

DEREK PRINCE
MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Sermon

Witchcraft and the Church (Part 2)



Sermon
By Derek Prince

This study is on the Epistle to the Galatians and on the cross. I pointed out yesterday a fact which I think has hardly ever been apprehended by most Christians: that Satan seeks to infiltrate the church with the power of witchcraft, and by that power, he obscures the cross. And once the cross has been obscured, Christians do not enter into their inheritance, and their whole spiritual life is corrupted.

I pointed out yesterday that there are five specific deliverances spoken of in Galatians, which we can receive only through the cross. These deliverances are our protection against witchcraft. If we avail ourselves of them, witchcraft will have no power over us. But if we do not avail ourselves of them, we are probably going to be, in some way, the victims of that evil power to some extent.

Yesterday, we dealt only with the first of these five deliverances, and it would be profitable to turn back, just for a moment, to that particular verse or verses, which is Galatians 1:3 and 4.

> "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins—on the cross, that is—that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of God and Father."

So, through the cross, the Lord has provided deliverance from this present evil age. I think there are a lot of facts there that have escaped the notice of many Christians. That it's not God's purpose that we should be part of this present age. That this age is inherently evil, and its character will never change as long as it lasts. And that God does not propose to change the age, but He proposes to deliver us from the age through the cross.

I pointed out a number of scriptural facts about the present age, which I will briefly recapitulate without dwelling on them. First of all, this age is coming to an end. Second, Satan is the god of this age. Third, we, through the Holy Spirit, have tasted the powers of the coming age, and that should have spoiled our appetite for the present age. Fourth, this present age causes worries that make us unfruitful and choke the word of God. Fifth, believers must not be conformed to this present age. And sixth, a servant

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of Christ cannot love this present age. And we have the tragic example of Demas, who, after being a mature Christian and a coworker with Paul for many years, he eventually abandoned it all because he loved this present age.

Now, we're going to go on today to the four further deliverances which are spoken on in Galatians. But I want to say something, first of all, that, in a sense, the total, basic deliverance is from this present evil age, and the other four deliverances are aspects of that deliverance. In other words, they are the ways in which deliverance from this present evil age will be made effective in our lives. So, we're going to look today at four further deliverances. Our time schedule does not permit us to spend much time on any. I will be going fairly rapidly. Teaching will be somewhat condensed, and some of it will be very new to some of you. But praise God for cassettes. So, if you don't get it all the first time, you can invest in a cassette. And I would suggest that, in many cases, if you really want to apprehend what I'm teaching, you may have to listen to the same message four or five times before the full impact of it reaches you.

We'll turn now to Galatians chapter 2 and verse 19, where we find the next deliverance. Galatians 2:19. I'm having a problem with my outline. It's slid down, so just forgive me for a moment if I try and remedy that. Galatians 2:19.

> "For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I through the law died to the law."

You see, when you're under a law, there's only one way of escape, and that's pay the ultimate penalty, which is death. Once the law has put you to death, there's nothing more it can do to you. There is no other verdict. Now, the mercy of God is that the death took place when Jesus died on the cross. Paul said in Romans 6:6,

> "Our old man was crucified with 'Him.'"

So, when Jesus died on the cross, if I can accept my identification with Him, I died. I paid the final penalty of the law. The law has nothing more to say to me. I have escaped from its claims and its dominion. "I through the law died to the law." The kindest thing the law ever did to me was to put me to death. The mercy of God was the execution took place in Jesus. Now, I am free from the law through the death of Jesus Christ. Now, this is a statement which is made so many times in Scripture that it's amazing how few Christians have ever apprehended it.

Let's turn to some of the statements in Scripture that say this so plainly. I could spend two hours on this theme, and some of you would still be surprised at the end, but I'm only going to spend a few minutes. Romans 6:14.

""

> "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace."

There are some amazing implications of this statement. Paul says, "You're not under law but under grace." They're mutually exclusive alternatives. If you are under law, you are not under grace. And if you are under grace, you're not under law. You cannot be under law and grace at the same time.

And then Paul says sin will not have dominion over you because you are not under the law but under grace. In other words, if you were under the law, sin would have dominion over you.

Then we turn to Romans chapter 7, verses 5 and 6.

> "For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death."

It's interesting to notice that the passions of sins were aroused by the law, and they worked in us to bear fruit to death.

> "But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter."

Notice again, Paul says we have been delivered from the law because we died. When did we die? When did we die? When Jesus died. That's right. His death was our death. His death released us from all the claims and obligations of the law.

Paul says we have been delivered from the law that we should serve in a new, new way, not through obedience to a list of commandments, but in the newness of the Spirit.

And then in Romans chapter 10 and verse 4, it's really summed up.

> "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."

So if you are a believer, then for you, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. Now, the Scripture is very accurate. It does not say that Christ is the end of the law as a part of the Word of God, or as a part of the history of Israel, or as a subject for meditation. As a means of achieving righteousness with God, the death of Christ on the cross eliminated the law. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes, whether you're a Jew or a Gentile, whether you're a Catholic or a Protestant makes no difference. Christ is the end of the law.

And then we look at a couple of other epistles of Paul. Ephesians chapter 2, verses 14 through 16. Is there anybody here who has an NIV? A large print NIV? Well, let's say a nice NIV, anyhow. That's wonderful. Would you be kind enough to bring it up to me? That means you'll actually appear on the video. All right, I'll read... I'll read the, the New King James, which is what I'm reading, but also to this, don't go away, 'cause I'll get back to you in a little while. All right? Just stand there and look spiritual.

Okay. Ephesians 2:14-16:

> "For He Himself"—that's Jesus—"is our peace, who has made both one." Who is both? Jew and Gentile. That's right. "Has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances." What did He abolish? The law of commandments contained in ordinances, "so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace."

I don't think we need to read any further. Now, that says that He abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances. But this script, this translation is so vivid that I want to read it if I can. And this is the NIV beginning at verse 14:

> "For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations."

Nothing could be clearer than that. He has abolished in His flesh the law with its commandments and regulations.

Thank you so much. I might call on you again. So, be a willing volunteer. Thank you. I really appreciate that. I'm having real problems with this outline. I once had to put one of my wife's shoes on the... on the... Everything on this... it's a beautiful... it's one of the nicest pulpits I've ever preached from, but the thing slides downwards.

All right. Colossians, are you with me? Colossians chapter 2, verses 13 through 16. Interestingly enough, the same verses, same number as in Ephesians. Now, this speaks about what God did through the death of Jesus on the cross. And I... it's in the middle of a sentence. I'd like to read the whole sentence, but I'm being economical of time. Are you with me? Colossians 2:14:

> "Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers"—of Satan—"He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Therefore"—because of that—"let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths."

Notice, application is, therefore, let nobody judge you about the keeping of the law. And that includes the Ten Commandments, because the Sabbath is the fourth of the Ten Commandments. Now, Paul doesn't say, 'Don't observe the Sabbath. That's your choice.' He says if, if you don't observe it, don't let anybody judge you. That's my answer to my dear Seventh-Day Adventist friends. I'm not going to let them judge me in respect of the Sabbath.

So you see, it's very clear. The death of Jesus has finally and forever set aside the law with its commandments as a means of achieving righteousness to God. Now, if you knew all that was implied, you'd take a deep sigh of relief and say, "Thank God." Why don't you do that? Thank God. All right. Now then, what are the results of this deliverance? Well, wait a minute. Let's look a little further on in Colossians

chapter 2 while we're there. Colossians 2, verse 20 and following:

> "Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world..." And that's what Paul has been talking about when he says food, or drink, or things like that. "If you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations —'Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle'—?" "Don't you realize," he says, "that when Christ died, you died to all that?" You're not under all that. So don't subject yourselves to it. Let anybody bring you back under it. And then he says about all these regulations, which all concern things which perish with the using, according to the commandments and doctrines of men. These things, indeed, have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh."

How true that is. The one way to promote lust is to say, 'Don't lust.' The more you preach against lust and make rules against it, the stronger it becomes.

I don't want to offend anybody, but we see this so clearly in Israel. The ultra-Orthodox are just consumed by lust. They're the most dangerous people for young ladies to be alone with. All their rules have just strengthened something inside them. You see what Paul said? "The passions of sins which were aroused by the law." He said, "If the law hadn't said, 'Don't covet' or 'Don't lust,' I wouldn't have even known what lust was. But when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." See, this is so contrary to the thinking of religious people that we have to spend some time elaborating. Making rules does not make people righteous. A law has never made anybody righteous. The best it can do is restrain sin, but it cannot change the human heart.

