

Los Angeles Conference #3

by T. Austin-Sparks

The Lord Jesus lived His life on the ground of His being glorified, and He put everything on the ground of the glory of God.

Duration: 41:32

Scripture: John 7:39, John 11:4, John 12:16, John 12:23, John 17:1, John 17:4-5

Topics: "Conference"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the theme of hopelessness and impossibility in various situations. He refers to the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand, where the disciples believed it was impossible to provide enough bread for such a large crowd. The speaker also mentions the story of the man at the pool of Bethesda, who had been hopeless and unable to be healed for 38 years until Jesus intervened. The sermon highlights the importance of having our lives aligned with Jesus and the hope and transformation that comes from that alignment. The speaker concludes by referencing Ephesians 3:21 and emphasizing that Jesus came to bring hope and realization to our broken lives.

Transcript

I am glad to have this opportunity, friends, of meeting with you and sharing with you something of that which the Lord has spoken to my own heart, and I trust it will be His means of blessing to you also. I am going to ask you to open the word with me and just traverse the path in the gospel by John. The basic passage will be in chapter 17, verse 1, These things speak Jesus, and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, Father, the hour is come, glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee.

Verse 4, I have glorified Thee on the earth, and now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. Now will you go back to chapter 7, verse 39, For this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive, for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Chapter 11, verse 4, When Jesus heard it, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby.

Chapter 12, verse 16, These things understood not His disciples at the first, but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him. Verse 23, Jesus answereth them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone, but if it die, it beareth much fruit.

Chapter 13, verse 31, When therefore He was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him, and God shall glorify Him in Himself, and straightway shall He glorify Him. Chapter 16, verse 31, Jesus answereth them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own shall leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. Back to verse 14 of that chapter, He shall glorify me, for He shall take mine, and shall declare it unto you.

You will have noted the common word in all those passages, which after all are only a selection, there are others containing the same word, which could be added. This word forms a pathway right through the gospel by John. It is the pathway of the glory.

And you will have noticed that even in the selection of passages on this matter which we have made, how the Lord Jesus placed everything, everything, on the ground of His being glorified. From beginning to end, that for Him was the ground of everything, His being glorified. We should be impressed with that without any exposition of it or enlargement upon it.

The fact, overwhelmingly shown and declared and verified in this book, that for the Lord Jesus everything rests upon the ground of His being glorified. The phrase which He used a number of times seemed to be governed very much in His life by this phrase, the hour, mine hour, mine hour, the hour, His hour was not yet come. There was an hour which governed His whole life, the significance of a time, an all-governing time in everything, and that hour, that particular time was in His mind, coming up again and again as He went along.

He called His hour, was the hour of His being glorified. It was as though He were bringing out of the future something that governed this present situation, whatever it might be, from time to time. When you ask, what is the glory of the Lord Jesus? What does the glorifying of the Lord Jesus mean? The answer in the Bible throughout is just this, glory of God is always the expression of His complete satisfaction.

When God is perfectly satisfied, fully satisfied, then the glory of God always breaks out, at least that through Old and New Testaments, and the Lord Jesus was living in the light of a time which He called the hour, when the Father's full satisfaction would be realized, the Father fully satisfied, the glory of God's satisfaction. He was living in the light of that and bringing that into every detail of His life. We're going to show that in a moment.

But you notice, He was governed again and again by this hour business, whatever it was. Begin in chapter two, the marriage in Cana of Galilee, the water and the wine, we're coming back to it in a moment. But it says about that, this beginning of signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and showed forth His glory.

But notice what led up to that. The feast, the failure of the wine, and His mother anxious, concerned, turning to Him and saying, they have no wine. Jesus turned to her and said, woman, what have I to do with you? Mine hour is not yet.

Mine hour? But then He acted. After that pause, waiting for something, saying in effect, I can do nothing of myself. I can only do what I do as the Father enables, gives me His sanction to do it.

And when it comes from the Father, it will be quite all right. The Father will be glorified. I'm not here to glorify myself by what I do.

I'm here to glorify the Father. And in His heart, He was saying, Father, will this glorify you if I do this thing? And He got the answer back. All right.

And showed forth His glory. His hour, that great future hour of the Father's satisfaction came, was brought forward. And that is not imagination and strained interpretation.

Because you have actual occasions when He said, Father, glorify. And there came a voice. I have glorified.

I will glorify. Living, you see, in that touch with the Father. Another occasion when His brethren after the flesh said, this is the time of the feast in Jerusalem.

Everybody is going up to Jerusalem to the feast. You go up. Jesus said, you go.

I go not up. Mine hour is not yet. In effect saying, I am not just governed by what everybody else does.

I am not governed by common acceptance. Popular opinion. The fashionable thing to do.

I must have it from the Father. But this going up is in some way going to be to the Father's satisfaction. You go up.

And when they had gone up, then went He up. Strange behavior, isn't it? But what's going on inside? It's this all the time. Father, are you going to get something out of this? Is this going to be to your pleasure? I can't do it on any other ground than it glorifies you.

