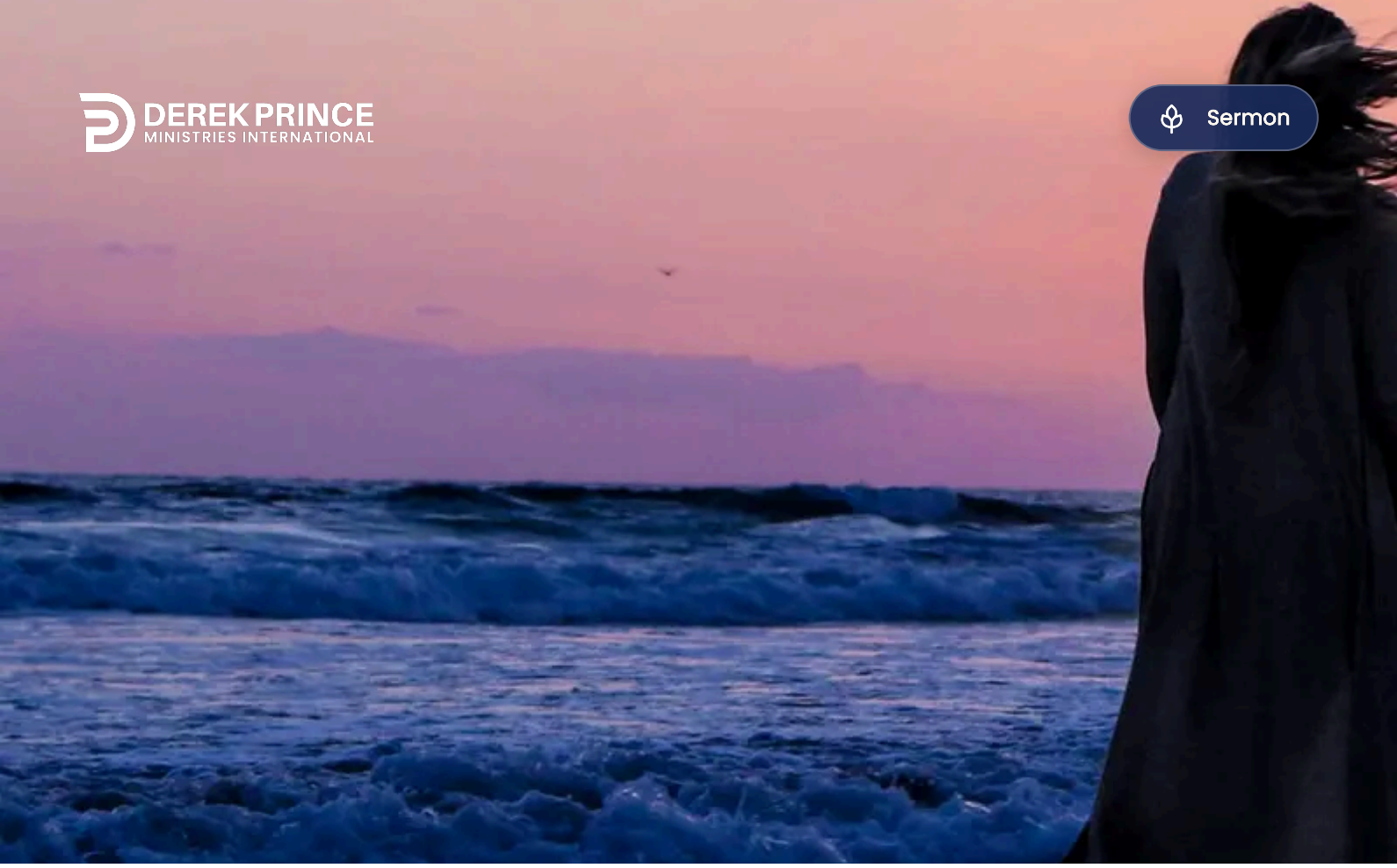


Deliverance From The World



Atonement
By Derek Prince

We are studying from Galatians various ways in which the cross is designed to work in our lives, various deliverances which come through applying the cross in our lives. We've looked at four, and let's see if we can remember them. The first one was deliverance from this present evil age. The second, from the Law. The third, from self. And the fourth, from the flesh, the carnal nature.

There's one more important deliverance that we're going to look at now, it's stated right near the end of Galatians, chapter 6 and verse 14. Galatians 6:14. Paul has been writing about people who want to boast or glory in certain religious accomplishments, which we won't go into. Then he comes to this tremendous statement:

> "God forbid that I should glory [or boast] except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."

