

Healing For Wounded Soldiers



Sermon
By Derek Prince

Second Timothy chapter 2 verses 10 through 13. Now this is a suggested motivation for all of you. (Derek and Ruth reciting this Scripture.)

> "Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying: 'For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.' Amen."

DEREK:

I want to read a testimony to just encourage your faith. This has got nothing to do precisely with what we're here for, but it's a letter that I received recently from a missionary lady in Uganda whom I have known for almost forty years. She's writing about a doctor and his wife, Christians, who were traveling around West Uganda ministering in all sorts of small villages and places where no doctor would normally go, and this is something that happened to them. The name of the doctor was Chris, and the name of his wife was Jane. This what she says:

> "The seminar was over and they started out of the place where they had been teaching in Western Uganda. The car was stuck as it was very slippery."

And any of those of you who have ever been in East Africa will understand what it means when the car was stuck because it was very slippery.

> "Some Africans gathered to help push them out backwards. Typically Jane got out to help and was pushing on the side, not the front. Chris was instructed to turn sharp. It was dark and he couldn't see Jane, thus

© 1970 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.

knocking her down and running over her lower leg and foot, crushing it. You can imagine his horror when he heard Jane screaming. Of course, Chris got out to help her. In what I would describe as a split second thought, Jane in agony decided that she shouldn't be screaming and at the stop of her voice prayed and praised instead, most of the time in tongues. Chris joined her in praying the same way. All who gathered around prayed with them. Suddenly surges of power came into the leg and foot and the pain left. She was healed right there. Chris, a doctor, knew that he was seeing a present-day miracle. Praying changed to rejoicing and she has a perfect leg and foot. What a mighty God we serve!"

I felt that God wanted us to have this special session for healing wounded soldiers because I have encountered so many wounded soldiers in the body of Christ. My friend, Lance Lambert, told us that about three years ago he conducted, or he spoke at a conference on the West Coast, and he said to us afterwards, "It was like a conference of the disillusioned." There were so many disillusioned believers coming to that conference seeking some kind of help from God. And I think that is a key. If people get disillusioned it's because they've been entertaining an illusion, and one thing I want to do this morning is to dispel any illusions that you may have been entertaining about the nature of the Christian life. There are a lot of false ideas about what it means to lead the Christian life.

I'm going to read just a little from Every Day With Jesus. How many of you know what Every Day With Jesus is? All right. Ruth reads it and passes it on to me, and I felt that what Selwyn Hughes said was so appropriate that it would be good just to introduce it. He says it so well. The Scripture that he uses is about the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden, and he says:

"After He drove the man out, He placed cherubim to guard the way to the tree of life. [And the title is The Celestial Bouncers. He's speaking about life's convictions. And he says:] The next life conviction I hold, the seventh, is this, life on this planet is exceedingly painful and difficult. This might seem at first rather a pessimistic outlook to take on life, but I have discovered that only when we have faced this fact can we transcend it.

Early on in my Christian experience I came under the teaching of some people whose constant emphasis was on such themes as Abundant Living, Victorious Christian Life, Divine Health, and so on. It was their belief that as a result of Christ's redemption on the cross, most of the effects of sin could be overcome and we could enjoy the kind of bliss that Adam and Eve experienced in the Garden of Eden prior to the fall.

Then one day the verses that are before us now came home to me with great force. When Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden, they were banished forever. God stationed cherubim, celestial bouncers, and a flaming sword to prevent them from returning. They could not go back. They could only go forward, and the way forward was difficult and painful accompanied by thorns, weeds and frustrating situations.

[And then he goes on just a little bit further.] Just recently when conducting a seminar in South Africa a man came up to me during a break and commented, 'What we are being taught in our church is contrary to what you are saying here tonight.' When I pressed him for an explanation he continued, 'We are taught that the joy of the Lord can eliminate all pressure, stress and pain from our lives if we let Him. God's life and power can so fill our beings that no emotional pain will be felt.'

The purpose in the mind of those who propagate this kind of teaching, though they may be largely unconscious of it, is to blunt the painful reality of what it's like to live as part of an imperfect and sometimes evil society. Thus they learn to pretend that they feel now what they really will not or cannot feel until they get to heaven. This, I am afraid, is illusion rather than reality.

[Then he goes on just a little further.] Often when emphasizing this theme that life is painful and difficult, I have been accused of being a pessimist. Usually I reply like this, 'Better to be a sane pessimist than a silly optimist. Only when we face reality can we overcome it.' It was a statement made by Oswald Chambers which brought the issue home to me. This is the statement. "There will be little progress in the Christian life until we see that life is more tragic than orderly.'

More tragic than orderly. Is that really so? I think it is. Some deny this and point to the many good things that happen, but Chambers is not denying that good things do happen, nor is he saying that God does not work through these situations to glorify His name. He is simply saying that in

the ledger of life the column marked TRAGIC EVENTS has more entries than the column marked ORDERLY EVENTS. Not to accept and understand this is to live with a false view of life."