And let me say this even in regard to the political system. It's good to have good laws in a nation, but don't imagine that making laws will ever change the hearts of people. Even the law of Moses couldn't do that, and that was a perfect, God-given law. There has to be another way. Thank God, there is another way. Now let's look briefly at the results of deliverance from the law. If we can say, "I through the law died to the law that I might live to God," what will that do for us? I want to suggest to you three things.

First of all, it brings freedom from condemnation. Let's look in Romans. Romans is, of course, the main epistle for this whole theme. I'd like to say to you, if you want to be a successful, fruitful Christian, you have to know Romans. There's no substitute. There's no alternative. Romans 8... Well, let me say also that, in a certain sense, Romans 8, as I see it, is the goal of Christian living. It's the Spirit-controlled life, the life of victory, the life of joy, the life of fruitfulness, the life of peace with God. That's where we'd all like to get. But you can't get to Romans chapter 8 without going through Romans chapters 1 through 7. In the days when people used to make percolated coffee... There are two kinds of coffee: percolate and instant. Instant coffee is one thing, percolated is another, and I've never believed that instant would ever taste like percolate. A lot of Christians want instant Romans chapter 8, but you can't get it. You have to go through the percolator. It's chapters 1-7, and the whole of the seventh chapter, the ultimate... goal of the percolator... is release from the law. You read... there's no other theme in Romans chapter 7 but release from the law. And when you've gone through that, then there is "therefore." I'm sure some of you have heard me say, when you find a "therefore" in the Bible, you want to find out what it's "therefore." That "therefore" in Romans 8:1 is because of Romans chapters 1 through 7. When you have been through every stage of the percolator, and the ultimate stage is to realize that you are not under the law, you're delivered from the law, then you can say, "There is no condemnation." No condemnation.

I think the strongest weapon of Satan against Christians is condemnation. And this first verse is the entrance into Romans chapter 8. You cannot live in Romans chapter 8 as long as you live under condemnation. And as long as you seek to be made righteous by the keeping of law, you will always be subject to condemnation, because you'll never be quite sure that you've done all that you should do. Or you'll be reminded of something you didn't do. You have to be delivered from the law in order to come out from under condemnation. You have to come out from under condemnation in order to come into Romans chapter 8. Let's read the first four verses.

> "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do"—notice that—"in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin"—or as an offering for sin —"He condemned sin in the flesh. That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

So we've been delivered from the requirements of the law that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, but not through the keeping of the law. Because that raises the million-dollar question, what is the righteous requirement of the law? And although that's such an important question, my observation is the majority of Christians today have never given it any consideration. It's an interesting word. I'll give you one other place where that same word that's translated "righteous requirement" is found, and that's in Revelation 19...

About the marriage supper of the Lamb, verses seven and eight.

> "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife the church has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

It's the same word that's translated 'righteous requirement' in Romans 8.

And you see, it's very important that we know what it is, because it's going to be our bridal attire.

And if we don't have any righteous acts, we'll have no material out of which to make the bridal dress.

That's a solemn thought, isn't it?

All right, what is the righteous requirement? Well, that leads me to the second consequence of deliverance from the law: freedom to love.

And the righteous requirement of the law is summed up in one short, simple word of four letters: love.

That's what it's about.

If we miss love, we've missed the whole purpose.

Let me give you some scripture. John chapter 13, verses 34 and 35. Jesus is taking farewell of His disciples. And He says,

> "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another."
>
> "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another."

Somebody has commented on that final verse, Jesus gave the world the right to judge the church. He said if the world doesn't see us loving one another, then it can say we are not His disciples.

And He said, "I give you just one commandment."

Moses gave you ten,

Judaism today has six hundred and thirteen,

and Jesus says, "I'll give you one."

"But you love one another."

That is His final word.

This is consistently taught throughout the New Testament. Go back to Romans chapter 13, verses 8 through 10. Romans 13:8-10. It begins with a negative.

> "Owe no one anything except" what? "To love one another." "For he who loves another has fulfilled the law." Notice that?
>
> "For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'You shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up

> in this saying, namely, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Loving your neighbor includes all the commandments.

> "Love does no harm to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

That's very, very clear.

Galatians 5. I'm going to want somebody with an NASB in a moment. Would somebody prepare themselves? Who's got an NASB? Okay, well, come up and be ready, all right? Just hang around in the wings for a moment.

Galatians 5:6.

> "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love."

What's the only thing that really matters? Faith that works through love.

You see, it's not just to say faith is the only thing that matters, because there's only one kind of faith that is of God. That's faith that works through love.

There's a whole lot of so-called faith in the church that works by anything but love, but it's not acceptable to God.

The only thing that God is ultimately after is faith working or expressing itself through love.

And then we have, one more moment, Galatians 5:14.

> "For all the law is fulfilled in one word,"

Now you can guess what word is, can't you?

> "All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

All the law. That is the righteous requirement of the law. That's what has to be fulfilled.

But it will not ever be fulfilled by trying to keep the law. It can only be fulfilled through the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

Let me borrow your, thank you so much. Wonderful Bible. And she's got markers everywhere, a real Bible student, isn't that nice?

We're turning to 1 Timothy chapter 1 verse 5. I would like to read this from the NASB because it is such a powerful translation.

1 Timothy 1:5.

> "But the goal of our instruction is love."

What are we aiming at? Love. That's right. If we don't produce love, we've missed. We've missed the goal.

Then Paul says there are three requirements for love:

> "from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith."

And then he goes on,

> "For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion."

Any kind of religious activity in the church that doesn't produce love is wasted time. It's fruitless discussion. How much fruitless discussion has been going on in the church? No mind could calculate.

I heard a story which illustrates this point. Thank you, that was so kind of you. This is just, it's an apocryphal story, you understand. It doesn't necessarily happen, but a man was arguing with his mother. The mother wanted the man to go to church, and the man wanted to go to church. And the man said, "I don't want to go to church. I don't like those people, and they don't like me. Why should I go? Give me two reasons." Well, Ma said, "First of all, you're 40 years old, and second, you're the pastor of the church."

Well, you see, to me that paints such a picture of religious activity. I'm the pastor. I don't like those people. They don't like me, but we're going through all the procedures of religion.

Let's turn now to James to complete this little study of the righteous requirement of the law. James chapter 1 number 25.

> "But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the word, this one will be blessed in what he does."

Now, James talks about the perfect law of liberty. What does he mean?

Go on to chapter two, verse eight.

> "If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you do well."

So what's the perfect law of liberty? Loving your neighbor as yourself. It's also the royal law.

And then, in verse 12 of that chapter, it says,

> "So speak and so act as those who will be judged by the law of liberty."

In other words, we will be judged by how much we've loved.

And notice the beautiful words that he uses. He calls it the perfect law, the law of liberty, and the royal law. It's the perfect law because it includes all other laws. It's the law of liberty because the person who truly loves is free to do whatever he wants. He's the only free person on earth today.

If your heart is filled with and controlled by the love of God, everything you want to do is right. There's no law against it. It's the royal law because you live like a king.

But all that is impossible until we've been delivered from seeking to achieve righteousness by keeping the law of Moses or any other religious law. I smile at so-called evangelicals, fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and others, because they all say, 'We're not under the law,' and nearly all of them substitute their own silly little laws.

If the law of Moses couldn't make people righteous, believe me, Baptist law will never make people righteous. Nor Pentecostal law, nor Presbyterian law, nor Catholic law. We are not made righteous by the keeping of the law. Now listen, that doesn't mean we can be lawless.

If we're made righteous by faith, we will keep the laws we ought to keep. Do you understand? That's the evidence. It's not the root, it's not the cause.

All right. If you understood what I'm telling you, and I mean, I'm sure you're moving that way, you'd get excited. I mean, really, when you once realize what it is to be free from the claims of the law, it's like a tremendous burden rolls off your shoulders. Thank God. Amen.

All right. The third result of deliverance from the law, as I describe it, is freedom to be led by the Holy Spirit. Paul said,

> "You are not under the law but under grace."

If you're under grace, you're led by the Holy Spirit. Let's go back to Romans 8 for a moment.

Romans, the eighth chapter, verses 14 and 15. Romans 8:14 and 15.

> "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

Now that's a continuing present tense. As many as are regularly led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

To become a baby in God's family, you have to be born again of the Spirit of God. To become a mature son, you have to be led by the Spirit of God. That's the only way to maturity.

> "As many as are regularly led by the Spirit of God, these, and only these, are sons of God."

Then he goes on to say,

> "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery again to fear."

What is he talking about? Going back under the law. You've been made a son, don't become a slave.

> "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'"

There you're under these two mutually exclusive alternatives. You can live like a son or you can live like a slave, but you cannot be both at the same time.

And then we turn, in that context, to Galatians 5 and verse 18. Galatians 5 and 18.

