

THE TEACHING  
**LEGACY**  
 OF DEREK PRINCE

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**Twelve Steps to a Good Year**  
 Part 4: Steps 7 and 8

This is the fourth installment of our series of teachings on “Twelve Steps to a Good Year.” Twelve times in the epistle to the Hebrews the writer says, “*Let us.*” These two words indicate resolutions or decisions—not ones we can make merely as individuals, but resolutions we need to make together with our fellow believers. That is why it always says “*Let us*” rather than “*Let me.*” Taken together, these twelve passages in Hebrews constitute twelve scriptural New Year resolutions. As we go through these steps, I would suggest that you make it a point to memorize them in order. Then, at the end of this series, you will have something positive and permanent to take with you through this year and the years to follow. (*The first six of these steps were presented in the previous three editions of this series.*)

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**Step 7: Let Us Hold Fast  
 Our Confession Without Wavering**

Like the previous sixth step, the seventh step is found in Hebrews 10:

*Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.*

*Hebrews 10:23 NASB*

Let's first review some points about this theme of confession as it is presented in Hebrews to see how we have arrived at this statement. First, confession means “saying the same as God.” Confessing our faith, then, is saying the same with our mouth as God says in His

Word. It is making the words of our mouth agree with the written Word of God at every point. As we advance in our Christian lives, our confession should come closer to complete agreement with the Word of God in every area of our experience.

Second, it is through our confession that we are linked to Jesus as our High Priest. One of the main themes of Hebrews is that Jesus is our High Priest in heaven. He is there on our behalf in the presence of God the Father—to represent us, to present our petitions, to intercede on our behalf, and to make good on every right confession we make.

This is brought out in Hebrews 3:1:

*Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession.*

*NASB*

In other words, our confession enlists the ministry of



Jesus as our High Priest on our behalf. If we make the right confession, Jesus is obligated in His eternal faithfulness to see that the confession is made good. If we fail to make the right confession or if we make no confession at all, we silence the lips of our High Priest. We give Him no opportunity to minister as High Priest on our behalf. We see, therefore, the tremendous importance in confession.

In Hebrews 4:14, we have Step 3 of the resolutions—one we have already examined in an earlier letter. Since there is so much to learn from the way this theme of confession is developed in the epistle to the Hebrews, let's look at it again:

*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*

NASB

In speaking of Jesus as our High Priest, Scripture immediately goes on to emphasize our confession. Our confession enlists His ministry on our behalf as our High Priest.

Here is the progression. In Hebrews 3:1, we are admonished to make the right confession. In Hebrews 4:14, we are admonished to “hold fast” our confession. We must not change what we have said. We need to keep making the words of our mouth agree with the Word of God.

Now we come to our present Step 7: “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering” (Hebrews 10:23 NASB). Notice the two added words: *without wavering*.

If we take these passages from Hebrews in the correct order, we see that, in respect to our confession, there are three successive stages. First, we make the confession. Second, having made it, we hold fast to it—we do not change. Third, we hold it fast without

wavering. Why do you think *without wavering* is put in? To me, it implies—not merely on the basis of logic, but on the basis of personal experience—that when we make the right confession, we are going to encounter negative forces and pressures that will come against us. Even though we have made the right confession and we are holding it fast, there may come a time when the pressure increases. In fact, it may seem that all the forces of Satan and all the powers of darkness are turned loose against us, tempting us to let go of our confession.

### **Don't let go!**

But this is the point at which the writer of Hebrews encourages us: “Don't let go. Hold fast—without wavering.” The darker the situation, the greater the problem. The more the pressure, the more important it is for us to hold fast without wavering. Why? Because “*He who promised is faithful*” (Hebrews 10:23). You may feel you have lost sight of God, and you don't know what He's doing. You may feel He's behind the clouds, out of sight. But Scripture says He is faithful. Whether you see Him or not, whether you understand or not, He is faithful. He is committed to His Word and He is our High Priest. If we hold fast our confession without wavering, He will do His job as our High Priest.

Compare this to the simple statement in 2 Corinthians 5:7: “*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*” Implied in this statement is an opposition between faith and sight. The natural man walks by sight—he trusts his senses and he believes only what his senses tell him. But for the Christian, in spiritual experience, we should not trust our senses. We walk by faith. Faith relates us to an unseen, eternal realm where nothing changes. The world of the senses is always changing, temporary,

unstable, and unreliable. But through faith we relate to a different world—a world of eternal realities and truths. As we relate to that world by faith, we hold fast our confession without wavering.

The pressures God permits to come into our lives determine whether we are trusting our senses or our faith. If we change our confession because of the darkness, then we are going by our senses and not by faith. For faith, there is no darkness. Faith sees with an inner spiritual eye into a realm that does not change. Faith gazes upon a High Priest who is always reliable and constant.

### **The Example of Abraham**

In connection with this principle of making and holding the right confession without wavering, I want to look for a moment at the example of Abraham as portrayed in Romans 4. I believe Abraham is one of the best examples of holding fast without wavering. Paul says:

*Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.”*

Romans 4:19–22 NIV

Real faith faces facts. Any attitude that is not willing to look at the real facts is not real faith. Abraham did not try to deceive himself or picture something different from what it was. With his senses he saw that his body and Sarah's womb were as good as dead. But then he firmly decided not to trust only in his senses.

Abraham is called “the father of all those who believe” (Romans 4:11), and we are exhorted to follow in his steps of faith. We are required to walk that same path of faith: we lay hold of the promise of God, we make our confession, and we hold our confession fast without wavering. We are not to be deterred by what our senses reveal. Instead, we look beyond the senses and the seen things into the unseen realm. By faith, we gaze upon our faithful High Priest, there at God’s right hand.

