

Women in the Church - Part 1

by Derek Prince

Derek Prince emphasizes the importance of understanding the prophetic word and following God's original purpose in creation to overcome the apostasy in the church and the lawlessness in the world.

Duration: 39:24

Scripture: Philippians 1:9

Topics: "Women"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the impending judgment of God on the whole earth. He begins by describing the state of the earth, which is mourning and fading away, and its inhabitants, who have transgressed the laws and broken the everlasting covenant. The speaker emphasizes that the root cause of all our problems is the fall of man and our separation from God's grace. He highlights the universal rebellion against God, which will ultimately lead to a fearful judgment from God. The speaker references Isaiah chapter 24, where it is stated that the Lord will make the earth empty, waste, and scatter its inhabitants.

Transcript

This is tape number 4400. Derek Prince speaks on the subject, the church and its ministries. This message is entitled, Women in the Church, Part 1. So we're going to make our proclamation this afternoon from Philippians chapter 1, verses 9 through 11.

I was checking the other day on books of the Bible for which we've made proclamations. I think we've made more proclamations from Philippians than any other book in the Bible. So here we are.

And this we pray. That our love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment. That we may approve the things that are excellent.

That we may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God. Amen.

Now this afternoon I'm teaching the first session and my wife Ruth will be speaking the second session. You notice I carefully didn't say she will be teaching the second session. So don't accuse me of that later.

You'll understand why I say that when we finish. Our theme is, Women in the Church. And I have to say having moved around and met thousands of people from different backgrounds and different cultures but

especially in the western world I have discovered that many women feel bitter and resentful towards men. They feel that they've been cheated, oppressed and wrongly dealt with. Now I don't believe I've ever been guilty of that myself so far as I know. And my own cultural background years ago didn't include attitudes like that.

I didn't know anything about them till years later. But on behalf of all males I want to ask forgiveness of all females. Who feel injured and hurt and oppressed.

And undoubtedly through the centuries many, many, many women have been oppressed. There's no doubt about that. However, women need to know that they're not the only ones who have been oppressed.

Unfortunately, the history of the human race since the fall has basically been a history of oppression and unfairness. The strong have usually oppressed the weak. The rich have usually oppressed the poor.

And the educated have usually oppressed the uneducated. There are exceptions, but they are exceptions. So when you consider as a woman that you've been wrongly treated or your sex has been wrongly treated that's probably true.

But bear in mind it's only one dark corner of a dark picture. And the reason for it all is the fall of man. Somebody said recently something that just gripped me.

A very simple statement. We live in a fallen world. And the root cause of all our problems is that we are fallen from God's grace.

We have fallen into sin. We are at war with our Creator. And yet we have somehow in us a picture of how things ought to be.

And then we feel frustrated time and time again when things don't work out the way we feel they ought to be. But remember that. It's because we live in a fallen world.

There are more unrighteous people than righteous. Far more. In most of our lives there are more sad days than glad days.

If we face the fact. There are many, many things continually going wrong. In the old stories they used to tell about the romantic couple that they married and lived happily ever afterwards.

That's a lie. No one ever lives ever afterwards. And many don't live happily.

And even the happiest marriage. And I had one for 30 years. Ends in a funeral.

These are just solemn intractable facts that we have to face. So when you consider that you haven't been fairly treated. Bear in mind the same applies to many others.

I'm sorry for any part I may have had. I certainly am not a woman hater. That's one problem that never troubled me.

Now my aim in this teaching is to be objective. How far I achieve that aim, I leave it to you to judge. But before I enter the details of this subject.

I think it's very important that I give you what I would call a prophetic backdrop. In 2 Peter 1, verse 19. Peter says, we also have the prophetic word.

Which made more sure. Which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place. Until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

That's addressed to all Christians. We have the prophetic word. We do well to give it heed.

It is a light that shines in a dark place. If we do not give heed to the prophetic word. We will find ourselves in the dark without light.

At least one-third of the whole Bible is prophecy. If you ignore prophecy and leave it out and take no account of it. You are ignoring at least one-third of God's word.

And how can you expect to prosper? If you don't avail yourself of the light that's given to us through the prophetic word. You will find yourself walking in darkness. And it will have two effects.