As I've said, I have encountered in the last few years in the body of Christ in many different parts of the world, not least here in America, so many wounded Christians, hobbling around, not able to express their full personality, not able to give all that they have in the Lord's service, some of them have moved off the field, they're not in the game any longer. They're on the sidelines watching other people do what they should be doing. They're very expert. They know how it should be done. They can point to the mistakes that are made, but they're not doing it themselves any longer. To me this is tragic.

I have received letters personally. In fact, one letter that David received and passed on to me really prompted my thinking in this way. This man blamed many people, including me, for the fact that he was no longer an active Christian. Some of the things he said about me were probably true and I long to be able to come in some way in contact with him and try to put things straight. Unfortunately, up to this time I haven't been able to do it.

Most of us could say the words attributed to Jesus when He was speaking to His Jewish brothers in Zechariah 13. They said, "What are these wounds in your hands?" And He said, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." And most of us would have to say the wounds that we receive were not from our enemies. They were from our friends.

But let me share something with you which is beautiful and does not come out in the English translation. The word that Jesus uses for friends means in Hebrew those who love me. Isn't that grace? Although they had rejected Him and crucified Him, He's saying in effect, "I know you really do love Me. We are friends." That's victory. When you can say to the people that wounded you, "I know you really do love me." I believe a lot of healing can come to many of us when we can say that. Well, I have wounds. Most of us carry wounds. "I was wounded with them in the house of my friends, the ones who really love me. They're not my enemies. They are my friends."

I want to say to anybody here, perhaps quite a number of people, if I have ever wounded you I'm sorry. Please forgive me. I didn't intend to do it. Sometimes I'm very insensitive, sometimes I pursue my own objectives and I'm not conscious of what I'm doing to others. I have come to this conclusion that probably the greatest single problem in the Christian church today is in the ministers, and the problem is personal ambition. I have seen many, many men who have effective valid ministries, but their motivation is personal ambition. They want to build a ministry for themselves. They want to establish a name for themselves. They want to have a record of success. That is not the right motive for serving Christ. We quoted the words of Paul:

> "Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

Paul always had a vision of the people who had not yet come to Christ and his motive was that they might somehow be brought into this salvation with eternal glory. And I want to say to you I believe that if we are motivated that way someday when we get to heaven, if God is gracious to us, one of our greatest delights will be to see the people that are there enjoying this salvation with eternal glory, because of our lives. To me that is sufficient motivation.

I know that some of you here have in some sense a feeling, "I've not been successful. I haven't achieved what I want." I want to give you a new definition of success. Success is not making a big name for yourself or pastoring a large church or heading up a big work of some sort. Success is successfully accomplishing the will of God for your life. That's very different, very different. I have met countless ministers who are insecure. In fact, I think Christian ministers are some of the most insecure people that you can meet. And as I've analyzed it in my own experience and that of others, I've come to believe that the reason is their security depends on succeeding. If they don't succeed, then they don't feel secure.

That is not a basis for security for any Christian. There's only one real basis for security. God is my Father, I am His child, He loves me, and I love Him, and whether I'm a success or failure in the eyes of men or even in my own eyes is completely secondary. I want to urge you to consider upon what are you basing your security. If your security depends on being successful, then when you're not successful you're insecure, and there are countless ministers in the body of Christ like that. Naturally we all want to succeed, and I believe that's a God implanted desire, but success is successfully accomplishing the will of God for your life. Paul prayed in Romans chapter 1, that he might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to Rome.

Now we know that God always answers the prayers of apostles, but if you study the journey that came as an answer to that prayer, no secular carnal-minded person would ever call it a success. He traveled as a prisoner in chains. They moved from one ship to the other. The second ship set out in very adverse circumstances contrary to Paul's advice, then they ran into an amazing storm that lasted for fourteen days, during which they never saw the sun or the moon or the stars. They gave up all hope of being saved until an angel appeared to Paul and said, "It's all right. You're going to be saved and God has given you all those who sail with you." That's two hundred and seventy-seven persons. Well, you think, well now that's all right. So they arrive in the island of Malta, they get ashore, they start to light a fire because it's cold. And it always impresses me that Paul wasn't standing around like an apostle saying, "You people should be doing something." He was out there gathering sticks, and what happened? Well a viper fastened on his hand and the local people said, "He must be a murderer who's escaped justice, but justice has caught up with him." So they watched, waiting to see him swell up and die, and after awhile he didn't die. So then they said, "Well, he must be a god." But you know, you would not normally classify that as a successful or prosperous journey. Why was it prosperous? Because the will of God was accomplished through it. That's the only criteria of success in your life and mine is, is the will of God being accomplished?

So now let me bring you some thoughts which I trust will help you to receive healing if you need healing. I want to tell you very clearly I cannot heal you. The only person who can heal you is God, but I hope that I will somehow dissipate some of the illusions and bring you into an attitude and relationship with God and maybe with your fellow men which will position you to receive the healing which can only come from God.

I'd like to read one passage in 1 Samuel chapter 17 verse 40. It's in the incident of David confronting Goliath. It's always been very real to me. Speaking of David it says:

> "Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine."