If you are not going to find satisfaction in this, well, let them have all the feasts they like. I'll not be there. Let them do what they've always been doing, but I'll not be in it unless there's something for the glory or satisfaction and pleasure of the Father.

Mine hour. Mine hour. And He evidently got the witness from the Father in that moment.

So I go up. I've got something in this. And He went up.

You see, He did have something in it. In His going up. You see? Putting everything on the ground of glory.

Glory. The glory of God in Jesus Christ. The glory of Christ.

Putting everything. That's something to govern life, isn't it? Does this really minister to the glory of Christ? Am I going here or not going? What I do or what I do not do? Will I act or refrain from acting? How much is this going to minister to His glory? That's the governing thing. A touch with heaven.

Can I do this? Will it be doing it for my own glory, my own pleasure, my own satisfaction? Or does His glory require it? Will it minister to His glory? That was the basis of the life of the Lord Jesus. He called that His hour. Governed by the hour of the Father's satisfaction.

And that was His glory. My meat and my drink is to do the will of Him that sent me. There's only another way of saying, my glory is His.

So you see, His life was governed by this. But then, you would notice one fragment which we read. And there's much more of the same kind in the same connection.

This glorifying of the Lord Jesus was the signal for the change of the dispensation by the coming of the Holy Spirit. This faith He of the Spirit, which they that believed were to receive. The Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.

In other words, Jesus glorified the Spirit is released. The Spirit comes. The great advent of the Spirit takes place.

The dispensation is changed into the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. This is the dispensation. And how much the Lord Jesus put upon that.

It's expedient for you that I go away. If I go not away, the Spirit will not come. The Comforter will not come.

Obviously, as we have recently pointed out, He put much more importance upon the Holy Spirit's coming than upon His own staying in the flesh. But the signal for the coming of the Spirit, as Pentecost so clearly declares and shows, both in the act and in what followed, was Jesus glorified. I mean, in the act it was a day of glory, wasn't it? The day of Pentecost.

Full of the glory of the Lord. But then everywhere they went full of this glory. Preaching, Jesus is glorified.

Jesus is on high. Glory went out over the earth. But the signal for that was Jesus being glorified.

And it is a very practical thing, dear friends. Whatever we may desire about the Holy Spirit, and we pray for the Holy Spirit, we want power, we want light, we want guidance. We ask for the Holy Spirit for a lot of things.

For a lot of purposes. Perhaps we're impressed with the necessity of the Holy Spirit. Remember this.

The Holy Spirit will only act in any way at all if the motive is the glorifying of the Lord Jesus. Nothing else. You can pray until you can't pray anymore for the Holy Spirit.

But the Holy Spirit genuinely will make no response until your motive is that Jesus may be glorified. Not that I may have something. Do something.

Be something. No, nothing like that. Jesus being glorified governs the whole matter of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus has put it on that ground. So, you can be quite sure of this, that once you are adjusted wholly to the glorifying of the Lord Jesus, and the Lord knows when we are adjusted or not, truly, when we are rightly adjusted, we've given the Holy Spirit the ground that he wants, and he'll move spontaneously. Well, we've a lot to say, and we mustn't stay with each one of these fragments.

Notice, again, and this is a door through which you enter into such a wealth in this gospel, that this matter of the glorifying of the Lord Jesus was the ground of the reversing of situations from the impossible to the possible, or to the actual. Now, there is a sense in which this whole gospel of John is the gospel of impossible situations, which are turned into actuality. Ever thought of that? A whole series, from beginning to end, of utterly impossible situations in the natural.

Well, begin, and we'll hurry through. The marriage in Tana and Galilee. The whole thing is proceeding, and suddenly the whole thing breaks down, collapses.

They have no wine. And it's the key to that thing. It's the whole basis of everything.

Of the joy and the fellowship, and the breakdown there. Well, it's shame. It's disappointment.

It's reproach. Well, the bottle, as we say, has fallen out of everything. And the wine fell.

It's a hopeless situation. What are you going to do? You can do nothing. Everything is at an end.

Everything's at an end. I expect those who knew about it were looking at one another in consternation, and perhaps afraid to let people know because of the disaster that it's felt. The utter spoiling of the whole thing.

Hopeless. And mark you, Jesus was very careful, and you see it comes up again and again in the gospel, very careful to see that it was hopeless. They have no wine.

I'm not here just to redeem broken down social occasions. I'm not here just to make things a little more pleasant for people and save them from their embarrassment. I am here for the purpose of doing what is utterly impossible to men.

That's how I've come. Life is broken down. Life is full of shame and embarrassment and disappointment and hopelessness.

That's where you begin. A hopeless, impossible situation for man by nature. And he's come into that.

And he turned it. And he showed forth his glory by changing this hopeless situation into one not only of hope, but of realization. That's chapter two.

What about chapter three? This man, Nicodemus, this man is trying to find his way into the kingdom. Find the secret of the kingdom of God. He's got all that ever a man could have of religion and learning.