First of all, you won't know where you're going. Secondly, you will not understand what's going on around you. Only those who have the light of the prophetic Scripture.

Have a clear idea of where we're headed. And can understand some of the tremendously confusing things that are going on around us. So I want to turn to one particular passage of prophecy.

Which has a lot to do with our theme here this afternoon. And that is in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 and verse 3. Now, 2 Thessalonians is dealing with the coming of the Antichrist. And it warns us, or Paul warns us.

That the Antichrist will not come until something else has happened first. So if something else has not happened first. We know that the Antichrist is not coming immediately.

And in verse 3 of 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. Talking about that day, the day of the coming of the Antichrist. Paul says, let no one deceive you by any means. For that day will not come unless the falling away comes first.

And the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition. The man of lawlessness is one of the titles of the Antichrist. But Paul says, don't imagine that the Antichrist will come.

Until there has first been what this version calls, the falling away. The NIV translates it, the rebellion. And the New American Standard translates it, the apostasy.

So there is going to be an apostasy before the final revelation of the Antichrist. The best translation, if you're familiar with the word, is apostasy. Because that's exactly the Greek word which is translated, apostasia.

It's only used in one other place in the New Testament. In Acts chapter 21, verse 21. Where Paul is accused of apostasy by his fellow Jews.

Because he taught disobedience to the law of Moses. So the meaning of the word is turning away from revealed divine truth. In rebellion and disobedience.

And until that happens, Paul says, the Antichrist will not come. In fact, the apostasy in the church is what will open the way for the Antichrist. Because God has ordained that to a great extent.

He will through His church, which is His governmental body on earth. He will restrain the lawlessness of man. But when the church throws off restraint and becomes lawless.

Then there is nothing else left to restrain lawlessness on earth. And that's why we have an ever increasing scenario of lawlessness in the world today. Because the church, by and large, has apostasized.

It has turned away from the clearly revealed truth of God's word. And it has led the way into rebellion. There are some dramatic historical examples of this.

When the church fails, God's restraint is withdrawn. I guess I'll give you one example. At the end of the last century, in Germany, Christian theologians came out with what was called the New Theology.

It's no newer than the Garden of Eden, but that's what they called it. And in this New Theology, the Old Testament is not to be taken literally or seriously. It's a compilation of myths and history and poems and fragments.

But it's not the Word of God, exactly. Now that had a cataclysmic effect on Europe. And furthermore, on much of the rest of the world.

When the church apostasized in Germany, it opened the way for a flood of evil and lawlessness. From which we are still suffering the effects today. The second thing happened in 1910.

The church leaders, the Christian church leaders in Germany, published an official statement. In which they refused the Pentecostal movement. They said it was from Satan.

Now thank God a few years ago, leaders of the church in Germany met together and publicly repented of that statement. But in the meanwhile, these two things, the apostasy of the theologians and the rejection of the Holy Spirit by the leaders of the church, opened the way for a flood of lawlessness. And let me give you just two products by name.

Karl Marx and Adolf Hitler. And the emergence of those two men, both from Germany, can be directly attributed to the apostasy of the church in Germany. And so Paul says there's going to be an apostasy, a falling away, a deliberate rejection of revealed divine truth.

The apostasy is called today, humanism. And do you know the feminine form of humanism? Feminism. It's just the male and the female version of apostasy.

And it goes back to the first temptation of Satan of Adam and Eve. When he said, You will be like God, or gods, knowing good and evil. And he tempted our two foreparents to take upon themselves the responsibility of judging what is good and what is evil.

And that is precisely what humanism is. It takes away from God the right to set absolute standards of morality and righteousness and truth. And says we'll set our own standards.

We'll decide what is good, what is evil, what is true, what is false, what is right and what is wrong. And I personally believe, this is my own opinion, that the most powerful satanic force released in the world today is humanism. And if we had time we could trace the consequences of humanism in situation after

situation.

But the subtlety of it is that it does not appear immediately to be as evil as it is. And as I've said, and I make no apology for this, feminism is the female version of humanism. You might say, well why doesn't Satan ever think up a new temptation? I'll tell you why.