I've always thought about those five smooth stones, and I view David as in some sense a type of Jesus. Why did he want smooth stones? Because they were the only kind that would fly accurately. If they weren't smooth they wouldn't stay on course. Why did he go to the brook? Because that's the place to find smooth stones. What made the stones smooth? Two things. The water running over them but also they were being jostled against one another, and some of the rough edges or corners were worked off by contact with the other stones. And I believe that's how Jesus deals with us. He makes us fit for His service like the stones in the brook and there have to be two factors at work. Number one, the pure water of God's Word and God's Spirit has to be flowing over us. Number two, we have to be jostled by the other stones. And that is the problem with some of you —you've been bumped, some corners have been knocked off by other stones, other believers. I want you to understand that is part of God's program. It's not a mistake. It's God's way of doing things.

Well you could say, "I can't stand these stones. They're a pain in the neck. I'll get out of this. I don't have to be with all these stones." But you see, if you do that the water is no longer flowing over you. If you get out of fellowship you're in a very, very dangerous position. The Bible says if we walk in the light two things happen. Number one we have fellowship with one another. Number two the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us continually from all sin. So the condition is if we walk in the light. The first consequence of walking in the light is we have fellowship one with another. The second consequence is the blood of Jesus is continually cleansing us. All those verbs in that verse are continuing present tense: if we continually walk in the light, we continually have fellowship, the blood continually cleanses us. But, if we're out of fellowship, we're out of the light. And if we're out of the light, the blood no longer cleanses us. You cannot afford to cut yourself off from fellowship with your fellow believers.

I believe there's a principle amongst Catholics that in monasteries and convents they usually keep two or three really awkward characters just to test the grace of the others. I think it's a pretty wise plan if you're going to live in that sort of setting. They don't put out all the troublemakers. They leave them there to knock the corners off the others. So I want to warn you, don't react the wrong way. I've met so many people, "Well, there are so many hypocrites in the church. I just don't want to have anything more to do with those people. That person, he let me down, he betrayed me." —Whatever.

I remember in Africa when I was there teaching African students, persuading them to receive Jesus, they would come to me and say, "I don't want to join the church.

There's so many hypocrites in the church." Well I would say to them, "That's true, but the Bible says there would be hypocrites in the church. If there weren't, the Bible wouldn't be true, but you don't have to be one of them."

So, let me just continue with the thought in Selwyn Hughes that life is pretty tough. How many of you—you don't need to respond visibly—could out of personal experience deny that and say life isn't pretty tough? Pretty easy, I get things the way I want, things just go right in my life all the time. I think if I asked, very few of you would put your hands up. I don't want to ask you to do that. The problem is— one of the problems—that when things are going against us and we're suffering, that's bad enough, but the worst thing is to think, "Well, I'm suffering because I'm out of the will of God." That really grinds the knife into the wound.

Let me read you just two Scriptures. Matthew 7 verse 13 and 14. I just have to say I never read these verses without remembering a man who was a fellow soldier with me when I got saved. He was in the same room. He was a witness of the extraordinary experience that I had which we won't go into, except that he woke up to find me on my back on the floor in the middle of the night, my arms in the air roaring with laughter. That's not the conventional way to get saved, but I got saved that way. And this poor man who was not a believer but a friend of mine, he reluctantly got off his mattress and wandered around me rubbing his hands, keeping at a safe distance, and he said, "Well, I don't know what to do with you. I suppose it's no good throwing water over you." And something inside of me said, "Even water wouldn't put this out." But we remained friends. I was so glad that he was not religious. If he'd been a Baptist I would have had a terrible time, but he was a free thinker. His philosophy was, "Every one's got a right to do his own thing, and if that's his thing let him do it." So we remained friends.

When we arrived in the desert of North Africa he was in the unit of which I was the corporal, and I started a Bible class for my fellow soldiers. I had no idea about teaching the Bible. I said, "Where do you start?" I said, "At the beginning." "At the beginning of what? Well let's leave out the Old Testament and begin the New." So that's where I began and I had a class of about three or four or five soldiers that patiently endured my efforts to teach. And I got to Matthew 7 verse 12 and I was going to teach the next session on Matthew 7:13 and 14, which I'm going to read. It says, Jesus is speaking:

> "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. But narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."

So I was preparing to teach that and just before the lesson he came up to me and he said, "I'm sorry, Old Chap, but I won't be coming to your lesson." I said, "Why not?" He said, "I know if I do I will be converted."

Well, we remained friends, we lost contact with one another, then I met him in an underground station in London after the war. We renewed contact. Lydia and I went down to his home and we led his wife to the Lord, but he never, as far as I know, responded.