> "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."

Now the only way to become a mature son of God is to be led by the Spirit of God.

> "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."

So God's sons are not under the law. See? No matter what way you look at it, it comes out the same.

Let me give you a simple example that's been very vivid to me, and I hope I can make it clear to you, about the difference between being made righteous by keeping a law and being made righteous by being led by the Holy Spirit.

I compare them to two ways of finding your way to a certain destination. One way is a map, the other way is a personal guide. The map corresponds to what? The law. The guide is the Holy Spirit. All right. Now there's something in all unregenerate man that wants to be independent of God. It's the result of the fall.

You see, the motivation of the fall, the temptation of Satan, was not to do evil. It was to be independent of God. He said, 'You will be like God.' Well, there's nothing wrong in being like God. The problem was they wanted to be like God without depending on God. The ultimate, basic motivation of sin is not the desire to do evil. It's the desire to be independent of God. And wherever that desire comes in, sin follows.

So, here's this pale, healthy young man who's graduated from some university with some kind of a degree. He's starting on life's course, and he's presented with these alternatives: 'Do you want a map? Do you want a personal guide?' 'Oh,' he says, 'I understand maps. I have a degree in map reading. Give me the map.' The sun is shining, the road is clear ahead, and the birds are singing. He sets out.

But 48 hours later, the situation has changed. In the middle of the night, there's a howling storm, it's pitch dark, and he's on the edge of a precipice, and he doesn't know which way is north, which way is east, or which way is west. So he says, 'Help!' And a gentle voice says, 'Can I help you?' And he says, 'Oh, Holy Spirit, I need you. Thank you.'

Holy Spirit says, 'Give me your hand. I'll get you out of this. I'll get you back on the right road.' So a little while later, they're walking along on the road, the sun is shining, the birds are singing, and the way is very clear ahead. And inwardly he says to himself, 'I was a dope. Could have made it myself. I didn't really need to panic.' And as he says that, his guide disappears. And there he is with the map. He says, 'Now, I'm ready to make it this time.'

Well, about 48 hours later, he's in the middle of a swamp. And every step he takes, he sinks a little deeper. He says, 'Oh, God.' And that gentle voice says, 'Do you need me?' He says, 'Yes, thank you, thank you, Holy Spirit. I really need you. Need you. Give me your hand. I'll get you out.'

So there they are on the road again. Well, my question is, how many times does that have to happen? You understand? How many times does the old self-asserting, proud, carnal ego have to assert itself and say, 'I can make it without the Holy Spirit. I don't want to depend on anybody. I'm independent. I'm religious. I'm intelligent.'

That's the root problem of humanity. That's the problem that God has to deal with. If you analyze the course of your life, many of you will find out the thing God has been dealing with over the years is to get you to the point where you know you're a dope, and you know you need Him all the time.

Well, we can picture the young man going on. We can go just a little further. After a little while, as he's obediently led to the Holy Spirit, he says, 'You know, I've got this map here. Would you like that? Maybe it would help.' The Holy Spirit said, 'No, thank you. I know the way. I've been this way many times before. Besides,' He said, 'I made the map.'

So, I don't know whether I've been able to help you. See? It's a crucial issue for every Christian. The only way to achieve righteousness and maturity is to be led by the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is jealous. He will not share with the map.

If you trust the map, the Holy Spirit says, 'Okay, I'll come back when you need me.' Now, I don't say the map is meaningless. If you walk along with the Holy Spirit, He'll show you a lot of things on the map, but it'll never be a substitute for the Holy Spirit. Do you understand that?

Okay. So that's the second deliverance spoken of in Galatians: deliverance from the law.

> "I through the law died to the law that I might live to God."

Why don't we say that? You say it after me.

> "I through the law died to the law that I might live to God."

All right. Now we'll say it together this time.

> "I through the law died to the law that I might live to God."

Okay. We've got to go on now rapidly to the next deliverance.

The problem with me is I'm looking at second hand at the watch and not finding the right time. Lord, help me. All right. The next deliverance is in the next verse, Galatians 2:20. We'll get back to Galatians, verse 20.

> "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

What's the deliverance there? Deliverance from I, deliverance from self, deliverance from selfishness.

"I have been crucified. I'm not living any longer." I heard a story about the Salvation Army in its early days in East London, the East End of London. A man who couldn't read or write, and had been a notorious sinner, got wonderfully saved. He wanted to walk in the parade that they used to have, and he acquired one of these red Salvation Army jerseys. And then he went to a Salvation Army lassie and he said, 'I want you to embroider some words on here.'

So she consented and embroidered them in white. And next time they had a march, he marched down, and right across the red jersey, in white, was 'Under New Management.' Well, that's 'I have been crucified.' I've backed out. I've abdicated. I've got somebody else in charge. Not I, but it's Jesus.

What are common manifestations of the old ego? I'll give you a little list.

I think the first one is pride, or to use another word, arrogance. In our little local church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, last year, in about the spring, we had a visitation of the Holy Spirit, a very wonderful visitation, a visitation of the Lord. And the Lord dealt with us. We spent hours on our faces on the floor before the Lord.

We had a prayer meeting in which we really didn't do any praying. For once, by the way, God did some speaking. And without one single exception, the main sin of which we were all convicted, including Ruth and myself, was arrogance.

And we saw that for, in many ways, we had slighted the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit. We had treated Jesus like our butler and the Holy Spirit like a rubber stamp. When we'd made up our minds what we wanted to do, we said, "Butler, come here and see. Holy Spirit, just apply the stamp to mine."

That's the old ego, the uncrucified self.

Continuing the list, one obvious word is egotism. Ego is the Latin word for 'I'. So egotism is just I, I, I, I.

Personal ambition, which I think in the Christian ministry today is the most conspicuous feature. Sectarianism.

My group is right, my sect is right, my doctrine is right. My, my, my, my. I said before, sectarianism is idolatry. It's making idols of your own opinions.

Somebody said to me the other day, well, a little while back, a brother in the Lord, he said, "God doesn't give grace to those who are right. He gives grace to those who are humble."

If you have to choose, be wrong and humble rather than right and proud.

Nationalism is another expression of the uncrucified ego. See, one of the problems of Germany in the 1930s was, there were many Christians in Germany. But a lot of them were Germans first and Christians second.

And we never know, any of us, in any nation, when we'll have to decide, am I a New Zealander first or a Christian first? Am I an American first or a Christian first? Nationalism has ensnared millions of Christians.

I believe in patriotism, but patriotism and nationalism are two different things. Then racism, another expression of the uncrucified ego. How much damage has been done to the church. New Zealand is probably a country in which there's been relatively little of that. But in America, no one could calculate the harm that's been done to the church through bad attitudes to American Negroes and Indians. And of course, the Americans are by no means the only ones. The British have far from a clean conscience in that respect.

These attitudes of egotism, pride, arrogance, corrupt ministries and churches. Now I'm scheduled to speak to the ministers and leaders on Monday morning, I think. So I think I'll reserve that particular aspect of this for that time.

But let me turn to some words of Jesus in Matthew chapter 7, verses 17 and 18. Now I'm going to read the old authorized version, which just happens to be the best.

> "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit [or corrupt fruit]; nor can a corrupt tree bear good fruit."

> "Every good tree bears good fruit, but a corrupt tree bears corrupt fruit."

You see, once the tree has been corrupt, it doesn't mean that it stops bearing fruit. It means that the fruit it bears is corrupt.

Sometimes we imagine that when a movement, a ministry, or a man becomes corrupted by pride and egotism and arrogance and self-ambition, immediately he stops bearing fruit. That's not so. He may go on bearing tremendous amounts of fruit, but it will be corrupt fruit.

> "A corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit."

The only protection against corruption in ministry is the cross. If we cannot say, "I've been crucified with Christ," we are exposed to all sorts of forms of corruption.

What is the remedy? What is the remedy? It's Christ-centeredness. Displace the ego and replace it with Jesus.

I'm not really strong on history, but I vaguely remember that there was a time when astronomers believed that the sun revolved around the earth. I think it was, who can tell me who it was? An Egyptian, Ptolemy. That's right. Okay, then along comes a new school of astronomy that says, "That's nonsense. The sun doesn't revolve around the earth. The earth revolves around the sun." And Galileo proves it scientifically, and the church wants to put him to death. Typically enough.

I mean, you know, anything new is dangerous, especially if it's true. Well, I think, basically, contemporary Christianity is like astronomy before Galileo. We view the sun, Jesus, revolving around us, the earth. We really think in terms of salvation as something that means God will do whatever I want. God will supply all my needs.

