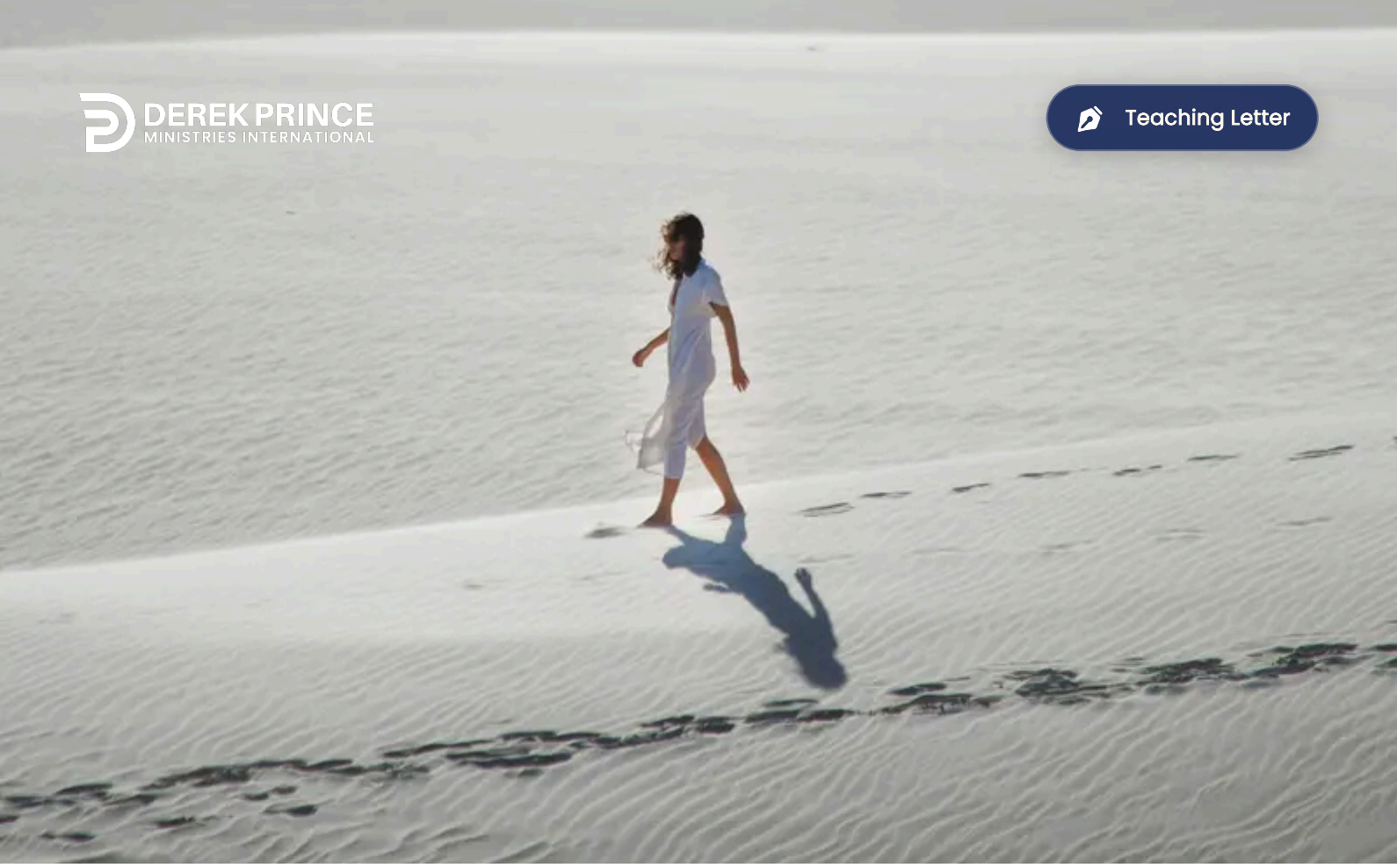


Walking Through the Land of God's Promises - Part 5



Part 5/6

Walking Through the Land of God's Promises
By Derek Prince

Wisdom

In this series of teachings, we have been addressing the theme, "Walking Through the Land of God's Promises." My purpose has been to show you that for every need that arises in our lives, there are specific promises in God's Word to solve that problem. In our past installments I summed up this principle by saying that God's provision for us is in His promises, and those promises are our inheritance.

In my many years of teaching, I have often pointed out the following profound truth. In the Old Testament, under a leader named Joshua, God led His people into a promised land. But in the New Testament, under a leader named Jesus (the same name as Joshua in Hebrew), God leads His people into a land of promises. It took Joshua and the Israelites a long time to claim the whole inheritance God had provided. Even after Israel had won many victories and gained much territory, God still said to them, "very much of the land remains to be possessed." The same is true for us as Christians. Like Joshua, we have entered into only a small part of the provision God has made for us in His promises.