Well, the end of that story is really tragic. Years later when I was living in Fort Lauderdale I received a letter from him. He got my address through some religious connection, and he said, "I wonder if you can help me. Nothing has ever gone right in my life." And he was a very gifted and talented man. "Can you help me?" So Lydia and I made an appointment. We met with him and his wife in a hotel room in England and I did everything I could to bring him to salvation, and he could not receive it. I don't know what his final end was. But dear brothers and sisters, don't turn the Lord down, because when it suits you, it may no longer suit Him. That has been such a lesson to me. He knew he would be converted if he came, so he decided not to come. When he wanted help, years later, help was not available. I'm not saying he died a lost soul. I don't know what happened to him. But oh what a lesson! Don't turn the Lord down and say, "When it suits me, Lord, I'll come."

You know one of the people that tried Paul said, "At some more convenient time, I'll see you again." But there never was a more convenient time. He never saw Paul again. But what I'm pointing out to you now is:

> "Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it."

One thing I appreciate about Jesus—He always told it just like it is. He never exaggerated, He never embellished, He was never sentimental, He just told it like it is. And then in Acts 14 verse 22 we read how Paul and Barnabas returned to the cities where they had been preaching.

> "Strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.' 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.'"

I tell people, "If you're walking in a way with no tribulations, it probably won't lead you to the kingdom of God." Difficult is the way that leads to life. I hope I can help you because I meet so many people whose attitude is, "Well, something must have gone wrong in my life. Why did this happen?" The answer is—well, let me tell you one of the answers in Romans 8. Now we all know Romans 8:28 don't we?

> "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, who are the called according to His purpose. [Wonderful! But we seldom go on to read verse 29. Verse 29 says,] For whom God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

So what is the good which God works all together for? It's to be conformed to the image of Jesus. It's not necessarily the things we would consider that we want. That's not God's primary purpose. God's primary purpose is to produce many sons in the likeness of Jesus, and He will do everything that's necessary in our lives to conform us to the image of Jesus. And it will not all be easy. We won't always enjoy it. Sometimes we'll wonder, "How could this have happened to me? Lord, You know my heart. I really want to serve You. I really want to do Your will. I know You've called me. How come I'm in this terrible situation?" God's answer is, "Because that's what it will take to conform you to the image of Jesus." That's God's ultimate goal. And I tell you, in a certain sense, God is ruthless. He will do anything that's necessary in our lives to produce that result.

Now let me just come to certain specific hindrances to receiving healing. I'm going to ask you three questions. Number one—is there anyone you need to forgive? I believe that the failure to forgive is the commonest hindrance to healing. When Jesus gave The Lord's Prayer, which we all know, He only made one comment. This is the only comment He made. In Matthew 6 verses 14 and 15:

> "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither you're your Father forgive your trespasses."

If you want God to forgive you, you have to forgive. You have no options. There's no alternative. There's no way out. You have to forgive.

And then in Matthew 18 a parable about a servant, you probably know the story. He owed his master ten thousand talents and he was about to be put in jail, but he cried out for mercy and his master forgave him that entire debt. But he went out and met a fellow servant who owed him a hundred denarii and said, "Pay me." And when his fellow servant couldn't pay, he put him in prison. The other servants went and told the master and said, "Look what's happened." And the master (who is in the place of Jesus) said:

> "You wicked servant. Should you not have forgiven your fellow servant that day."

So unforgiveness is wickedness, and many of us are guilty of that wickedness.

I've been—I wouldn't want to say fascinated because that's not a very spiritual word—but I've been so absorbed in the last few years by the book of Job. I've preached a series of messages on the title Why Do These Things Happen to God's People? You may not know that when I was preaching the key message in our church in Fort Lauderdale, Ruth was back in our apartment in agony, lying on the bathroom floor with a young lady that served us at that time, saying, "Read those proclamations." She was in such agony she couldn't move. So don't fool around with the book of Job because it will confront you with reality.

But what I wanted to say about Job—you remember he had a whole series of complaints against the Lord, very justifiable, because God said to Satan about Job,

> "You move me to harm him without cause, to destroy him without cause."

God Himself acknowledged there was no cause for Job to suffer. Some people will tell you, "Well, he suffered because he had a spirit of fear, and if he hadn't had a spirit of fear..." That is not the answer. God Himself said, "There was no cause for Job's suffering, but I decided to do it." You see

God is sovereign. That's a fact that isn't widely recognized in the Charismatic movement. My definition of sovereignty is this—God does what He wants, when He wants, the way He wants, and He asks no one's permission. And you have to get reconciled to that fact because that's the way God is.

Anyhow, you know, I'm sure, in outline, the story of Job, and he had three friends. Somebody said, "With friends like that, you don't need enemies!" They were called "comforters," but they were accusers. And the longer they went on, the more they accused Job. Their accusations got worse and worse and worse. Well then the Lord in Job 42 spoke to the leader who was Eliphaz the Temanite and He said:

> "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has."

That's interesting, because Job had a lot of hard things to say about God. He was very honest. He said, "You're not treating me right. I don't deserve this." And the Lord said, "Job spoke of Me what is right." God appreciates honesty. He does not want sentimental prayers that don't represent our real feelings. So He said to Eliphaz:

> "'Now therefore, take yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.' [So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the Lord commanded them; for the Lord had accepted Job. Now listen. This is the key verse:] And the Lord restored Job's losses [or the old version says turned again his captivity] when he prayed for his friends."