It doesn't enter our heads that God doesn't exist for our benefit. We exist for His glory. I believe there has to be a revolution in the church just as great as that revolution in astronomy some centuries ago. When we realize that the faith of Jesus Christ is not earth-centered. It's not man-centered. It's God-centered. God is the beginning. God is the ending.

> "From Him and through Him and to Him are all things."

You will never really have inward peace and security as long as you are self-centered. You will never be able to rest. There'll always be a certain element of insecurity. The only true security is to abdicate and let Jesus take the throne.

You see, what really should separate us from the world in matters of conduct? Is it the fact that we don't drink, and we don't smoke, and we don't do a lot of other things?

I've met thousands of Christians whose definition of a Christian is somebody who doesn't smoke, doesn't go to this or that, plus doesn't drink. I preached years back in a Pentecostal church in Copenhagen, Denmark.

And I had to ride the streetcar or the tram every day to a certain statue called Absalom in the middle of Denmark, in the middle, middle of Copenhagen. And I knew when I got to Absalom, I had to get off. Well, as I felt the kind of attitude that these people had, they were good Danish Pentecostals.

I saw that they got a totally wrong impression of what it was to be a Christian. So one day, I said to them, "Listen, you know that statue, Absalom, standing in the middle of the city? He doesn't drink. He doesn't smoke. He doesn't go to dances. He doesn't do a whole lot of these other things, but he's not a Christian because he doesn't have any life. And a Christian's not, you're not a Christian because of what you don't do. You're a Christian if you have the life of God."

Then Paul gives a description of what the world will be like as this age draws to a close. It's in Second Timothy chapter three, and I want to read it.

> "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come."

Some of us would say they have come. That's Second Timothy chapter three, beginning at verse one.

> "For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away."

Now, if you study that, you'll find there are eighteen major moral or ethical blemishes which Paul says will become more and more conspicuous in human conduct and

behavior as we approach the end of the age. But if you look at the beginning and the end of the list, the real problem is what, is what is with what people love.

It says in the beginning, in verse two,

> "Men will be lovers of themselves and lovers of money."

And the last of all is

> "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."

So three conspicuous features of the unbelieving world at the end of this age will be love of self, love of money, and love of pleasure.

Now, if the church is different from the world, the church must be without those three features: without love of self, without love of money, and without love of pleasure. And what I want to suggest to you is I see very little difference between much of the church and the world in respect of love of self.

It isn't unselfishness not to smoke or not to drink. It's enlightened selfishness. You're stupid if you smoke or drink. You're doing yourself harm. By not doing it, you're taking better care of yourself, but that's not unselfishness. Lots of people who don't smoke and don't drink are as selfish as it's possible to be, for people to be. Their lives are wrapped up in themselves. And they, in their inner being, are as worldly as the worst of the world.

The primary distinguishing mark between the church and the world is that we do not love ourselves. We've come to the end of the ego. What I want, what I need, what I think, help me, bless me, look at me. That all self-centeredness. We've got the idea in some sections of the charismatic movement that if we praise God long enough, we can get anything we want from Him.

Brothers and sisters, we don't praise God to get things from Him. We praise God because He's worthy of praise. This 'gimme' motivation is the motivation of this generation. This is a 'gimme' generation. And the church is just about as 'gimme' minded as the world, with a slightly different list of 'gimmes.' Give me health, give me prosperity, give me blessing, give me the right husband, the right wife. Nothing wrong with any of that, but the motivation has never been dealt with by the cross.

And really, there's very little significant difference between the professing church and the world. We've got certain culture, certain rules, but a good Buddhist, a good Confucianist, a good Hindu would do most of the things that we do, or not do them. That isn't what Jesus died to produce. He died to produce men and women and boys and girls that were totally and passionately dedicated to God.

And as long as self is in the way, that'll never be true. You remember the days when they had cameras that didn't automatically move to the next exposure? How many times did you ever take Aunt Mary, and then take a little muddle, but forget to move the thing on? And so what do you got? A blurred two images on the one exposure. Well, that's the life of many Christians. There's Christ somewhere, but isn't it? If we want a clear exposure of Christ, we have to get rid of self.

And the only way is by the cross. Now, let's deal with the results of what we're talking about. The first result, I think, is freedom to serve. Turn to Matthew chapter ten. Matthew chapter twenty.

We go from this. Matthew 20, let's go from—no, let's go to Mark. I'm sorry. Let's go to Mark. Well, this is recorded in both Gospels, but Mark is a little clearer here. Mark 7. And verse 35 to 45.

> "Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him, Jesus, saying, 'Master, we want you to do for us whatever we ask.'" Jesus was not quite naive. He said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" They said to him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on your right hand..."

Guided through the cross described in Galatians. Let's do a little quick review. Let's try and remember them in their right order. First, deliverance from this present evil age. I heard at least three voices say that. Second, deliverance from the law. And third, deliverance from self. Let's say that once more. Deliverance from this present evil age, deliverance from the law, and deliverance from self. There are three remaining deliverances which we're going to look at now. The fourth one in this list is stated in Galatians 5:24.

> "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

So from what does God offer us deliverance in that verse? From the flesh. That's right. Now we need to say a little bit about the use of that phrase, 'the flesh,' in the New

Testament. There are certain phrases in the New Testament that are used with a special meaning. And in order to understand it, you have to realize what that meaning is. Sometimes in the New Testament, the word 'flesh' is used simply of our natural, physical body. But at other times, it's used with a different, but connected meaning. It's used about the nature that was born with us when this body was born. It's a nature descended from our first parent, Adam, and it's the nature of a rebel. Inside every descendant of Adam, somewhere there is a rebel. And this rebel is called the flesh, or the fleshly nature. It's also called the body, the body of sin, the body of the sins of the flesh, and the old man. So there are five different phrases in the New Testament, but all of them essentially refer to the same thing, maybe from different aspects. Let's look at them again a moment. Flesh, the body, the body of sin, the body of the sins of the flesh, and the old man. And the essential feature in common is that they are the expression of rebellion. Adam rebelled against God before he ever had any children. And every descendant of Adam is born with the nature of a rebel somewhere inside. And you know what God's remedy for the rebel is? He only has one. He doesn't send him to church. That's right. I use a stronger word: execution. But the method of mercy is the execution took place when Jesus died on the cross.

Perhaps you need to look to your finger in Galatians for a moment. I think it's important that you look at this. Romans chapter 6. And verse 6.

> "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin."

You've got two of the phrases there: the old man, the body of sin. In the eternal counsels of God, when Jesus died on the cross, our old Adamic, rebellious nature was put to death in Him. That's the way of deliverance from that nature. See, lots of Christians who attend church on Sunday believe that somehow or other God forgives their sins. I was attending the Anglican Church in Britain, and somehow or other I believed that something happened when we said every Sunday morning, "Pardon us, miserable offenders." But I knew perfectly well that I was going to go out of church and go on committing the same sins. So after a while, I said to myself, I wonder whether which provokes God more: not to confess my sins, or to confess them and go on doing them. And in the end, I decided if that's all Christianity had to offer, it was not for me. You see, nobody was able to tell me that God not merely forgives our past sins—that's wonderful—but He also deals with the rebel. And when the rebel has been put to death, you don't need to go on committing the same rebellious sins. That's God's provision: deliverance from the old Adamic nature. And so in verse 11 of Romans 6, Paul says,

> "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God."

First of all, you have to know it. That's Romans 6:6. Second, you have to reckon it. You've got to apply it to yourself. You've got to believe it's true in you. If you don't know it, you can't reckon it. Now let's go back to Galatians 5:24. It says, "Those who are Christ's have a certain distinctive mark." What is it? They have crucified the flesh. You see, there's always two aspects to the provision of God through the cross. One is what God has already done. The other is our applying it in our own lives. So, God has made the provision; we have to apply it. In Romans 6, it says, "Our old man was crucified," but in Galatians 5, it says, "Those who are Christ's have crucified." They have done it. They have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. There is something we have to do. And notice that this is the mark of those who are Christ's. What is it? It's not that they're Catholics or Protestants, or Baptists or Pentecostals, but they have crucified the flesh. That marks out those who truly belong to Jesus Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 15... Keep your finger in Galatians; we'll probably be back there. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul says something about those who will be ready to meet Christ when He returns. 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 23.</p>

Talking about the resurrection, it says,

> "each one in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterwards those who are Christ's at his coming."

Notice he uses exactly the same phrase in 1 Corinthians 15 and Galatians 5. What is the mark of those who are Christ's? Those who will be ready for Jesus when he comes. They have done what?

> "Crucified the flesh."

So, here is a vital application of the cross in our lives.