Because the old one always works. Generation by generation by generation he's always succeeded in persuading man to take upon himself the responsibility that belongs alone to God. And the character flaw which he exploits is always the same.

It is pride. I want to tell you all pride is the most dangerous thing that can ever come into your life. Now, as a result of this apostasy and the lawlessness in the church, lawlessness has invaded the human race.

And Jesus predicted it would be so. In Matthew chapter 24. Matthew 24, verse 12.

Jesus gives a little list of things that will mark the close of the age. He speaks about persecution of Christians. Many Christians falling away.

Many false prophets. And then in verse 12 He says, Lawlessness will abound, and the love of many will grow cold. The Greek word used for love there is *agape*, which is normally restricted to Christian love.

Jesus is warning that there will be such an atmosphere of lawlessness on earth that even Christians will be affected by it. And their love will dwindle and wither. So, this situation of lawlessness is what we are confronted with today.

I don't know how many of you ever read a little daily devotional called Every Day with Jesus. By Selwyn Hughes. We read it, Ruth and I have read it regularly for years.

And in this particular passage he is commenting on Romans chapter 12 and verse 2. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. And his comment is this, and it's exactly appropriate to what I'm saying. The Christian church has always stood in danger of being brainwashed by the world.

But perhaps never so much as in this present decade. Secularism, which is another way of calling humanism. Secularism has spread its tentacles far and wide so that almost without realizing it, we find ourselves thinking about the important issues of life with much the same mindset as the world.

I am referring, of course, to those issues where there is a clear and distinctive Christian viewpoint. J.B. Phillips translates the text for today in this way. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within.

That's a very serious and solemn warning. And I see everywhere I go, but especially in the West, the church being squeezed into the world's mold of thinking. And when we think wrong, ultimately we will live wrong.

We've all heard about translations of the Bible in modern English. Which is all right, I'm not the least bit opposed to it. But I used to say to Ruth, can you get modern language without modern thinking? I believe you can, but it takes great discernment to do it.

And some modern versions go beyond modern English to modern thinking. Now, this universal rebellion is going to call down the most fearful judgment of God that you can imagine. In fact, quite probably you can't imagine it.

I wonder how many of you believe that God is going to judge the world. You do? Because a lot of people just act as though that was irrelevant, it's not going to happen. In Isaiah chapter 24, verses 4 through 6, we have this picture of an impending judgment on the earth.

If you start in verse 1, it's the most amazing statement. Behold, the Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste, distorts its surface and scatters abroad its inhabitants. That's the opening verse.

Then we go down to 3 verses 4, 5 and 6. The earth mourns and fades away. The world languishes and fades away. The haughty people of the earth languish.

The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse has devoured the earth and those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned and few men are left.

I don't know how you feel about that. I feel it will happen exactly the way it is described. So we need to find out why.

What is it that's going to put terrible judgment from God on the whole earth? And the answer is threefold. Verse 5, the earth is also defiled under its inhabitants because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. There are three charges brought against the earth or the people of the earth.

Number one, we have transgressed the laws. And as a specimen of that we could simply take the Ten Commandments. We have broken the Ten Commandments.

We have changed the ordinance. The ordinance, I believe, means the way God ordained that life should be lived. The pattern of life, especially in home and family.

And thirdly, we have broken the everlasting covenant. That is the everlasting covenant made in Jesus Christ. And I would say probably, numerically, the majority of professing Christians today have broken that covenant.

We are a covenant-breaking people. Probably, I think, God does not apply to those here. But if you consider that leaders of most of the major denominations have publicly denied such things as the virgin birth, the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ, and made provision for such things as marriage between homosexuals.

You have to say we have broken the everlasting covenant. And that's the reason for the judgments of God which are set forth here. Now I want to speak, and we're coming now to the theme of this talk, about the ordinance.

God's pattern for life. And there are two basic human relationships on which all others depend. The relationship between husbands and wives, and parents and children.

That's really the basic ordinance of God. The way that husbands and wives should relate. The way that parents and children should relate.

And when that is broken, we release a cataclysm of disorder, lawlessness, and wickedness upon us. And anybody, in any way responsible for producing that result, will have a terrible time answering God. So, if what we're dealing with is the ordinance, the relationship between husbands and wives, parents and children, bear in mind it's an extremely important, serious topic.