That couldn't have been easy. And you see, if people have mistreated you it may well be that God will not restore your captivity until you pray for your friend. There's not one of us here above the age of twenty, and we're mostly well above that age, who hasn't been injured in some way, been treated unfairly. It's part of life. The question is how do we respond? Job took the right route under the instruction of God. He prayed for his friends. He was healed. Some of you, if you need healing, will not be healed until you pray for the person who injured you or harmed you. So you have a choice. I say forgiving people is not an emotion, it's a decision. You don't have to feel it. You have to will it and say it. Recently we were in Turkey with a group of believers from—I don't know how many nations— Middle East and the Balkans. But there was this one woman who was a pastor's wife from Lebanon, and she carried in her heart such intense hatred of the Jews because of what she claimed they had done to Lebanon—part of which was undoubtedly true. Most of the people that came were enemies with somebody else. I mean, in the Balkans everybody is an enemy of somebody, and in the Middle East everybody's an enemy of somebody. Everybody has national hatreds. So after I'd preached once or twice we had a foot washing service, and we invited people to wash one another's feet. Well, Ruth went to this Lebanese lady and tried to persuade her that she had to forgive the Jews. She said, "I want to, but I can't." And then marvelously a Jew came to wash her feet and he'd been a tank commander in Lebanon with the Israeli forces. And when he came to her, that was the ultimate test. Would she allow him to wash her feet? And she said, "I want to, but I can't." And she was absolutely right—she couldn't. But Ruth said to her, "Well, if you ask God, He'll give you the grace to do it." And she did, and broke down, cried, wept. After that, she received a glorious deliverance from many demons, was baptized in the Holy Spirit which she had never experienced, and ended up by prophesying all in the course of two days. But the key was that forgiving the Jews.

Of course, if you're a Jew, some of you are, you have a lot to forgive. Nobody has more to forgive than the Jews. No other nation has ever suffered as the Jewish nation has suffered. But if you want God's blessing you have to forgive. If you feel you can't do it, be honest with the Lord. Say, "Lord, I just don't feel I can forgive that person, but help me. I want to do it." You see, forgiving comes in two ways. It's a decision of the will, but it's the supernatural grace of God.

I had a letter from a lady. I think she's here, but she described the torment that she went through because she hated her father, and right at his deathbed he turned to the Lord and was saved. And then she hated God because He'd saved her father. But she came to the point, this is the essence of the letter, that she had forgiven her father. She'd been a Christian all along, but she could not forgive her father. And I understand that, because I've dealt with countless people in whose lives the ogre was the father.

© 1970 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.

But you have no options. You have to forgive if you want God's grace in your life.

So now, the next question, how do you respond when God tests you? There's a Scripture that really has impacted Ruth and me. It's in Job 7:17 and 18, Job 7:17 and 18, and Job says, and he's speaking to God:

> "What is man, that You should magnify him, [Put your magnifying glass on him. Has that ever happened to you? You feel you're under God's magnifying glass? He's magnifying all the wrong things in your life?] What is man, that You should magnify him, That you should set Your heart on him, That You should visit him every morning, and test him every moment?"

That came as a revelation to me that God visits us every morning and tests us every moment. And I would like to ask you, morning by morning are you ready for God's visitation? Because it is very discourteous if somebody visits you and you ignore them. And do you realize that God is testing you every moment? You say, "God, why?" And I think God's answer is, "I want to be proud of you. I want you to be the best that you can be. That's why I'm testing you."

And then a little further on in Job there's a man named Elihu, a young man and he comes up with this. It's interesting. I don't think— I'm not sure that I understand the reason, but Elihu spoke about four chapters after the three friends had all had their say. And when God appeared to Job He spoke to Job, He spoke to the three friends, and He did not say one word to Elihu. I'm not sure I know the reason. Maybe he was a young man, he was out of place. But anyhow God simply ignored him. But anyhow this is what he said in Job 34 verses 31 and 32, and this impacted me so powerfully some time ago:

> "For has anyone said to God, 'I have borne, I will offend no more; [Has anyone said it? Have you ever said it? 'God, I have borne, I've gone through whatever You've put upon me. I will offend no more.'] Teach me what I do not see; If I have done iniquity, I will do no more?'"

Would you be prepared to pray that? Teach me what I do not see. Ruth and I have a proclamation taken from the end of Psalm 19. Are you there, Sweetheart? You might as well make it with me—the last three or four verse of Psalm 19:

> "Who can understand his errors?
> Cleanse me from secret faults.
> Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me.
> Then I shall be blameless,
> And I shall be innocent of great transgression.
> Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
> Be acceptable in Your sight,
> O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

Thank you. Ruth and I began to pray that prayer several years ago, maybe three or four or five years ago. 'Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults'. And I have lost count of the secret faults that God brought to light after we began to pray that prayer. The Bible says:

> "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. You cannot trust your own heart."

You can only trust the Lord.