Turn now to Romans chapter 8. You'll notice that we go backwards and forwards between Romans and Galatians because these are the two epistles that deal with this

theme. Romans chapter 8, verse 8 and verse 12 and 13. Romans 8 says,

> "So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

Those in whom the fleshly nature is still alive and active, those who are dominated by the flesh, cannot please. They may try ever so hard. They may try to keep all the rules, make all the good resolutions, but they cannot please God because the fleshly nature is in rebellion against God and is not subject to the law of God, and cannot be.

But Paul goes on in the same eighth chapter, verse 12 and 13,

> "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh."

We owe nothing to our carnal nature. All it's caused us is problems. So don't spend all your time petting your carnal nature, which you owe nothing.

> "For if you live according to the flesh,"

That means if you let your fleshly nature continue to control you, "you will die."

The end of that is death.

> "But if by the Spirit [the Holy Spirit] you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."

Notice again, Paul is talking about the body as an alternative phrase for the flesh. He's not talking about literally putting your physical body to death. He's talking about dealing with that nature, the old Adamic nature.

And he says,

> "If through the Holy Spirit you put that nature to death, you will live."

Notice, we're dependent on the Holy Spirit. We cannot do it by our own carnal effort. But on the other hand, the Holy Spirit will not force us if we do not will to do it. It's one of those areas where there has to be cooperation between the Spirit and our will. We've got to know God's provision, we've got to believe it, we've got to reckon it, and we've got to actually enforce that provision on our carnal nature through the Spirit.

So we're talking about putting to death the fleshly nature. That's the only way to true life. At a time in my rather varied career, I was associate pastor of an Assemblies of God church in the United States. And one of my assignments was to visit the sick in hospital. Well, now that church preached divine healing. It believed that healing was provided. It taught that if you're sick, you call for the elders of the church and they pray over you and anoint you with oil and

> "the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up."

But there were an awful lot of sick people to visit.

And after a while, it began to depress me. I thought, "God, what's the matter? If we believe in divine healing, if we preach it, if we pray, why are the people sick?" And God answered me with this scripture:

> "If you live according to the flesh, you will die."

He said to me, in effect, "These people spend most of their time catering to their fleshly nature." And the end of that is death. He said, "They spend much more time in front of the television than they do in their Bible. They spend a lot of time in useless conversation over the telephone. Most of their minds are focused on what they can do for their bodies." He said, "That kind of living produces death. 'If you live according to the flesh, you will die.'" I don't mean they were lost souls, but they did not have the divine supernatural life of God at work in their physical bodies.

So, if we want life, we have first of all to put to death the flesh, the body. What is included in the flesh? There are many, many things, and a lot more things than most Christians would normally think of. Most Christians, if you talk about the flesh, they think about immorality and drunkenness and maybe swearing. But the flesh is much wider than that. Let me give you a little list of things which I believe belong to the flesh. There, it includes many unruly passions, emotions, and desires.

Some of the most obvious are fear. Fear is normally an expression of the carnal nature. If you look at the list of the people who are going to go into the lake of fire in Revelation chapter 21, you find the first two in the list are

> "the fearful and the unbelieving."

Then we have the immoral, the sorcerers, the murderers, the liars, and all the others. But just see, fear and unbelief are works of the flesh. And we have to put them to death.

Resentment, anger, grief, covetousness, sexual lust, and all fluctuating moods. Moods shouldn't have any place in Christian life. We shouldn't be up and down, one day elated, the next day depressed. Christians who are dominated by their moods are dominated by the carnal nature. That has to be put to death. It's a much wider picture than the average. You see, what religious people tend to do, and I myself, I mean, we're all religious people whether we want to be it or not, we tend to have each one of us our own personally tailored list of things we oughtn't to do, and they're the things we don't want to do. You know, they don't suit us.

But our list is usually very incomplete because there are a lot of things that ought to be on the list that we do do that we don't mention. Now, how do we put the flesh to death? The answer is, the cross is the instrument by which to put the fleshly nature to death.

> "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh,"

the fleshly nature with its passions and desires. That means to say, you have to make a decision of will. You have to apply what the New Testament teaches personally to your own life.

Today, counseling is very fashionable in the church, and there's a lot to be said for counseling. But you can go on and on and on counseling people who are never willing to crucify their own flesh. And if they're not willing to make a personal decision, all the counseling in the world won't have much permanent result. One of the main goals of counsel should be to bring people to the place where they'll apply the cross. And if people don't apply the cross after the counseling, it's really not much use while counseling them any longer. Do you know why one reason why some people want to be counseled? Because they want attention.

There are many who've never had the attention that human nature desires. Their parents didn't care for them, maybe their husband didn't care for them. They've gone through life without ever having attention. And now they discover if they have enough spiritual problems, they can be the center of attention. So they never want to come to the end of their problems because then they'd be the end, that would be the end of their attention. You see what they haven't done is crucified that desire for attention. That's what they have to deal with.

What's the result of applying the cross? I want to give you three results. The first one is freedom from sin to do God's will. I want to turn to a surprising passage in 1 Peter. 1 Peter chapter 4.

First Peter, chapter 4, verses 1 and 2.

> "Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God."

You could also look at that, look across the page in your Bible, if it's like the Bible, in First, chapter 2, verse 21.

> "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps."

What's the example? Suffering. So what are we called to? Suffering. That's right. A lot of people don't recognize that as part of the call of God.

Now, going back to chapter 4 of First Peter, Peter says, arm yourselves with this attitude that to escape the dominion of sin costs suffering. The truth of the matter is you're going to suffer anyhow. But if you're prepared for it, the best outcome. If you're not, you'll suffer, but you'll probably get no benefit from it.

Paul says elsewhere,

> "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen."

If we take our eyes off the invisible realities, we'll still suffer, but we'll get no benefit.

Anybody who tells you that the Christian life is a way to escape from suffering is deceiving you. Paul and Silas told the churches that they had founded,

> "We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God."

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So any road that bypasses that, that signpost to the kingdom of God and bypasses tribulation won't lead there.

> "We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God."

There are many different forms of tribulation. It doesn't all mean that we'll be martyred or stoned. There's many, many different ways in which tribulation comes. But Peter says, you better arm yourself with this expectation, you're going to have to suffer.

Now he says, "Arm yourselves with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." That's a strange statement, isn't it? "That he who no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but to the will of God." We've got to be delivered from the lusts of the flesh in order to be able to live to the will of God.

And you see, there comes a point where we have to apply the cross to our own fleshly nature. And the cross was applied with nails. And comes a time when we've got to drive the nails into our own carnal nature. We have to crucify the flesh.

And those nails are painful in different ways, but there's always a certain pain attached to those nails. There's no way out of sin that bypasses suffering. Let me give you an example.

There are two ways you can suffer. One is the right way, the other is the wrong way. Let's take the right way first. Here's a young lady, a committed Christian. She's in her early twenties, attractive to look at, talented. Along comes a man who's not a committed Christian. But he falls in love with her, and he wants to marry her, and he'll do anything. He'll go join the church, sing the hymns, read his Bible, if only he can get this girl.

Now she goes to her pastor, and her pastor knows her and the man and says, "If you marry that man, it'll be a disaster. He's not really a committed Christian. He's just pretending to be a Christian in order to get to marry you. And once he's married you, the pretense will fall away."

Now, what is she going to do? She can put the nails in her fleshly nature. Say, "I won't give in. I won't yield to the temptation. I'd love to be married. I want children, a home, but I'm not going to let that desire dominate me contrary to the will of God." Nails. Here you are. One, two, three, four. Painful. But safe.

And after a while, the pain fades, and she remains a beautiful, sanctified, committed Christian. The other way she could suffer is by ignoring the counsel of her pastor and the godly instructions of the Word of God. So she goes ahead and gets married.

And after 20 years, the man she's married runs off with another woman and leaves her with four kids. That's suffering. So sometimes you have to decide whether you're going to learn the short way or the long way.

But one way or the other, it will cost you suffering. Better to drive nails in and get over, get it over with, than to disobey and go your own way and reap the fruits. After 20 years of living hell, she's learned the lesson. Don't marry the wrong man. I know lots of people that have learned it the hard way.

Whichever way you go, it's going to involve suffering. Either the suffering of an unhappy marriage or the suffering of denying your own strong, personal, fleshly desires for the sake of God. You have to choose.

"But once you've suffered in the flesh, you stop sinning." If that girl has got any sense, she's never again going to marry an uncommitted Christian. But she learned the hard way. But one way or the other, it's not without suffering.

I don't believe there's a single committed Christian here who's been a Christian for as much as five years who hasn't experienced suffering. If there is, would you kindly let us know?

Now, suffering is part of the Christian life. We are called to suffer. We're called to crucify the flesh. We're called to put the flesh to death. But it's the way to life. The new life, the abundant life, the fullness of life that God has. The only way into that life is through the cross.