If we are going to go deeper into the promises of God, we are going to need wisdom—the very topic of this edition of The Teaching Legacy of Derek Prince. Let's continue our exploration of this wonderful land of promises God has provided for us through faith in Jesus Christ, our heavenly Joshua.

Wisdom That Works

In this section of our series, we will focus on the promises of God which relate specifically to wisdom. Before we begin, let me add that all wisdom unfolded in the Bible is always practical. In the many years I have walked with the Lord, I have discovered that He is a very practical God. In fact, I believe that anything which is truly spiritual is also extremely practical.

We sometimes talk about people who are "so heavenly minded" they are of "no earthly use." However, such people

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are not truly spiritual. People who are truly led by the Holy Spirit are always very practical people. In keeping with that principle, the first promise we will examine is a very practical one, found in James 1:5-8.

> "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do." (NIV)

In this verse, God has promised very clearly that He will give wisdom to any one of us in any situation when we need it. All we have to do is ask God, "who gives generously to all without finding fault."

Isn't that an amazing promise? God will give wisdom generously to all who need it. Even more, God does not find fault with us for lacking wisdom and needing to ask for it. He knows we lack wisdom, and He is willing to supply what we lack. The promise in James is: "It will be given to you."

With such assurances, we should never hold back from asking God for wisdom. However, one main reason we don't have the wisdom we need is not admitting our need for it. We do not acknowledge that we lack wisdom. We prefer to trust in ourselves and our own understanding—which often leads to problems. Other times, we may recognize our lack of wisdom, but it does not occur to us to ask God for it.

No Doubts

A third reason why we may be lacking in wisdom is because we do not ask for it in faith. God insists that when we ask Him for something, we need to believe He will give us what we ask for. That is why James says in the passage above: "But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt." This truth is consistent with the whole teaching of the Bible, as we see in Hebrews 11:6:

> "...for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (KJV)

Whatever you are coming to the Lord to receive, God requires that you believe in Him and that you trust that He will reward you. In this instance, the requirement applies specifically to receiving wisdom.

When we seek wisdom from God, we have to set our hearts and minds to believe. Believe what? That if we ask in humble faith, God will give us what we ask for. God is truly waiting for us to see our need and ask for His provision. He is waiting to give. Do you believe that?

Hidden In Christ

Wisdom is a major part of our total inheritance in Jesus Christ. But where can we find it? In 1 Corinthians 1:30, Paul gives us a clue:

> "But by His doing [that is, by God's doing] you are in Christ Jesus [so our whole inheritance, you see, is really in Christ Jesus], who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption...." (NAS)

According to this passage, Jesus is our wisdom. All our wisdom is in Him. (He is also our righteousness, our holiness, and our redemption.)

Another scripture which supports this principle is found in Colossians 2:2-3, in Paul's request concerning the Christians at Colossae and in other places:

> "My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (NIV)

Where is wisdom? This verse tells us. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Jesus Christ.

Before I came to know Jesus, I was a professor of philosophy at Cambridge University. I was searching continually for wisdom; but in truth, I was living on the scraps and the garbage heaps of human wisdom. When I came to know Jesus, I was delighted to discover that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Him. I turned aside from those garbage heaps and scrap piles, and I

made up my mind that I would seek the wisdom that is in Jesus. Do you know what I discovered? In Jesus are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

A Heart In Tune

To learn more about wisdom, it is also helpful to take an honest look at its opposite: foolishness. We need to understand that foolishness is not just lack of intelligence. There is a moral quality to foolishness; it indicates a heart that is not in tune with God. In Mark 7:21–22, Jesus gives a list of evil things that come out of the unregenerate human heart. He says:

> "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness." (NAS)

Notice what bad company foolishness keeps! Theft, murder, adultery, envy, slander, pride, and many other evil activities. It is very interesting that in colloquial Arabic, the opposite to the word for "clever" is the word "lazy." In other words, foolishness is not just lacking intelligence. It is also a lack of character.

The Role of the Spirit

Earlier, we answered the question, "Where is wisdom?" We saw that Jesus Christ Himself is the wisdom given to us by God, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in Him. But how do we access these treasures? How does God supply that which we ask?

I believe one key answer to these questions is found in John 16:13–15. Jesus, speaking to His disciples, says:

> "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore, I said, that He takes of Mine, and will disclose it to you." (NAS)

It is clear from all we have studied so far that the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ. But the One who makes these treasures available to us—the One who draws upon them and discloses them to us—is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the administrator of the riches of all the kingdom of God—including the riches of wisdom and knowledge which are in Christ.