Years ago, in 1946, I was attending the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in a course on the Hebrew language, and the professor was a complete unbeliever. He didn't believe in anything except himself, but he was teaching on that Scripture "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," and in Hebrew the word 'deceitful' is 'aqob' (in Hebrew). And he went into an explanation of this word 'aqob'. 'Aqob' comes from a Hebrew word for 'a heel', and it's a part of Jacob's name which in Hebrew is 'Yaaqob': 'He will supplant, he will cheat'. That's the man God chose, incidentally. And he began to describe the meaning of this word and I've never forgotten this. It was like he was just speaking to me. He said that word 'aqob', and he gave the reasons in Hebrew, is an active word, not a passive word. It doesn't mean the heart is deceived, it means the heart is deceitful. You cannot trust your own heart.

The same word is used in Hosea where it says: "Gilead is a city cunning for blood"—aqob. And he said that means they shed blood and then they cover it over. That's the nature of your heart and mine. It's cunning. It's deceitful. You cannot trust it. "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool." The only one that can search your heart is the Lord, and often He will not do it unless you invite Him to do it. Are you prepared to invite Him? I'm so glad that Ruth and I began to say that, because it has cleared a lot of garbage out of our lives.

> "Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be a wicked way in me."

That's another Psalm. I don't believe that God will search us many times unless we invite Him. He doesn't push His way in. But if we say "Search me," well that's an invitation. Are you willing to invite God to look into your heart?

And then one final question. I've asked how do you respond to God's testing? The next question is how do you respond to God's chastening? I spoke about this last night. Again I'm speaking out of my own personal—the Lord's dealings with me, and don't imagine that you've been a Christian so long that God won't chasten you, because I've probably been a Christian as long as anybody here—fifty-four years, and God has not ceased chastening me. So Hebrews chapter 12—we read the passage last night—I want to read it again. Hebrews 12 verse 5:

> "You have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:
> 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord,
> Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;
> For whom the Lord loves He chastens,
> And scourges every son whom He receives.'"

There are two wrong ways depicted there to react to God's chastening. One is "Do not despise the chastening." Don't shrug it off and say, "Well, there's no reason for that. I'm as good as the next." Most of us have what the Bible calls a besetting sin. There's one particular sin that is our commonest problem. I will be very frank with you and tell you my besetting sin—it's impatience. I come from a family of impatient people. Because of my background and training I've always been impatient, and it often happens when I'm impatient I say, "Well, that's the way I am. It is a sin, but..." And God goes on patiently dealing with me until I acknowledge I shouldn't be impatient. It's wrong. It's a sin.

Maybe your sin is not impatience. It may be criticism. You're very critical. You're critical of your spouse, you're critical of your pastor, you're critical of your fellow believers. That's a sin. You're so used to it you just don't see your need to repent, but it's a sin. Cry out to God. Say, "God, I acknowledge this as a sin in my life. Forgive me. Cleanse me."

The other wrong response is to be discouraged when you're [inaudible]. Being discouraged means, "Oh, God, I can't take any more of this. I just can't go through this any longer. I'm going to give up. I can't stand the way You're dealing with me." So there's two wrong responses—to shrug it off, to despise it, or to be discouraged.

And then at the end of that passage it says in verse 11:

> "Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful, nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it [or exercised by it]."

That's the right response—to be trained, to learn your lesson, to change your way of thinking, to change your way of responding. That's what God is waiting for and He's very patient. I marvel at how patient God has been with me. I've often said, If I'd been God I'd never have chosen me in the first place.

When I was first saved, having a background of Cambridge and so on, my attitude was, "Well, God was pretty lucky to get me." But the longer I lived with myself I saw how far that was from being true. My second attitude was, "I can't understand why God ever chose me." But He did. He chose me and I responded. He's chosen you and you've responded. That isn't the end of your problems. That's the beginning of a new kind of life under the discipline of God, being trained by God, being tested by God, being visited by God. Think of that. He visits you every morning. He tests you ever moment. You can resent that. You say God—in fact, Job resented it. He said, "God, stay away from me. I can't take any more." But he repented.

Now we come to the application. I don't have any program. I don't have anything worked out. As a matter of fact, as you heard before we've departed from our program a long while ago. I want to suggest that each of you just sits where you are quietly for a few moments pondering on the issues that

I've raised and maybe saying to God, "Search me and try me and know my heart." Maybe you need to change your attitude. Maybe you need to change your relationship.

"Lord, we just pray that You will release Your Holy Spirit into all of us, and enable us to see ourselves, at least in a measure, as You see us. We thank You that You love us with an everlasting love. All of our weaknesses and our failings and our sins don't change Your love for us. But, Lord, we want to respond to Your love, we want to be the kind of people that Christ died to make us. Thank you, Lord."

Scott, would you come down? Ruth would you come too? We're not in a hurry and we're not afraid of silence. So many Pentecostals are terrified of silence.