The second result of crucifying the flesh is relief from the curse of trusting in the flesh. Let's turn back to the Old Testament for a moment to Jeremiah 17. Verse 5. Jeremiah 17:5.

> "Thus says the Lord, 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength [or his arm], whose heart departs from the Lord. For he shall be a shrub in the desert and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited.'"

So, if we have known the grace of God, experienced this supernatural grace, we turn away, and we begin to trust in our flesh and our natural ability, and indulge our carnal nature, what happens? We come under a curse. And the result of the curse is described in the sixth verse. You become like a bush in an arid desert. Now, I've spoken, I think, already about that message of mine, "Curse to Blessing." This is one of the causes of a curse. It's knowing the grace of God and turning back then to fleshly effort, to carnal self-reliance, to doing it our way. And I could be considered critical. I don't believe I am, but I think most churches have done that.

I think basically, nearly all certain sections of the body of Christ were born out of the grace of God and the supernatural moving of the Spirit of God. And I think most of them today, if you look at them objectively, have turned away from the supernatural grace of God to relying on fleshly efforts. And they've come under a curse. But if we will apply the cross to our own carnal nature, we can be free from that. That's such a vivid description of a person under a curse. They live in a desert. Things never go totally right. They're always on the verge of success, but it never comes their way. If you were to use one English word, it would be frustration. And that frustration very frequently is the result of turning away from supernatural grace of God to our own carnal efforts.

The third result of dealing with the fleshly nature is freedom to worship God in the Spirit. Philippians chapter 3. Worship is one of those things that is being restored to the body of Christ, and we're beginning to see again the tremendous, immense, and preeminence of worship in the life of the church. But some people try to take shortcuts and to work worship in a very carnal way. Let me say one thing. There is a total difference between entertainment and worship. As long as we're satisfied with spiritual entertainment, we will never know true worship. There are, I would say, various sections of the church where the business of the pastor is to provide spiritual entertainment every Sunday morning. But those churches don't know worship. It's the statement of what it means to worship God in Philippians 3, verse 3.

> "For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit," or the new translation says, "who worship in the Spirit of God," "rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

There's three marks of the true circumcision. Number one, we worship in the Spirit of God. Number two, we rejoice in Christ Jesus. Our focus, our boast is Jesus. Number three, we have renounced all confidence in the flesh. As long as we have confidence in the flesh, we have a very limited measure of true worship. The fleshly nature is a barrier to true worship.

> "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

All right, we come to the fifth and final deliverance spoken of in Galatians. Let me turn to Galatians chapter 6 and verse 14. You don't have to be a theologian to find out what the deliverance is from. At least, I hope you don't. Galatians 6:14.

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

From what are we delivered in that aspect? From the world. That's right. Now, we need to understand what the world means in New Testament language. It doesn't mean earth. You don't need to be delivered from the created earth. That's part of God's creation. It's been defiled and spoiled by man, but we don't need deliverance from it. The world is used in a very technical sense in the New Testament. It means a certain sociological order set up by man. Describing what happened during the flood of Noah, Peter says,

> "The world that then was perished, being overflowed with water."

That whole sociological order that existed in the days of Noah perished. The world didn't perish in the sense which we mean the globe. The mountains didn't perish, but that sociological order, that whole culture and way of living was destroyed by the flood. Now, we are confronted by the world in us in another sociological order, that which we are familiar with. And although there are many different cultures and nationalities and languages, according to the New Testament, there is one general sociological order which is the world. And the world, according to the New Testament, is at enmity with the church. There can be no real peace between the church and the world.

The distinctive feature of the world, both in the days of Noah and in our day, is this: It is not submitted to the righteous government of God. And God's righteous

government today is embodied in Jesus Christ. And you discover the world is not submitted when you present the claims of Jesus Christ. Because that's when the rebellion of the world is brought out into the open. And God's first demand of the world is repentance. Lay down your rebellion.

The world can be very cultured, very intellectual, very artistic. It has tremendous artistic and cultural achievements to boast of. It's built magnificent buildings, created beautiful symphonies, but when you get down to its heart condition, it is a condition of rebellion against God. And generally speaking, the more intellectual people are, the stronger their rebellion. The carnal mind, no matter how educated, is against God.

I don't know whether you've heard this saying. It's a little parable. Actually, I think I quoted it in our book, *God is a Matchmaker*. "A ship at sea is all right. The sea in a ship is all wrong. The church in the world is all right. The world in the church is all wrong." You know what happens when the sea gets into a ship? It sinks. What happens to the church when the world gets in? It sinks. That's right.

We need to understand that the world, as I've defined it, is controlled by Satan. That's a shocking statement, but it's very clearly said. Turn to the First Epistle of John, chapter 5 and verse 19. First Epistle of John, chapter 5 and verse 19. It begins with the words, "We know." But I've commented that many times when the New Testament says, "We know," we *don't* know. We *should* know, but we *don't* know. All right.

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

Who's the wicked one? Satan. That's right. The Greek is even simpler. It says, "The whole world lies *in* the wicked one." The ultimate controlling force in the world is Satan. Now that's something that every committed Christian needs to understand.

Jesus said to his brothers, who were not yet believing in him, he said,

> "The world can't hate you 'cause you belong to the world. It doesn't hate its own. But me it hates, because I testify of it that its deeds are evil."

And then before he took farewell of his disciples, he said,

> "If the world hated me, it's going to hate you too."

Brothers and sisters, if we're true to Christ, there is no way we can avoid the hatred of the world. If we avoid the hatred of the world, we have compromised our commitment to Jesus. We don't have to go looking for it. We don't have to seek persecution. We don't have to be foolish or fanatic. We just have to be true to Jesus Christ. And there's a spirit in the world that hates the Spirit of Jesus.

And I venture to predict to you that in two decades, the Christian church is going to be confronted with the hatred of the world in ways that few of you have never anticipated. And it will come through revival. Some people think that when revival comes, the church will take over the world. I don't believe that. There's two periods in history when the church *did* try to take over the world. One was under Constantine and the other was in the Middle Ages. And in each case, it was a total disaster for the church. The church lost out totally. It's not our business to run the world. Satan is running the world. It's our business to be separate. And when revival comes, it will separate the church from the world. And then, for the first time, some of us will discover how much the world really hates us.

There's no reason to hate the church at the moment. You know why? Because it's—it's got us where it wants us. But it's very hard to distinguish between the world and the church in most Western countries today. I don't know whether you've heard the story about the great preacher Spurgeon preaching in his Tabernacle in London in the last century on a Sunday evening. He looked out across the congregation, and he stopped in the middle of his message, and he said, "If the devil should come in now and start hauling some of you off," he said, "I wouldn't know whether to shout 'Thief!' or not."

One other scripture: Revelation 12, verse 9. This is a prophetic preview, I believe, of the future, but we don't need to be concerned with that. It's also a description of Satan. It's perhaps the most complete description of Satan given in one verse.

> "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth,"

and so on. Satan has control of the world through deceiving them. They don't *know* who rules them. They don't *see* the

unseen force that actually determines their destiny. He prevails through deception. That's why we need to be so careful to guard against being deceived, because when we're deceived, then he can begin to manipulate us and start to control us, and we won't realize what's happening to us.

We need to understand that the Spirit of God and the spirit of this world are directly opposite. Turn to First Corinthians, chapter 2, 12 through 14:

> "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God."

Remember, only the Holy Spirit can reveal to us what God has given to us.

God has made total provision for us through the death of Christ, through the cross. But only the Holy Spirit can show us what that provision is.

Paul says,

> "We have received the Spirit of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God."

Not the spirit of the world. The two are in opposition to one another.

Verse 13:

> "These things we also speak," that's the things which God has given us, "not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual,"

or unfolding spiritual truth to spiritual persons.

Notice that Paul, in a sense, warns us against using the jargon of human intellectuality. That we cannot use the words which man's wisdom teaches. My firm conviction is that we cannot accurately present spiritual truths concerning man's nature and problems in the jargon of philosophy or psychiatry.

And I'm always nervous when I hear preachers beginning to quote like that. Because that's not the kind of language that we can use to communicate spiritual truth. Jesus never talked like a psychiatrist. Psychiatrists do you understand? He was simple, down to earth. He talked about birds and seeds and simple things like love and hate, and light and darkness, and righteousness and sin.

Sin has very little place in the vocabulary of psychiatry. Do you understand? Psychiatrists talk about problems. God talks about sin. It's a very different thing. You think you're dealing with a problem, or you recognize you're dealing with sin.