### No Wavering!

In this connection, we need to pay close attention to what James says in his epistle. Many Christians fail at this point. They make a confession, they hold it fast, but when the pressures build up, they don’t hold fast to it without wavering.

*But when [a believer] asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.*

*James 1:6–8 NIV*

James describes the person who wavers—a person who starts to ask, starts to pray, or starts to believe, but does not hold fast without wavering. That person is tossed to and fro, blown about by the winds and the waves. Such a person, the Scripture warns (and this is a very solemn warning): “That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord.”

By wavering, we can forfeit our blessing and lose the benefit of Christ’s ministry on our behalf as our High Priest. The remedy? We hold fast our confession without wavering.

## Step 8: Let Us Consider One Another

Step 8, like the two previous steps, is found in Hebrews 10. To get an understanding of the context, we’ll look at three verses:

*And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.* *Hebrews 10:24–26 NASB*

This translation of those verses is a good one. However, in the original Greek, the order of the sentence is reversed. In Greek, this would read: “Let us consider one another, how to stimulate to love and good deeds.” That brings out the real essence of this particular resolution: “Let us consider one another.” We are to consider one another from the point of view of how we can bring out the best in each other.

So many people today are shut up in the prison of self. Their basic problem is self-centeredness. I have never met a self-centered person who was truly happy and enjoyed true peace. In fact, the more you concentrate on yourself—the more you worry about yourself and seek to please yourself—the more your problems will increase. You must first be released from that prison of self-centeredness. As this passage indicates, there is one scriptural way to be released: Stop worrying about yourself. Stop caring for yourself all the time. Stop fighting for yourself. Instead, start to consider your fellow believers. “Let us consider one another.”

### The Example of Jesus

In Philippians, Paul sets before us the example of Jesus as one we need to follow. What Paul says is very applicable to this resolution.

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

*Philippians 2:3–4 NASB*

This is the exact opposite of looking out for your own personal interests. The release is to look out for the interests of others—to be more concerned about others than yourself.

Then Paul encourages us to follow the example of Jesus:

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant.*

*verses 5–7 NASB*

I have always said that our attitude determines our approach—and our approach determines the outcome. Here, then, is an attitude we need to cultivate: “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.”

What was the attitude? The Greek literally is “a slave.” Jesus, who was Lord of all, emptied Himself of everything and was willing to become a servant—a bondservant, a slave. That is the attitude Paul says we need to imitate.

We find a very beautiful parallel passage in Galatians 5:13–14:

*For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your*

*freedom into an opportunity for the flesh [that is, to gratify your own fleshly and selfish desire], but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* NASB

The way not to indulge our fleshly nature, not to yield to selfishness, and not to become shut up in that prison of self is to look outward to others. “Through love serve one another.” That is what the Holy Spirit is emphasizing to God’s people today. Many people today talk about serving the Lord, but never serve their fellow believers. Can we really serve the Lord if we are not willing to serve our fellow believers? The Lord comes to us in the members of His body—so our attitude toward those members is really our attitude toward the Lord Himself.

### **The Example of Paul**

In this connection of being willing to serve others, let’s look at a statement Paul made to the Corinthian Christians. Bear in mind, Paul was by background a very strict, observant, orthodox Jew. He had the qualifications to be a rabbi. He was a Pharisee. He practiced a kind of “righteousness” that separated itself from other people, regarding others as on a lower level. But when Paul came to know Jesus, the most wonderful change took place in his nature. Bear in mind also that those Corinthians were basically the scum of the earth. Paul says that some of them had been homosexuals, some prostitutes, some drunkards and some revilers. Simply stated, they were not the best kind of people. (Corinth was one of the major seaports of the ancient world and, as so often happens in seaport towns, that is the kind of people you tend to meet.)

In that context, consider this astonishing statement by Paul:

*For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake.* 2 Corinthians 4:5 NASB

Here is this proud Pharisee saying, “We’re your slaves for the sake of Jesus.” To those people! Notice the three steps. First, dethrone self: “not ourselves.” Second, enthrone Christ: “Christ Jesus the Lord.” Third, serve others: “we are your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake.” That is Paul’s message on how to escape from self-centeredness.

### **Serving Is a Skill**

Having seen Paul’s recommendation, I must point out that serving is a skill we have to acquire. It does not just happen spontaneously—and it is not ours by nature. Take the example of a waiter. A waiter is one who is called to serve. But a waiter needs to be trained. There is much that goes into the proper training of a waiter. A friend who was a waiter explained to me once what was involved in being a good waiter. In his description, I saw a marvelous example of the training to serve one another.

Serving is a skill we have to acquire. We must study others to find out what produces a positive or a negative response. Then we should learn how best to inspire them to love and good deeds—not to the opposite. This requires practice, training, and discipline.

Serving also requires the right environment. You see, after the writer of Hebrews says, in Hebrews 10:24, “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,” he goes on to say, “not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” The right environment is expressed in the words, “our own assembling together.” It means that close, committed, regular fellowship is the environment in which

we can be trained to serve one another.

In the next verse of Hebrews 10, the writer states the disastrous alternative. Immediately after the warning against forsaking our own assembling together, he says this: “For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins” (Hebrews 10:26).

It is no accident that these words follow. The implication is that if we do not stay in the right environment, if we are not in close, committed, regular fellowship, we will go back to sinning. The only safe way is to stay in fellowship, learn to serve, and learn to consider other people.

In the next two installments in this series, we will be looking at the final four steps to a good year. I trust you are making practical application of these steps as they have been presented thus far.

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