Therefore, in order to receive the wisdom God has promised to give us, we must develop an ongoing, intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who makes these treasures of wisdom and knowledge available to us. We have to walk in harmony and in fellowship with the Spirit of God. We have to hear what the Spirit is saying. We have to be sensitive to His gentle nudges. We have to give heed to the warnings He gives us.

So many times we get into trouble because we run one of the red lights the Holy Spirit has put up in our way. When we ignore His warnings, we inevitably run into some kind of accident or problem. Such misfortunes do not happen because the wisdom was not available to us. Rather, they happen because we did not heed the Holy Spirit.

On To Maturity

In Romans 8:14, Paul says:

> "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." (NAS)

The Greek word used for "sons" indicates maturity. The mark of the mature believer is to be continually led by the Holy Spirit. That maturity causes us to be sensitive to every little nudge, every word of direction, and every whisper of the Holy Spirit. If we operate in this way, wisdom is continually made available to us.

I would like to offer one more practical word of guidance on how to receive wisdom. Feed your mind on God's written provision of wisdom; that is, the book of Proverbs. Proverbs opens with these statements:

> "[that they are] for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight; for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young." (NIV)

There are 31 chapters in the book of Proverbs. Why not read one chapter each day, and do that every month for a year? I can assure you that at the end of that time, you will be a lot wiser than you were at the beginning of the year.

What About You?

Perhaps you are currently seeking God's wisdom—and you know how badly you need it. Or, as you have read through this teaching letter, you sense a longing for a deeper, more intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit—the One who makes the treasures of wisdom available to us. Let's express that desire to the Lord now through the following prayer:

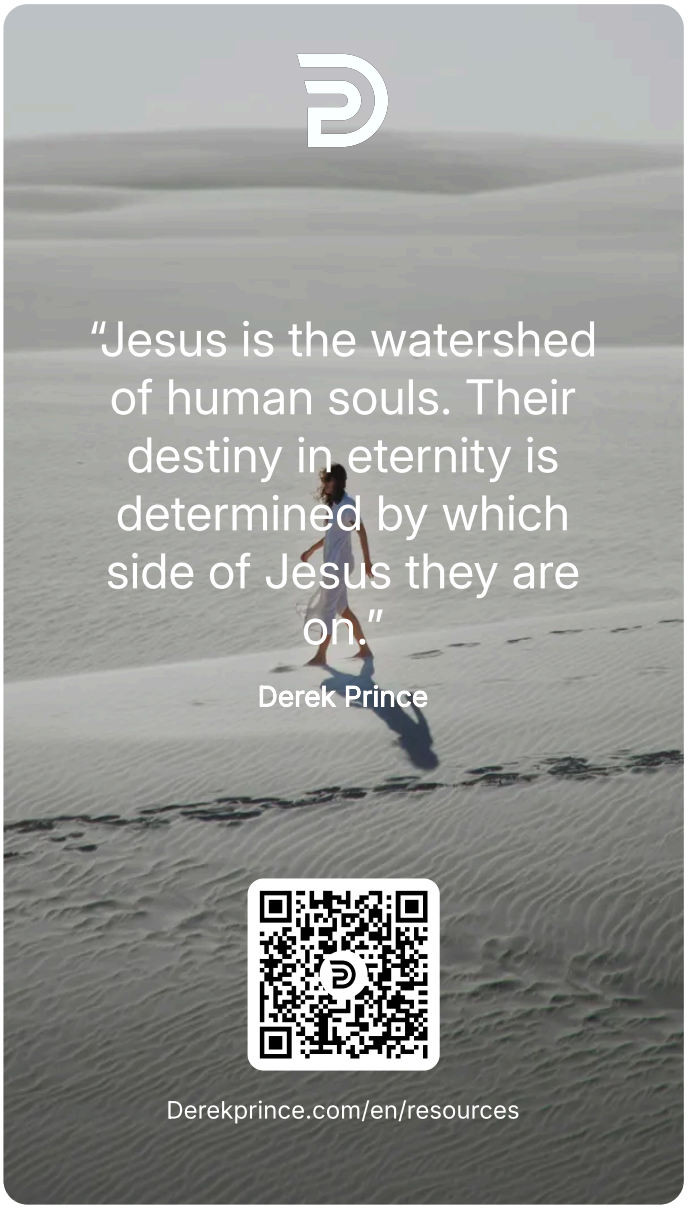
Father, I come to You now, seeking and asking for the wisdom I have just read about. I proclaim my belief that "You are...and that You are a rewarder of those who diligently seek You." I ask now that You will provide the treasures of wisdom hidden in You. I also ask for a more intimate walk with You, deeper than I have known up until now. Thank you for Your loving kindness and faithfulness to me. You know what I lack and what I need.

Thank you, Lord, for making Your wisdom available to me through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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Teaching Letter

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