Then Paul goes on, verse 14:

> "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Now, you need to understand this translation does not bring out the full meaning. The word that's translated 'natural' in Greek is *psuchikos*. How many of you know what the Greek word *psuche* means? Psyche. Soul. That's right. So *psuchikos* really should be translated 'soulish.' In the Scandinavian languages, they had the word *sjælelig*, which means 'soulish.'

Paul is contrasting the spiritual with the soulish. And he's saying man, by his spirit, through the Holy Spirit, can appropriate spiritual truth. But man without the Holy Spirit, in the realm of his soul, his intellect, his reason, his emotions, cannot apprehend spiritual truth.

How well I know that, because I started to study the Bible as a philosopher, believing it my philosophic duty to find out what the Bible had to say. I couldn't understand the Bible. It was the first book that I'd read that baffled me. And I'd been plowing wearily through it for three, for nine months. I met some very humble people in Britain, in Yorkshire, with a very humble level of education. And you know what frustrated me? They understood the Bible. They talked about the Bible as if it was the morning's newspaper, as if everything just happened. And I said to myself, "That isn't fair. Here have I spent seven years at Britain's largest university studying philosophy, and I don't understand it, but they can." It's one, but I was trying to apprehend it with the soul. They had apprehended it by the spirit. "The soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God."

Let me give you, I could go on with this, but we, we ought to keep our eye on the time. Let me give you just a couple of

other places where this word 'soulish' is used. The first is in James chapter 3, verse 15. Oh, James is talking about church fights. You know what causes church, church fights? Soulishness. All right. He says in verse 14:

> "If you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth."

Then speaking about that, he says,

> "This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic."

Guess what word is translated 'sensual'? *Psuchikos*. This wisdom is earthly, soulish, demonic. It's going down. First, you come down to the earthly level, then you come down to the soulish level, and what's the next stage? The demonic. And when we get into the soulish realm, apart from the spirit, relying on our own natural understanding and ability, we expose ourselves to demonic influence.

Then just turn to Jude for a moment.

Please read verse 17 through 19. Jude, verse 17 through 19.

> "But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts."

You know, the key word in Jude is 'ungodly.' Then of these people, it says,

> "These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit."

Guess what's translated 'sensual'? The Greek word is *psuchikos*. These are soulish persons. What do they do? They cause divisions. They don't have the Spirit. They're not receiving spiritual revelation through their spirit. They're trying to deal with spiritual things in the realm of the soul, the mind, the intellect, the reason, the emotions. And they're the source of problems. These are the ones who cause them. Another translation says they 'separate themselves.' In other words, they very often start their own church. That never happens in New Zealand, does it? What a description! "Oh, we have more truth than they do, so we'll start our own church." "People don't appreciate my ministry in this church, so I'm going to start my own church, and I'll take a few people from this church with me." What does the Bible call that? Soulish. Not spiritual.

All right, we're talking about the world. Let's look at one other statement in 1 John chapter 4, verses four and five. Well, we could read six as well. John is talking about people motivated by the spirit of Antichrist, which we can't go into. And he says, these people have the spirit of Antichrist in them. They're the people of the world. But then he says to the believers,

> "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

Who's in the world? Spirit of Antichrist. Who's in you? The Holy Spirit. Now, talking about spirits, may I just let me be true. The Holy Spirit wouldn't be in us if Jesus wasn't. But it's spirit versus spirit. John is talking about him.

> "They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them."

The world listens to people who speak from the same spiritual source as the source of the world.

> "We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us."

See, sometimes I think we're a little too eager to get the world to listen. Because if the world *does* listen, it could indicate that it's the spirit of the world in us that the world is listening to. That's a searching statement, isn't it?

> "We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who does not know God does not hear us."

I don't personally favor running after the world to get its attention. I've found so many plans and projects to somehow get the world to listen. We have to be careful that when the world *does* listen, it's not the spirit of God in us that the world is listening to. We can come down to a level where the world will listen, but it's not the level of divine revelation. I'm not saying that we don't have to tell the world. We have to proclaim to the whole world. But we have to proclaim from a source that is not contaminated by the world. And I think, I think one of the most important things

for us at this time is what I would call spiritual purity. We don't have a mixed stream. The same epistle of James that we've been reading about talks about people who have two streams in them. One is pure water, and one is salt water. One's the Spirit of God, and the other's the spirit of the world. Well, you put a little salt water in pure water, and you don't get anything that's drinkable. I really feel, in a sense, that the thrust of what I'm teaching is the deep need for spiritual purity. I'm not talking about morality. I'm talking about being a channel for God's truth and God's Spirit and not compromised to please the world.

Incidentally, you know what the world listens to? People who are critical of Jesus. Doesn't follow their way, but they listen. The world is much more perceptive in many ways than Christians. The world recognizes hypocrisy much quicker than we do. I've seen it again and again. You know why? Because it recognizes its own spirit in them.

Now, I'll give you a very brief summation of the difference between the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world. This has a kind of background in my own experience. About two years ago in a local church in Florida, which is not perhaps the greatest church in the world, and it only has about 500 members, I went with Ruth from a journey, and they said, "Derek, we want you to speak, but don't give a talk." "We want the Word." So, I'd gotten a word from God, but it was one of those situations in which I got beyond what God had, what I had prepared. And I began to deal with this theme of the difference between the spirit of the world and the Spirit of God. And I think almost all the people there saw how much of the spirit of the world was in our church. And I think they expected me to come to the end and make some dramatic appeal. Well, I know how to make appeals. But I asked myself, if I make an appeal and get them to put their hands up or say a prayer, they'll get off the hook. They'll think, "Well, now that's resolved it." And it won't have. So, at the end, I said, "To tell you the truth, I don't think there's anything *we* can do about it." "We're shut up to the mercy of God. If God doesn't have mercy on us," "we can't help ourselves."

About one year later, we had this sovereign visitation of God in the church. When Jesus said, "If you want to meet me, I'll be in the church every morning from 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m." And things that we would never have anticipated. I believe that was God's response to my statement, "We depend on His mercy." I don't think you can plan this. I don't think you can organize it. I think you have to cry out to God for mercy. Paul says in Romans 9,

> "It is not of him that willeth," "nor of him that runneth," "but of God that showeth mercy."

That's unpopular with humanists. "You mean we can't do anything? God doesn't help us?" Exactly what I mean. Nothing. We are incapable in this area of helping ourselves. We're shut up to the mercy of God. That's not the way contemporary Christianity thinks. We've got five different programs to get God to do things. God is not obligated to do any of them. And in my opinion, we're coming to the place where unless we see that we depend on the mercy of God, nothing much is going to happen. I believe revival will come when Christians get down on their feet before God and say, "God," "we need your mercy." "If you don't help us, we cannot help ourselves."

Let me try it very briefly. Don't believe me when I say that. I'm so blessed by the fact that Paul would say in chapter 3 of an epistle, "Brethren, I'm closing," closing, and he'd go on for another two chapters. You know what I mean? I see there's a spiritual precedent for that. Anyhow, let me give you five distinguishing marks between the spirit of the world and the Spirit of truth. We've looked at one already in 1 John chapter 4. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth. The spirit of the world is the spirit of error. The world is under the deception of Satan. Secondly, in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, the verses that we've read, the Spirit of God reveals the things of God. The spirit of the world cannot comprehend the things of God. "They are foolishness." Thirdly, let's look in John 16:8 for a moment. John 16:8.

Jesus is speaking about the Holy Spirit. And when he comes, he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Only the Holy Spirit can do that.

Those are three invisible, eternal, spiritual realities on which all true religion is based: sin, righteousness, judgment. And John says elsewhere,

> "All unrighteousness is sin."

Everything is either righteous or sinful. There's nothing in between. And we face, ultimately, the judgment of God for sin and for righteousness.

Now, the Spirit of God is the only agent that can reveal that truth. The spirit of the world does not comprehend sin, righteousness, or judgment. It doesn't know what you're talking about. Doesn't believe in them.

The spirit of the world has a different philosophy, which is stated succinctly by Peter in Second Peter chapter 3 and verse 4. Second Peter chapter 3 and verse 4.

This is the mockers, the scoffers, the unbelievers. They say,

> "Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

That's the philosophy of the spirit of the world, summed up in that simple statement:

> "All things continue as they were."

Nothing's really going to change. God is never going to intervene. The same principles, the same processes will go on. The universe is just the product of a whole series of material forces which are not subject to anybody, and they just go on the same way, and the same way.

In the last century, there was one man whose name is well known who actually became the voice for that philosophy. His name was Charles Darwin. The essence of what his teaching was, "All things continue as they were." There's no sudden dramatic change, no judgment of God, no divine intervention. I'll tell you what that is. It's a lie. It's error.

