

His Fullness Is Linked to the Church

by T. Austin-Sparks

The Church is essential to spiritual fullness, and God's jealousy for the Church means that it must be nurtured and protected for fullness to be attained.

Scripture: Ephesians 5:22

Topics: "Spiritual Fullness", "The Church"

Description

T. Austin-Sparks emphasizes the profound connection between Christ and the Church, asserting that the revelation of the Church is essential for understanding spiritual fullness. He highlights that just as God has chosen His Son, He has also appointed the Church to fulfill His eternal purpose, making them inseparable in their mission. The sermon stresses that spiritual fullness cannot be achieved individually but is a collective experience within the Body of Christ, where mutual interdependence and fellowship are crucial. Sparks points out that Paul's writings reflect this fullness, as he received his commission and understanding through the Church. Ultimately, the message calls for recognizing the Church's vital role in realizing God's purpose and attaining spiritual maturity.

Transcript

Next to the revelation of Christ personally in His greatness, the revelation of the Church is bound up with our practical progress toward fullness. Paul has a far greater fullness in his writings than any other Apostle, and this is mainly due to the specific revelation of the Church which was given to him. What arises from this revelation is that Christ and the Church are one, as Head and members of one Body.

There are one or two things which arise for our apprehension in this matter. Firstly there is the fact so clearly and fully given in the Scriptures that God has just as definitely chosen and appointed the Church for the realization of His eternal purpose as He has chosen and appointed His Son. He has just as positively bound Himself and His fullness to the one as to the other. While one is subject to the other, and the medium and vessel of the other as the wife to the husband (Eph. 5:22-24), they are one in the matter of purpose. This carries with it the jealousy of God for His Church, and means that for fullness there can be no allowing of an ignoring, belittling, or injuring.

Further; God will keep strictly in the matter of spiritual fullness to working Bodywise. That is, it is not possible for any units as such to know fullness. Fullness is a related matter. "The Church is the fullness of Him." No individual can be that. Therefore spiritual oneness, interrelatedness, fellowship, mutuality, and interdependence are basic and indispensable to spiritual attainment of full-growth. "Till we all attain unto..."

a full grown man, unto... the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

In the Old Testament, when things were constituted according to the heavenly pattern, God spoke out of the Tent of Meeting. So it is in the New Testament. For the answer to his inquiry on the Damascus Road, Paul had to go into the city and get it as out from the Church. For the entering upon his great life-work he had to abide in the Church at Antioch and get his commission confirmed there (Acts 13). We are speaking here of spiritual fullness, and our ministry is concerned with that. It is not a committee, "General," "Executive," or "Advisory," but the "Body" in representation and spiritual functioning that is God's ordained way.

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