

Experiencing God - 3

by Anton Bosch

The sermon emphasizes the importance of worshiping in spirit and truth, and the need for discernment in our spiritual experiences to avoid false or imitative moves of God.

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:33

Topics: "Worship In Spirit", "Holy Anointing"

Description

Anton Bosch emphasizes the importance of worshiping God in spirit and truth, highlighting the shift from external to internal, from fleshly to spiritual interactions with God. He delves into the significance of the anointing oil in the Old Testament, stressing that it was for service to the Lord, sanctification, and consecration, not for personal benefit. Bosch warns against imitations of God's anointing and the need for discernment between the genuine and the false manifestations of the Spirit.

Transcript

One of the most important statement Jesus made was: "the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:23,24) If we are to meet with God then it has to be in the realm of the spirit and of truth.

Spirit, or spiritual, in this context is the opposite of fleshly, carnal or soulish. Most interaction between God and man in the Old Testament was in the realm of the flesh. Men saw manifestations of God with their human eyes and heard His voice with their human ears. These men then responded to God by doing physical things such as bowing down, falling on their faces removing their shoes etc. While there were a few people in those days who had a deeper relationship with God which went beyond the physical, the vast majority of people had an external relationship with God which seldom entered the spiritual.

But God wanted something more for us and therefore made some dramatic promises which included: That the laws would no longer be externally written on tables of stone but would be written in our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33), we would not be totally dependant on human teachers but the Spirit Himself will teach us (Jeremiah 31:34), His Spirit will no longer come upon us as an external power, but His Spirit will dwell within us (Ezek 36:27), and we will no longer have to go to a specific place to worship God but will be able to worship Him anywhere (John 4: 21). All these promises, and more, pointed to a shift away from the external to the internal, from the fleshly to the spiritual.

Even in the Old Testament there were indications that the Lord intended the anointing of oil to be a very sacred and profound process. There were very clear and specific rules that governed the use of the anointing oil which was a type of the Holy Spirit and which foreshadowed what His expectations for New Testament believers would be. First, the anointing was in order that they may minister to the Lord (Exodus 30:30). They were not anointed for their own experience or pleasure but in order to equip them for service. Today people speak of receiving "the anointing" as a result of worship or some other form of service. No, the empowering of God is needed before we enter into His presence and before we touch anything for service. Also note that the purpose of the anointing with oil was to sanctify and consecrate them to serve. They were not anointed so their hair could shine or their skin would glow - it had nothing to do with their own benefit. It is also important to note that they were anointed to serve the Lord. Today everything is focused on man's needs and pleasure, not on the Lord's.

Second, "It shall not be poured on man's flesh" (Exodus 30:32). It was to be poured on Aaron's head and his robes but not on his flesh. Yet, today it all seems to be about man's flesh. Without exception every modern experience and every single consequence, like shaking, jumping, being slain, and goose bumps are all manifestations in the flesh, in which it is claimed, "the spirit made me do it". If the flesh was not to be anointed in the Old Testament, then it is even less to be anointed in the New Testament.

Third, it was not to be copied or imitated (Exodus 30:32). This was so serious that anyone who produced a copy of the anointing oil was to be cut off from the people (Exodus 30:32). Today there seem to be so many copies and imitations of God's anointing and presence that the genuine is almost impossible to find. Sometimes people copy a manufactured product and actually improve on the original product. The copies of God's presence are very bad imitations and it is sad that people are so undiscerning that they cannot differentiate between the genuine and the false. And do we excommunicate the charlatans that produce these fake "moves of God"? No, we worship them as mighty men of God and gurus who have discovered some new and unique blessing. Many are blatant enough to explain that this "latest move of God is a new thing God is doing" and that God does not work within the constraints of His Word. I pray that every reader will have the courage to banish forever everyone who dares simulate the workings of God and who dares create a human substitute for the Divine move of God upon our spirits.

Fourth, the oil was not to be placed on outsiders. (Exodus 30:33). It was strictly for those who had been sanctified and consecrated to the Lord's service. Why is it then that in the last 30 years we have frequently heard about profane persons "receiving the Spirit", or about unbelievers who manifest many of the weird and wonderful things that are ascribed to the Holy Spirit? No, God is Holy and His Spirit is specifically called the Holy Spirit. God has no dealings with the unsaved, except to lead them to repentance and if the oil was not to be put on outsiders in the Old Testament then neither will He give unbelievers his approval by giving them a spiritual experience, except to bring them to their knees in repentance.

Finally, the man so anointed was not to "go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God" (Leviticus 21:12). This speaks of a complete dedication to the Lord and His service. Today, we are the temple and He dwells with and in us (1Corinthians 3:16). Thus the Lord's presence in our lives requires that we abide in Him and that we live holy and consecrated lives. The Lord has no interest in giving unsanctified and disobedient believers a spiritual "trip" so they can have some good feelings. Neither does He touch those who live their lives far from Him, steeped in the world all week but who want a quick spiritual experience on a Sunday morning.

The concept of brief and temporal "anointings" is an Old Testament concept. We have a promise of a far deeper and more enduring Presence in the New Testament. I pray that we will reject the false and seek the genuine.

"I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever - the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you". (John 14:16,17)

(To Be Continued)

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