But without the Spirit of God, we cannot see it. Only the Spirit of God can show us the reality of sin, the reality of righteousness, and the sure fact of judgment.

Going back to John 16 for a moment, verse 14. Again, Jesus is speaking about what the Spirit of God will do.

> "He will glorify me, for he will take of what is mine and declare it to you."

That's one clear distinguishing mark of the Holy Spirit. The aim is always to glorify Jesus. He never attracts attention to himself. The most modest, self-effacing person in the universe.

And that's one good way of checking whether a thing really is from the Holy Spirit. Does it glorify Jesus, or does it focus attention on man, or a ritual, or a denomination? The more the Holy Spirit is allowed to work, the more he will glorify Jesus.

Just to take something that happened, it's very simple in our church. And I believe, I want to make it clear, our church is not a pattern for all churches. But we had one beautiful Sunday morning worship service, maybe two or three years ago. It just flowed from beginning to end. And I said to the worship leader afterwards, a beautiful sister, "You know why? Because the attention was focused on Jesus from beginning to end." And that pleased the Holy Spirit. He's always pleased when we glorify Jesus. That's the Spirit of God.

Now, the spirit of the world glorifies man. It makes man his own god, his own master, the arbiter of his own destiny. It's got a religion for which we've coined a name in the last century or two. You know what the name is? Humanism. That's right. That's the religion of the spirit of the world. It focuses on man. It's the direct antithesis of the Spirit of God.

And let me tell you, brothers and sisters, in my personal opinion, we, most of us, have little concept of how much humanism affects us. It's mostly illogical. 'Cause logically, humanism will say, "Well, if it's right, let's do it. Let them do it." Everybody's free to do his own thing. Everybody but who? Committed Christians. That's right. Why? Because the spirit in humanism is directly opposed to the Spirit of God. That's just a front for an anti-Christian movement.

It's interesting, we can't go into it. I know you'd like to spend an hour or two, but in the picture of the Antichrist in Revelation and so on, it says he has a number. His number, everybody knows his number. It's 666. It says it's the number of a man. Alternatively, it's the number of man. In other words, the religion that is going to produce the Antichrist is humanism. It's going to be some man who is god to the human race.

And my personal feeling is it's so close to happening. I could say metaphorically, the shadow of the Antichrist has already fallen across the stage of human history. But you need to see the spiritual forces. If you see with the eye of the Spirit, you'll not be deceived. You listen to specious words and arguments and sweet politicians. How many of you know in New Zealand, the politician promises one thing and does something totally different? What's that? That's the spirit of the world. Don't believe the spirit of the world. It lies.

All right, I will come very quickly to a conclusion. I'm sorry, I've got one more distinguishing feature. I won't go into the scriptures at length, but the Spirit of God focuses on the eternal. The spirit of the world focuses on the temporary. Let's look, perhaps briefly, at two scriptures in Second Corinthians.

> "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being

> transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The Spirit of the Lord transforms us when we look in the right direction. We look in the wrong direction, the Spirit has nothing to work on. And at the end of the next chapter, Paul comes back to this theme.

> "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Who alone can enable us to see the eternal? The Holy Spirit. That's right. But when we get involved with this world, the eternal has no reality for us. It's entire focus on the things of time.

Now, the results of deliverance from the spirit of this world. Number one, commitment to Christ's kingdom. We cannot really be committed to Christ's kingdom while we're involved with the world. Give you some scriptures. We don't need to turn. Matthew 6 says, this is how you should pray.

> "Thy kingdom come."

What's priority number one in the prayer life of a committed Christian? Not his daily bread, not the forgiveness of his sins, not deliverance from the evil one, but what? The coming of the kingdom of God. Until you have that priority, you are not really lined up with Jesus.

Matthew 6:33 says, how many of you know that?

> "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you."

It's a question of priorities. But as we are involved with the world and enamored of the world, our priorities will never be right.

Matthew 24:14, our key scripture for our ministry,

> "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come."

So long as the church is mixed up in the world, it really cannot proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to all nations. Only a separated church can do that.

And John 18:36, a confrontation between Jesus and Pontius Pilate. Pilate said, "Are you a king?" Jesus said, "That's right. I am a king. For this purpose I came into the world." But he said,

> "My kingdom is not of this world."

I don't depend on this world for my... Secondly, deliverance from the spirit of this world means freedom from Satan's manipulations, deceptions, especially, I would say, for us in the media.

Much of the media is controlled by the spirit of this world. And we are in danger of being brainwashed. What's number one instrument of brainwashing in contemporary culture? Television. That's right. And how long do you sit there glued in front of that thing until your eyeballs become rectangular? How much good does it do you? How much closer does it bring you to God? How much conflict is there between its philosophy and its moral priorities and those of the kingdom? I'm not saying, "Don't watch television." I don't believe in dos and don'ts like that. I just say, just consider what it does to you.

Ruth and I were in a conference just recently, and in with black Christians from the United States, a wonderful group of brothers. And Ruth was saying about something, and she said, "I think 1982 was the last time I watched television." Well, I mean, they nearly let the roof off the ceiling. She wasn't— I mean, she just said it quite casually. She wasn't even thinking about impressing anybody. Now, I'm— Listen, I'm not preaching against television. I'm saying, be careful that you don't get brainwashed. Be careful the spirit of this world doesn't move into your homes and influence your children. And then you say to the pastor, "My child's rebellious." I'm sure, been feeding him on rebellion.

Well, we don't need to go on longer with that. The final consequence is, this is the consequence of deliverance from the spirit of this world: refusal to bow before the world's idols.

And I'd just like to give one final picture from Daniel chapter three. This is the story of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image on the Dura plains.

And he had decided that he was going to make this golden image. I think it was 60 cubits high, was it? 90 feet high.

Think of the amount of gold in an image 90 feet high. I doubt whether that much gold has been assembled anywhere in one mass.

And Nebuchadnezzar said, “Now, I’m going to have my full orchestra play, and when you hear that music, you’ve all got to bow down.” Well, everybody did, except three people: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Sermon
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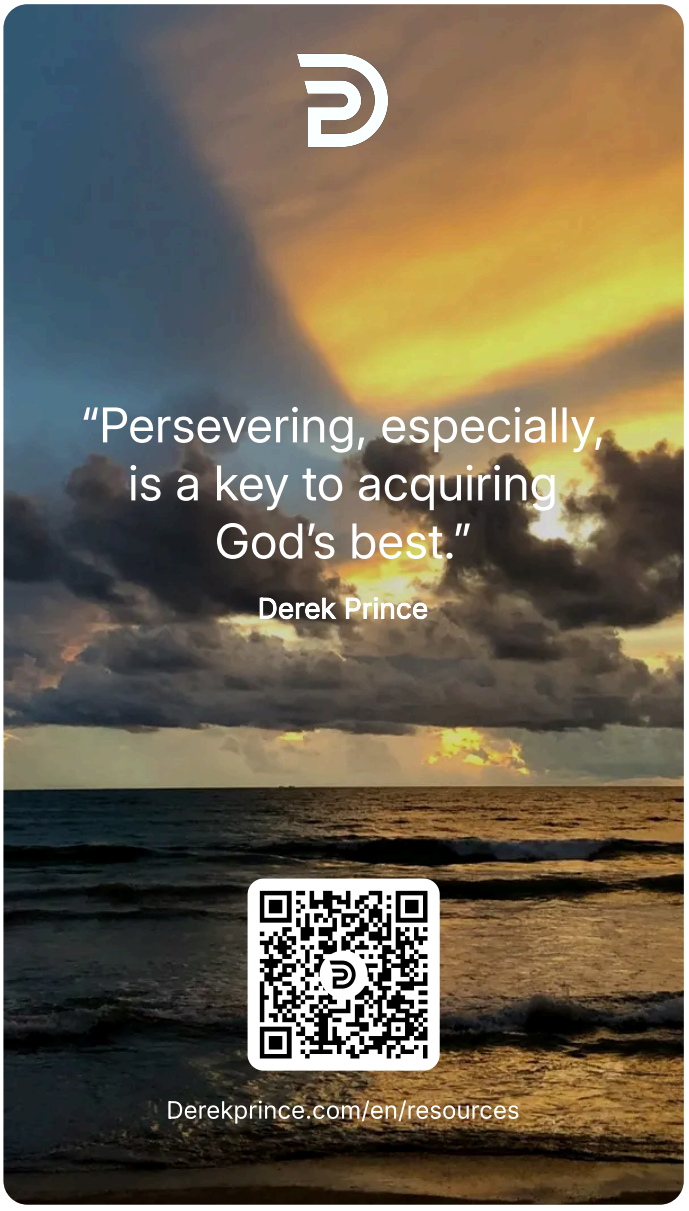

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