What is the deliverance there from? The world, that's right. The cross has come between the true Christian and the world. When the world looks in the direction of the Christian, he sees a corpse on a cross, which is not attractive. When a Christian looks in the direction of the world, he sees the same thing, a corpse on a cross. There's nothing to attract him, there is a complete line of separation marked out by the cross.

Now, we need to consider what is meant by the world. This is very, very important. You remember I gave you the two words, I better do them again, I think. One was the word for —which was what? Age, that's right. The other was cosmos which is sociological, that's right, let's put that up even if it takes a long while to write. But, it is the world, that's in quotes.

Now, worldliness is one of those phrases that Christians use to attack other Christians with, just like legalism. So I don't want to be guilty of that if I can help it. I want to give a specific definition to the world as used in the New Testament. Now there are other uses of this phrase elsewhere in the Bible but we're not going to go into them because time does not permit. As I said already, it's a sociological concept and my personal definition is simple.

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The world consists of all those people who refuse the righteous government of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

There was a parable, maybe we should read it, in Luke 19. The parable of the minas or, the pounds. Luke 19, we'll only read the beginning of the parable, beginning in verse 12:

> "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return."

This is a picture of Jesus leaving this earth, going to His Father in heaven and then waiting till He's to come back to take the kingdom.

> "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'"

That's the world. The world is all the people who say, "We will not have Jesus to reign over us. We will not submit to Him as Lord." And you see, it contains all sorts of different people. It contains people with other religions, it contains atheists, but it also contains a lot of respectable, good living people. You say, "They can't be part of the world. Why, they go to church." The way you'll find out is challenge them with unreserved commitment to Jesus. And something will come up in them that's not respectable. This religious veneer will be removed and you'll find there is a rebel inside. It's a religious rebel, it's a good living rebel, it's a respectable rebel, but it's just as much of a rebel as a Communist or an atheist or a Muslim.

So, the dividing line is submission to Jesus as Lord. Those who are submitted are not in the world. They have passed out of the world and into the kingdom of God.

You see, you cannot be in the kingdom of God without a right relationship to the king. A lot of people want to be in the kingdom but they don't want the king. That was the truth about Israel in Jesus' time. They wanted the kingdom but they rejected the king. And in rejecting the king they forfeited the kingdom. No one can reject the king and be in the kingdom. So, the decision about whether we're in the world or not is not the kind of clothes we wear or the kind of entertainment—primarily, although it may have something to do with it. But it's our relationship to Jesus. Are we honestly sincerely submitted to Him? That doesn't mean are we perfect because when we submit to Him He usually has to do a lot of straightening out in our lives. But we continue, sometimes reluctantly, but we continue to let Him straighten us out. We don't always enjoy it but there's one thing about it, it's better than the alternative.

I was totally of this world when the Lord met me—or when I met the Lord. I mean, I wasn't religious, I didn't care about religion, I was a philosopher. If you've ever met them, they're strange people. But God one night just yanked me out of the world and dumped me into the kingdom. I didn't have any doctrinal knowledge but I had met Jesus and surrendered to Him. And I have had lots of struggles, believe me. As many as any of you, and more than some of you. I've lived longer. One thing, I have never had any desire to go back to the world. What is there in the world? As far as I'm concerned, there is nothing, nothing whatever that attracts me or draws me or entices me. It may not always be easy in the kingdom but it is incomparably better than being in the world. That's my view. I mean, I came out in one night and I give God all the glory. I have never for one moment wanted to go back. It wasn't doctrine, it was Jesus. I had met someone who commanded my loyalty, my obedience.

So that's what the world is. I'll just give you one other scripture to confirm that, 2 Peter 3:6. We have to read verse 5. Peter is talking about the judgments of God upon the world and he says in verse 5:

> "For this they [certain people] are willfully forget that by the word of God the heavens were of old and the earth standing out of water and in the water: by which [that's the word of God] the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water."

The world that then existed. The earth didn't perish, the universe didn't perish, the solar system didn't perish. What perished was a certain sociological order, the order of men before the flood. What was their problem? They were not submitted to the righteous government of God. And God did away with them in one very brief, comprehensive judgment. Peter says the world that then was perished.

But now a new world order has come into being. It's different in many respects but it has one thing in common with the world before the flood: it is not subject to the righteous government of God. God doesn't offer any alternative government. It's not Jesus or, it's Jesus or nothing.

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Now let's look at some of the things that the New Testament tells us about the world. They are, I think, frightening and I think they've largely been ignored in the contemporary church. At least, in this nation and in most of the western world.