In fact, our welfare depends on finding God's will. Now, we hear today a lot about cultural. Things are all right because they're cultural.

Culture has changed, I would have to say it certainly has. But I want to point out to you that when Jesus spoke about these relationships, He went back to God's original purpose in creation. If you look in Matthew 19, verses 3 through 5, the Pharisees came to Him, testing Him and saying to Him, Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason? And He answered and said to them, Have you not read that He who made them in the beginning, made them male and female and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife and they too shall become one flesh? Jesus said, Have you not read, in the beginning? Now, most of you may not be aware, but the Hebrew title of the book of Genesis is exactly that.

Bereshit, in the beginning. So, Jesus was deliberately referring them to the record of creation in Genesis. And He said, This is the starting point.

This is the standard. And then again, when Paul spoke about family relationships, especially husbands and wives, he based it on the eternal relationships within the Godhead. In 1 Corinthians chapter 11, just one verse.

1 Corinthians 11, verse 3. But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman or the wife is man, and the head of Christ is God. So Paul went even further back than Jesus. For his pattern he went to relationships in the eternal Godhead.

And he traced a headship that descends from God the Father through Christ the Son, to the husband, to the wife. There is no possibility of any of those factors being changed by culture. They are eternal, unchanging facts.

Let me point out that it's ridiculous to advance culture as a reason for changing anything. People say, Well, it's a cultural affair. The truth of the matter is, if you analyze the cultures of the world all over, most of them are rooted in demonic practices and superstitions.

So how can we turn to something demonic for a pattern for our lives as Christians? Now I want to go to the original pattern. I believe we have to start here if we're going to make sense and get something solid and reliable for our basis. So I'm going to turn to the account of the creation of man and woman in Genesis chapter 1, verse 26 and 27.

Then God said, Let us make man in our image. You notice it was a decision of the Godhead. Father, Son and Holy Spirit together decided, Let us.

Let us make man in our image according to our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image.

In the image of God He created him. Male and female He created them. That's the account of the original creation of the human race.

Man and woman. And they were created to exercise rule. We don't know, I think, anything specific about the relationship between them.

But the original pattern was for man and woman together to rule God's earth. Then we discover the specific reason for which woman was created. Being a male I recognize that women are a mystery.

I think most males will come to that conclusion. The creation of woman is one of the fascinating mysteries of the Bible. If you turn to Genesis chapter 2 and verse 18.

The Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone. I will make him a helper comparable to him or to complete him. I think that's the best translation, a helper to complete him.

That's the first time in creation that anything was not good. Up to that time everything had been very good. But now the fact that Adam didn't have a mate was not good.

He needed a helper to complete him. And how did the Lord produce the helper? This is just wonderful. Verse 21, The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam.

That's the first anesthetic in history. And as he slept he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman.

The Hebrew says He built it into a woman. So how did God do that? We have no idea. It is a mystery.

We just know, we see the product. It happened. And I have been married altogether 48 years.

30 years to my first wife and 18 years to my second. I have learned that woman is a mystery. It solves a lot of, gets me out of a lot of problems.

I mean a wonderful mystery. As I said I have never been a woman helper. But I just recognize I am dealing with something I don't fully understand.

Now, what was the role of woman? Now we're coming to the basics. What was she created to do and to be? In one word, a helper. And that is the key to understanding fulfillment in a woman's life.

A woman's nature is to be a helper. Now in our contemporary thinking that's prejudice. There you are, they're putting us down.

We are to be helpers. Let me point out something to you which will encourage you. In John 16 verse 7, Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit and He called Him the Helper.

So you women have got the same title as the Holy Spirit. Do you think the Holy Spirit feels inferior to the Father and the Son? Because He's the Helper. Do you think that Jesus feels inferior to the Father because He's the Son? God spoke about Jesus in His earthly ministry and said, Behold My servant in whom I delight.

Do you think that Jesus is inferior to the Father because He's the Servant? You see we've got this totally wrong mindset. Which is the root of many of our problems that it's inferior to be a servant. That's not true.