SCOTT:

I hope you will hear, O Lord, my God, for I said hear me less they rejoice over me, less when my foot slips they exalt themselves against me for I'm ready to fall, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare my iniquity, I will be in anguish over my sin. But Lord my enemies are vigorous and they're strong and those who hate me wrongfully have multiplied. They also who render evil for good, they are my adversaries because I follow what is good. O Lord, forsake me not, O my God. Be not far from me.

Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation. Amen.

DEREK:

I wonder if it would be good ifScott were to read that prayer as he read it sentence by sentence and each ofyou to repeat it as your prayer. Can you do that? Do it slowly. We're not in ahurry. Do you understand? If you went to the dentist or the doctor you couldspend half an hour in his waiting room and you wouldn't think it too much. Soyou can spend half an hour in God's waiting room. It's not too much.

SCOTT:

Psalm 38:

> "Lord, all my desire is before You;
> And my sighing is not hidden from You.
> My heart pants, my strength fails me;
> As for the light of my eyes, it is also gone from me.
> My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague,
> [Let me just say, when we read these friends and relatives—this is where forgiveness is in operation right now, the next part of this.]
> And my relatives stand afar off.
> Those also who seek my life lay snares for me;
> Lord, we pray right now the Holy Spirit you'll quicken this next part for those.
> Those who seek my hurt speak of destruction.
> And plan deception all the day long."

Holy Spirit, right now we just ask you to give each one of us right now grace for friends, for relatives, and those who have sought my destruction. Right now, Lord Jesus, we pray forgiveness, the spirit of forgiveness, the grace of forgiveness, right now friends. Lord Jesus, those who have determined to call themselves my enemy, Lord we pray right now Holy Spirit you will quicken faces and names to us across our family lines, our joints, Lord those we have walked with in years past when we came up to the house of the Lord together, we sat at table together, Lord, those who broke bread with us and Lord, those who've betrayed us. Lord, I forgive them, I forgive them, I forgive them. Lord, I choose to forgive them because You commanded me. I choose Your choice. I choose Your way. Holy Spirit give me grace now.

We all need to say this together. Lord Jesus Christ, I choose to forgive. I choose to forgive my friends who betrayed me. I choose to forgive my family members who betrayed me, and who rejected me. Lord, forgive me for my anger toward You when I thought You had forsaken me, when I was alone. Lord Jesus, forgive me for You never left me or forsook me.

> "For in You, O Lord, I hope;
> You will hear, O Lord my God,
> For I said, 'Hear me lest they rejoice over me,
>
> Lest, when my foot slips they exalt themselves against me.'
> For I am ready to fall,
> [Lord, right now Holy Spirit's going to start healing something in this realm.] And my sorrow is continually before me."

Lord, for sorrowful hearts right now. For sorrowful hearts, Jesus. Lord, no one knew rejection like You knew rejection. You cried, "My God, My God." There was a silent heaven. No one knew rejection like You knew rejection. No one, no one outside the camp. Lord Jesus, You never knew Your Father's silence. Father God, Your Son. My sorrow is continually before me. I will declare my iniquity. I will be in anguish over my sin. Lord, forgive us for blaming others. Forgive me, Lord Jesus, for placing blame. It is my iniquity, it is my sin. Lord, I forgive those who rendered evil for good. Lord, we repeat that to You, Lord Jesus. Work that into us. Lord. I forgive those who rendered evil for good. They are my adversaries because I follow what is good. Do not forsake me, O Lord. O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, Oh Lord my salvation. Holy Spirit, come right now. Holy Spirit. A wounded spirit, who can bear it? Lord, You can right now, Holy Spirit.

DEREK:

I have the impression that there are those here today who have to make a decision which will depend on the rest of their lives. You have to decide whether you'll go to God's way or your own way. I urge you, I urge you, don't leave this auditorium till you've made the right decision. Amen.

Lord, I pray for those who are in the valley of decision right now, and there's no way out but by making a decision. I pray, in the name of Jesus, that You'll help them make the right decision which will set their lives in line with Your purposes. In the name of Jesus, Lord, let your Holy Spirit be released upon those who are struggling in that valley of decision right now. O God, release the Holy Spirit upon these strugglers in the name of Jesus.

SCOTT:

Create in me, O God, a clean heart, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence. Do not cast me away from Your presence. Lord, do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me, O God, the joy of Your salvation and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then, then I will teach transgressors Your ways and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips. God, open my lips. We pray for release of the Spirit right now, Your Spirit release from the spirit of bondage in the name of Jesus. Set the captive free, O God. Open my lips. (Speaking in tongues). Let the river of living water, O God, flow out of my innermost being, O God. The God of my salvation, open my lips and my mouth. Show forth Your praise, O God, the sacrifice of praise O Lord, for You do not desire sacrifice or else I would give it. You don't delight in a burned offering, the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart. Those and these, O God, You will not despise. Thank you, Lord. You're releasing captives, Lord. You're opening the prison gates, You're breaking chains right now. Chains are breaking in the name of Jesus, right now. Chains are breaking in the name of Jesus. You've come to set the captive free, Lord. You plundered hell. Lord, You arose into high. You led captivity captive, a train of captives behind You, Lord. You sat down at the right hand of the Father. You gave gifts to man. Right now, O Lord, You're interceding on our behalf in the name of Jesus. The prison gates of resentment, anger, bitterness, jealousy, strife, envy, backbiting—O God, the carnality. All our vain ambitions, O Lord, that we were trying to use You for our ends. Forgive us, O Lord Jesus.