1 John 2:15–17. Some of this is old-fashioned but it's still true.

> "Do not love the world, or the things in the world..."

Now, we have to be careful. That doesn't mean that you're an enemy of sinners. God loved the world and He gave His Son for it. But we're not to love the world order and the way it lives. Do you understand? We cannot be friends with the world and friends with God.

> "...if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

That's perfectly plain, isn't it? There's no problems theologically about understanding that.

> "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

Everything that's in the world's motivations and attitudes, ambitions, desires, standards, priorities, is not of the Father, but is of the world. You know, there are the three basic temptations, I'm sure you've heard this. The lust of the flesh, the desires of the physical body; the lust of the eye, covetousness; and the pride of life, here I am, no one tells me what to do.

They were operative in the garden of Eden. The tree was good for food, lust of the flesh; it was attractive to the eyes, lust of the eyes; and it was designed to make them wise without God, pride of life.

Jesus, likewise, encountered the same three temptations in the wilderness. Make these stones bread, the lust of the flesh; cast yourself down from the pinnacle, the pride of life —do something to demonstrate how great you are without the Father; and the lust of the eyes, Satan showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. He said, "You can have it all—on one condition, just bow down and worship me."

What I want to point out is that Adam failed; Jesus, the last Adam, won. It's interesting because Adam failed in a perfect situation, Jesus won in a desert when He was fasting. Thank God Jesus won. He has defeated those temptations. Those temptations make up the nature of the temptations of the world. All temptations fall under those three headings: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes which is in modern Americanese, window shopping, and the pride of life. Okay.

The most dangerous is the pride of life. This is the temptation that's, "Here I am, I'm a miracle worker, I can do this, I can do that. I don't have to keep these silly little regulations. I'm free." What's the end of that? Disaster.

Verse 17:

> "The world is passing away, and the lust of it..."

It's all impermanent. None of it is going to last.

> "...but he who does the will of God abides forever."

What a breathtaking statement! If you will unite your will with the will of God and say, "I'm here to do God's will," you are as unshakeable and as undefeatable as the will of God. See? You're never going to be defeated because God's will ultimately can never be defeated. So what we have to do is to align our will with the will of God. The devil will try to convince you it's painful, it means giving up a lot—he's a liar, don't listen to him. It's a blessed thing to will one will with God. It takes off this awful burden of "I'm responsible for my life, I've got to do this, I've got to do that." You can roll the burden upon the Father and He will take care of you.

Let's look at the words of James, chapter 4, verse 4. James, I think you would agree, was pretty plain-spoken. In James 4:4 he says:

> "Adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

Why does he say adulteresses? Because Christians who turn to the world after they've committed themselves to God are committing spiritual adultery, they're breaking their betrothal commitment to Jesus. I mean, I can't say it any clearer than that. Friendship with the world, enmity with God. You have to choose.

Let's turn to John 15. Of the various writers of the New Testament, which one do you think spends more time than all the rest dealing with the world? Which one would it be? It's John. It's one of his major themes. John 15:18–19. Jesus is speaking to His disciples just before He's about to leave them. He says:

> "If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. [Don't be surprised, don't let it shock you.] If you were of the world, the world would love its own; yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

Again, that is so plain there's no doubt about His meaning. That verse 19 is a remarkable verse. The phrase "the world" occurs five times in that one verse. God must be trying to say something. Let me just read it again.

> "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

One thing is we shouldn't be shocked if the world hates us. You know the problem with the contemporary church? The world doesn't hate us. That's our biggest problem. Because, why should it? Let me point you to the words of Jesus in John 7, speaking to his brothers who were unbelievers and rejected Him. In other words, they were part of the world because they rejected God's righteous government at that time. Jesus said, "The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify of it that its works are evil." As long as you're part of the world, the world won't hate you. But if you are separated from the world and bear witness to the truth of righteousness, the world will hate you. So as I say again, I really think the problem with contemporary church in this nation, the United States—and in most western nations and I'm not excluding other nations but I'm not so familiar with them—our problem is the world doesn't hate us. Why should we? We don't embarrass them. It feels perfectly comfortable with us.

Somebody said there are so many million quote, born again Christians. 40 million, 50 million. If that were really true, the world would feel the impact. But actually, 40 or 50 million quote, born again Christians really don't impact the world. The world shrugs its shoulders and says, "Carry on." I think those of you who are from Europe would agree in most European nations today, Christianity is regarded as something remote from the past and an anachronism, it has buildings here and there but it doesn't really say anything to contemporary life. They're not against it, they don't respect it. They're not concerned about it. They just go their way, they're not impacted.

