

T H E T E A C H I N G

L E G A C Y

O F D E R E K P R I N C E

Do You Realize How Valuable You Are?

Throughout the years of my ministry, I have tried to help many people with various problems in their lives. Eventually, I came to a surprising conclusion: *our basic problem as human beings is that we do not realize how valuable we are.*

Consequently, we make the most tragic mistakes. We are like a person who is legally heir to a vast fortune, but we sell off our entire inheritance for something incomparably less valuable: pornography, getting high on drugs, excessive drinking, materialism, financial misdealings.

Others may value themselves higher, seeking prestigious positions in politics, the entertainment world, or even in the ecclesiastical realm. Yet for all the prestige this world has to offer, it does not compare with the value of our inheritance—which some people will give up in exchange for that prestige.

If we are to appreciate our real value as human beings, we must consider the unique and wonderful way in which Adam—the ancestor of our race—was created.

The Miracle of Adam's Creation

In John 1:1–2, we discover that the actual agent in creation was not God the Father, but the divine Word who was with God from eternity—the Person who was later manifested in human history as Jesus of Nazareth: “*All things were made through Him [the Word], and without Him nothing was made that was made*” (John 1:3).

Creation, as a whole, was brought about by the spoken word of God: “*By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God*” (Hebrews 11:3). “*For He spoke and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast*” (Psalm 33:9). But as described in Genesis 2:7, the creation of Adam was uniquely different: “*And the LORD God formed [molded] man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;*



and man became a living being [literally, a living soul].”

Picture the scene! The Lord knelt down, took dust in His hands, mixed it with water, and molded it into the body of a man. So there it was—the most perfect piece of sculpture ever fashioned—more perfect than any masterpiece of Michelangelo. But it was lifeless! Then something marvelous happened. The Creator leaned forward, putting His divine lips against the lips of clay and His divine nostrils against the nostrils of clay. Then He breathed into those lips and nostrils. His breath penetrated the form of clay and transformed it into a living human being, with every organ of its body functioning perfectly, and with all the marvelous spiritual, intellectual, and emotional responses of which a human being is capable. No other being has ever been created in such a way.

A Powerful Breath

The words used to describe this miracle are particularly vivid. Hebrew is one of those languages in which the sound of certain words is directly related to the action which they describe. The sound of the Hebrew word translated *breathed* can be rendered *yipakh*. It consists of a tiny internal “explosion,” followed by a forceful, ongoing release of air from the throat. Thus, it vividly represents the action which it describes.

As the Lord breathed into those lips and nostrils of clay, He did not let out a languid sigh—He forcefully *breathed Himself* into that body of clay, which thus received a miraculous impartation of the very life of God!

Immediately, man became a triune being, composed of spirit, soul, and body. The spirit came from the inbreathed breath of God transforming man’s body of clay into living, pulsating flesh. His soul, produced by the uniting of spirit and body,

became a unique, individual personality, capable of making its own decisions—I will or I will not.

God’s Representative

Together with his God-given mate, Adam was appointed to rule the earth as God’s representative. The triunity of his inner nature represented the likeness of the triune God. His outward form mirrored the *image* of the Lord who created him (Genesis 1:26-27). Both in his inward nature and his outward form, he uniquely represented God to the rest of earth’s creatures.

Furthermore, Adam and Eve enjoyed regular personal fellowship with the Lord. At the close of each day He came to spend time with them (Genesis 3:8). Who knows what revelations of Himself God shared with them? We do know, however, that God granted Adam the privilege of choosing names for all the other living creatures (Genesis 2:19).

In spite of this privileged relationship, the greatest tragedy of human history followed. Tricked by Satan, Adam and Eve traded their God-given inheritance for a piece of fruit! This disobedience affected every part of Adam’s triune nature. His spirit—cut off from God—died. In his soul he became a rebel, at war with his Creator from that time onward. His body became subject to sickness, aging, and ultimately death.

God had warned Adam concerning the tree of knowledge, “*In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*” (Genesis 2:17). It was Adam’s spirit that died instantly; yet his body did not die for more than 900 years.

Renewed Relationship

Adam’s disobedience was terrible in its consequences, but it brought to light an aspect

of God's nature that would otherwise never have been fully revealed: the unfathomable depth of His love. *God has never given up on Adam and his descendants.* He longs to bring us back to Himself.

This is beautifully expressed in James 4:5 (NAS): "*He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us*"—the Spirit that was breathed into Adam at his creation. Incredible though it may seem, God continues to long for the personal fellowship which He once enjoyed with Adam. This relationship was broken by Adam's rebellion, a rebellion that has been perpetuated in every one of Adam's descendants.

Furthermore, at infinite cost, God has made a way for us to be restored to Himself. He sent Jesus "*to seek and to save that which was lost*" (Luke 19:10). By His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross, Jesus has made it possible for each of us to be forgiven and cleansed from sin and to become members of God's own family.

Our True Worth

In Matthew 13:45–46, Jesus told a parable which beautifully describes the wonder of our redemption: "*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*"

For me this depicts the redemption of a human soul. Jesus is the merchant—not a tourist or a sightseer—but a man who has dealt in pearls all his life. He knows the exact value of every pearl. The pearl that He has purchased is just one human soul—yours or mine. It cost Jesus all He had—everything He owned.

In contemporary terms, this is how I picture the scene when that merchant broke the news to his wife.

"Honey, I've sold our car."

"You sold our car! Well, at least we still have a roof over our heads."

"No, I sold our house, too!"

"Whatever made you do all that?"

"I found the most beautiful pearl I've ever seen. I've been looking all my life for such a pearl. It cost everything we owned—but wait until you see it!"

What does this mean to you and me? Each of us should picture ourselves as that one priceless pearl.

Our Redeemer

Remember, it cost Jesus everything He had to buy you and me back to Himself. Though He was Lord of the entire universe, He laid it all aside and died in absolute poverty. He owned nothing. The robe and the tomb in which He was buried were both borrowed. "*Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich*" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Perhaps you have never seen yourself as important. You may have a poor self-image. You may look back on a life of pain and disappointment, a deprived and unhappy childhood, a marriage that ended in divorce, a career that never materialized, or years wasted on drugs and alcohol. Your past and your future may both convey the same message: failure!

Not to Jesus! He loved you so much that He gave up everything to redeem you for Himself. To affirm and accept this truth, you may want to repeat the following words of the Apostle Paul: "*He loved me and gave Himself for me*" (Galatians 2:20). Say it again, "*He loved me and gave Himself for me.*" Make these words your own: "*He loved me and gave Himself for me.*"

It is now time for you to see yourself as that pearl held in the nail-scarred hand of Jesus. Hear Him

saying to you, "You're so beautiful! You cost Me everything I had, but I don't regret it. Now you're Mine forever!"

You can't do anything to earn this love and acceptance. You can never change yourself enough

or make yourself good enough. All you can do is accept what Jesus has done for you and thank Him! You belong to Him forever!



THE TEACHING

LEGACY

OF DEREK PRINCE

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