It's not. Jesus is the servant of the Father. The Holy Spirit is the servant of the Father and the Son.

What matters is to find your particular place and fill it. Don't argue with God. He made you that way.

Whether male or female. Whether black or white or any other color in between. And that's the way you're going to be.

So you might as well learn to make the best of it. Not fight it. Not argue about it.

I have a dear friend, a brother in the Lord, who was born a Muslim in Algeria. Had a dramatic personal encounter with Jesus. And has become a committed believer in Jesus.

Because of his Muslim background, he began to argue with God about the way God had chosen the Jews. And the privileges that appeared to be granted to the Jewish people. And why should they, and why should they, and why should they.

And eventually God spoke to him and said, Ali, that isn't his name, but Ali, your problem is not with the Jews. It's with me. And I say to you ladies, your problem is not with men.

It's with God. And He's not going to change. He's sovereign.

You can argue with Him, plead with Him, get angry with Him. But He is not going to change. Thank God, because He's perfect.

All right, now. What we're saying now is the result of the fall. Bear in mind we don't know exactly what life would have been like if man had never fallen.

But we, as I said, live in a fallen world. Now, it's a wonderful thing that Christ has redeemed us from the curse that came upon us through the breaking of the law of Moses. If you want to read that, it's one of my favorite Scriptures, I've preached on it countless times.

Galatians chapter 3 and verse 13. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, etc. So Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law.

That is, the breaking of the law of Moses. And if you want to know what that curse is like, you can look at the last 54 verses of Deuteronomy 28, which lists countless curses of every kind that come through breaking the law. Thank God, on the cross, Jesus has made a curse that we might be delivered from every one of those curses.

But, we are not yet delivered from the curse that came through the fall. That is still in force. Let's look for a moment at what the curse of the fall was.

And you'll see, it's very much in force. Genesis chapter 3, beginning at verse 16. This is God speaking to the woman, He said, I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception.

In pain you shall bring forth children. Well, I know there are a lot of theories about painless childbirth. But most of you ladies here know they just don't work.

And they won't work, because the Lord said it will be painful. It will be painful until that curse is lifted. It is not yet lifted.

Then He went on to say to Adam, Adam curses the ground for your sake. In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you.

As long as you see thorns and thistles around, you know that that curse has not yet been revoked. It will be, but not yet. So, we are talking now about God's order in a creation that is under a curse, as I say.

We don't know exactly what the relationship would have been between man and woman before the fall. I mean, as far as I know, there's no way of finding out. What we do know is what the relationship is to be after the fall.

And it's stated in Genesis 3, 16. I'll quote it again. I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception.

In pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be to your husband and he shall rule over you. We've already commented on the fact that childbirth is painful.

It then says, your desire shall be for your husband. Now, my personal thinking is, that's not so much a sexual desire as the expression of a desire in every woman, not always fulfilled, to bear children. And people can switch sex to homosexuality.

But no one has yet devised a way by which a woman can have a baby without a man being involved. So that basic desire of woman causes her always to be dependent on man. I don't believe it's ever going to change.

And then he says, and this is the crucial verse which makes some people so angry. He, the husband, shall rule over you, the wife. Now I want to say a little bit from my knowledge of Hebrew, which is not perfect but is helpful.

The preposition over doesn't correspond to what's in the Hebrew. Over suggests in a way suppression, domination, at least to some people's minds. But the Hebrew preposition is just one syllable, be.

It's translated in, or with, or by, or many different things. It's one of the most fluid prepositions in Hebrew. And it does not really express what is understood in English by the word over.

It's interesting that the word that's translated rule, the verb, gives us the Hebrew noun for government. And, interestingly in modern Hebrew, the word for the prime minister is the head of the government. Rosh HaMimshallah.

So this idea of rule is directly connected with the idea of headship. And you could translate, he shall be your governor, he shall be your ruler, he shall be your head, he shall be your protector. See, it's got a very different suggestion from the way it sounds to most ears in English.

And actually, I'll give you my opinion, women need protectors. And the ones that think they don't are the ones that need it most. I tell you, I have such a picture today out of my own experience of the terrible frailty of human life.

Tape over.

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