Dear John. Let's look in the first epistle of John, chapter 5, verse 19. Let me say don't get angry with me, get angry with John. 1 John 5:19:

> "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one."

Who is the wicked one? Satan. Actually, I've read the translation here but the Greek, you can't translate it because it doesn't make English, but it says "the whole world lies in the wicked one." He's got the whole world. There's a song about Jesus that says, "He's got the whole world in His hands." Which, of course, by the grace of God is true. But in actual fact, theologically it's Satan who has the whole world in his hands. That's exactly what John says. The whole world lies in the wicked one.

Let's look in Revelation 12, and bear in mind this is also the writing of John. Revelation 12:9. Here you get the main titles of Satan in one verse.

> "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent [or snake] of old, called the devil and Satan."

There's his four main titles. Devil, you know what that means? Slanderer. The Greek word diabolos means literally a slanderer. And the Latin language has again retained the world, diabolo, diab, et cetera. Satan means the enemy, the resistor, the opposer. He's a dragon, a great monstrous, frightening creature but he's also a little snake. So if he can't overpower you, he'll sneak in through the drain hole. See?

What does he do? This is a breathtaking statement. He deceives the whole world. The whole world is deceived by Satan. If you take those various statements about the world, I think you have to acknowledge that as committed Christians, we have no place in the world. We do not belong there. So we have to be delivered from the world's deceptions. I've given just a little list of the forms that the deceptions take. But it's far from complete. We have to be

delivered from the world's opinions, from it's values, from it's judgments, from its pressures, from its enticements. We cannot allow any of those to dictate our thinking. We have to be changed.

What's the greatest single channel of the world's pressure in contemporary America? Television, for sure. Absolutely. I'm not saying all television is wrong, but basically 90% of the time you have your television set on, it is channeling the world into your home. There's just no doubt about that. It is a remarkable demonstration of witchcraft, if you know what witchcraft is. It entices, it manipulates.

Take just the advertising system. What's the aim of advertising? To make you want things you don't need and buy things you can't afford. And why do they do it? Because it works. Why do they spend billions of dollars on advertising? Because they get more billions back. If it didn't work, they wouldn't do it. Not all advertising is wrong, but basically it's a pressure from this world.

I don't have to decide your lifestyle but I'll tell you, I've decided my lifestyle. Television has no place in it. That's not a sacrifice. If you want to torment me, put me in front of a television set and make me watch it for a couple of hours. I perfectly acknowledge not everybody is like me, thank God. But you better examine what it is that is, as they say, making you tick. Where are your values, your standards and your judgments coming from? What determines your priorities?

There's only one way out from the system of the world, it's an old-fashioned word that has dropped out of many religious vocabularies. It's repentance. There's no other way. Let's look at just two scriptures. Mark 1:15. These are the words of the forerunner who came to introduce Jesus. He said:

> "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand."

Remember, God's purpose in the gospel is to bring His kingdom in. What do you have to do to get into the kingdom, what's the first word? Repent. When Jesus started His ministry in Matthew 4:17, He paid John the greatest compliment He could ever pay him. He took up exactly where John left off. Matthew 4:17:

> "From that time, Jesus began to preach and to say [what], Repent..."

Repent means I lay down my rebellion, I'm not going to set my own standards, do my own thing, think my own way. I turn my back on all of that and I submit without reservation to God's righteous governor, who is Jesus. That is repentance.

And after repentance comes faith. I've dealt in the past with scores of people who were struggling for faith. My conclusion at the end of it all was most of them were looking for the wrong thing. They couldn't believe because they'd never repented. There is no valid scriptural faith in the gospel apart from repentance. It's repent and believe. Turn your back on the rebel system, come into the kingdom and submit to the king. That's repentance.

Now, in closing, let's look for a moment at Paul's rather melancholy picture of Christians who do not apply the cross in their lives. Philippians 3:18–19:

> "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who set their mind on earthly things."

What's the root problem? They're enemies of the cross. They're not enemies of Christ. They want everything they can get from Him. There's just one thing they don't want, it's the work of His cross in their lives. What is the result? Well, they're headed for destruction. That's a terrible word. It's not just a word that's applied to time, it's a word that's applied to eternity.

Their god is their belly—that doesn't apply to American Christians, does it? And their glory is in their shame. And it's summed up in the word, "they're interested in earthly things." May God help us.

Sermon

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