Lord, we pray right now through these joints, we're joint members, we're joint heirs, the joint supplier that's been broken. Lord, as we started in this journey together—many of us here and those who are not here that we are related to naturally and spiritually, Lord. Those that we go up to and the joy keeping festival up to the house of the Lord, and then we were broken. Lord, forgive us for the curse of broken covenants. Lord, that we used Your name and covenanted in Your name. Forgive us, Lord. Lord, we pray for healing for brothers and sisters in the Lord, right now. They are members of Your family.

Lord, we forgive pastors and we forgive shepherds.

DEREK:

I just want to say to Scott that there are a lot of people here that have never been through what he's been through. And they aren't going to understand. So we appreciate your humility and your honesty, and I know there are many who were wounded in "Shepherding," but there's a lot of people who weren't wounded in shepherding, but you were wounded. And I'm inclined to think that the time has come when if all your needs have been met, we'll let you go. But if you have something that's not totally resolved in your heart and life, one of the things that Jesus said is:

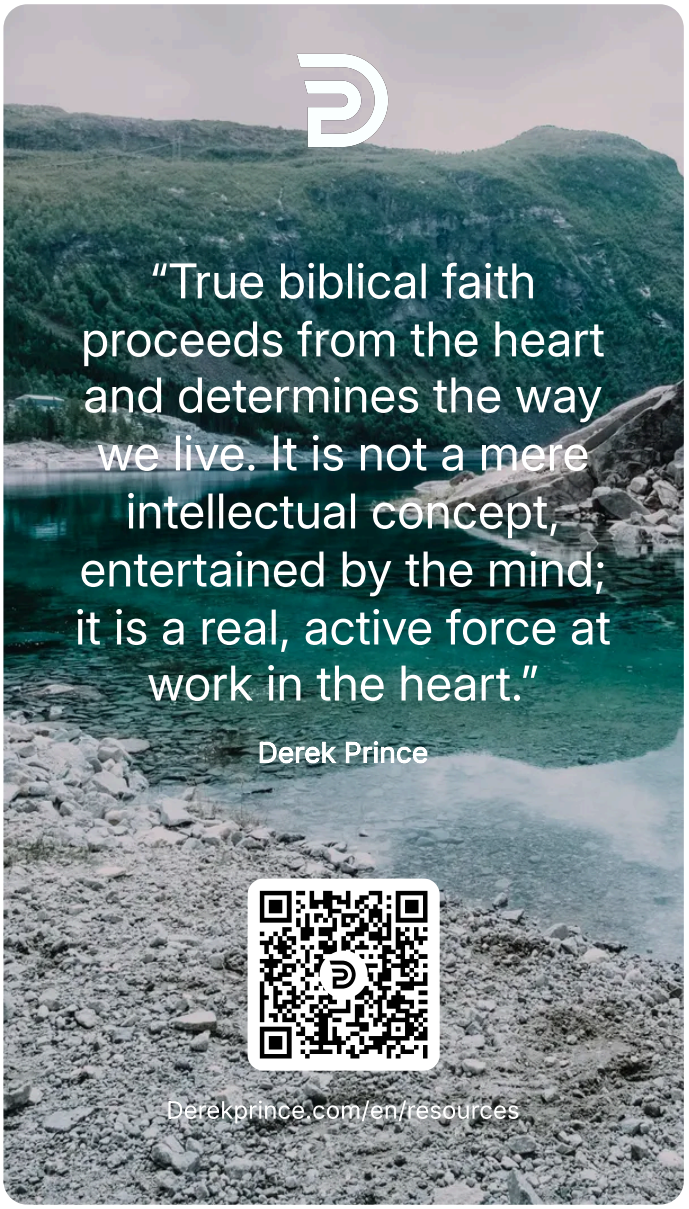
> "Whosesoever sins you forgive, they are forgiven."

That was spoken to His apostles. Sometimes we need to tell somebody else and hear from them, you are forgiven. And I fear perhaps there are quite a number of people here. God has been dealing with you. You've become conscious of things that were not right. You've confessed them to God,

you've repented, but you need to hear somebody else say, "You are forgiven."

Lord, we worship You this morning. We thank You that You are working by Your Holy Spirit. We thank You for Your faithfulness. Thank You, Lord, that You hear the cry of a humble and oppressed heart, but You're here to set Your people free. Lord, may many people be delivered this morning, we pray, from the oppressions and the bondages that have kept them from being what You want them to be and from serving You effectively. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sermon
Transcript: MV-D136-100-ENG
Last Updated: 16 Sept 2026
Website: Derekprince.com/en/resources



© 1970 - Derek Prince Ministries, International, Inc.