Thou art the teacher in Israel, said Jesus. The teacher in Israel. Everything of tradition, everything of inheritance, everything of position and prestige, everything that a man could have.

And still dissatisfied. Still speaking like a man in despair. Disappointed.

Coming to Jesus by night to try and find a solution to his heart problem. The heart problem. And Jesus takes great pains to show how hopeless his situation is.

He doesn't take up this man on his own ground and encourage and comfort him. He throws it straight at him. You must be born again.

Except a man born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Cannot, cannot, cannot. Hopeless.

For the best. Hopeless for the best of this world. It's an impossible situation naturally no matter how much religion you've got.

Hopeless this. But upon that hopeless situation, not only for Nicodemus, but for how many more for us. Not only into hope, but realization in the kingdom.

In the kingdom. It's an impossible one you see. My point is that Jesus is continually making it perfectly clear that that for him the situation is impossible.

But with him there is no such thing as impossibility. Chapter three. Chapter four.

Was there ever a clearer example of hopelessness than that woman of Sica? Thou hast had five husbands. He whom thou now hast is not thy husband. And when she begins to speak, you hear her tone despairingly.

Sir, give me this water. But I thus, not again, I that come all this way hither to draw the cry of a woman who has exhausted life of all its hopes in despair. You know what he did with that? But he drew out this hopeless situation, didn't he? Made her aware of it.

Took pains to let her know. It sounds cruel for him to bring up her past. But he's letting her see how her own state is a hopeless one in order that he might show that he is the hope of the hopeless.

Chapter four. Chapter five. When Jesus was coming to Galilee a certain nobleman of Capernaum came to him and said, Sir, come down.

My son, life at the point of death, come. And again it sounds so cruel. Jesus, but this poor, distraught, heartbroken father with his whole life wrapped up in that boy who is at the point of death.

Jesus says, except you see signs of wonders, you won't believe. What is it? Is it unkindness? Cruelty? Lack of sympathy? No. He's drawing this man out to his extremity and making him recognize and acknowledge that only in Jesus is there any hope.

He says, Sir, come down, come down. Ere my child dies. It's a cry.

Almost a despair, isn't it? As though he comes to the last resort. Only Jesus. That's what Jesus wanted.

Only Jesus. No other hope. And Jesus didn't go.

He said, go, my son lives. You know the rest of the story. And it's one more of these examples of the impossible.

Chapter five. Chapter six. When shall we buy bread enough to feed so great a multitude? Five thousand people.

Two hundred penny worth of bread. If any of you like to look into your Bible and work that out, you'll find that that represented a year's wages for a laboring man. Two hundred pence.

Not sufficient to meet this need. Jesus put the question to the test. How can it be done? No, it just can't be done, said the apostle.

It just can't be done. It's hopeless. It's impossible among the people to sit down.

Well, you know the rest of the story. But that is quite hopeless, quite impossible, isn't it? But come to real actuality. Chapter six.

Chapter eight. A man born blind. Born blind.

Strange language, strange kind of argument. A lot has been made of this. All sorts of things have been said about it.

The disciples asked, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered, neither this man nor his parents. But that son of man should be clothed up. Well, born blind.

And the man's own language about this, Mark Mule, shows how he realized the hopelessness of his position when the rulers attacked him, challenged him about who it was that had given him his sight and said that this man was a sinner. The man said, why, dear, here's a strange thing. Here's a strange thing.

Was it ever known from the foundation of the world that anyone born blind should receive this? From the foundation of the world. His idea about it, you see, was one there's no question about this with him. This is a hopeless thing.

This was a hopeless thing. Never been heard of from the foundation of the world. That's pretty hopeless, isn't it? Yes, Jesus meant it to be like that.

For the glory. For the glory. Hopeless situation.

Chapters 8 and 9. 11 Lazarus. Do you know his attitude over that? They sent to him, he whom thou lovest, this seat. And not as disputing that statement, his love.

Nevertheless, he abode where he was for a day. And when at last he came and moved toward the tomb, the sister said, Lord, by this time he's thinking. And the Lord had deliberately, deliberately forced it up to that, naturally, naturally, to make the thing as hopeless as anything could be, naturally.

This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God shall be glorified thereby. We go on to the end. The last chapter.

What is it? Master, we have toiled all night and have taken all a fisherman's life long, acumen and knowledge and ability exhausted. Nothing's the verdict upon. Well, you know the rest.

Launch out. Let down the net. Impossible situation comes to a glorious realization.

For his glory, he put everything on the ground of his glory. There's a lot of comfort in this for us, you know, friends, isn't there? Oh, how often do we despair, feel the hopelessness of things while Jesus lives. There's no such thing.

We can say that. I can say that. But it doesn't require a lot to say it.

But oh, sometimes it's the most testing thing that we can know to believe that this is possible after all. But it is. And many of us have enough experience because he has taken pains to bring us to the place where but for the Lord, well, this is the end.

But for the Lord, there's no more possibility. But how again and again he has changed that hopeless, impossible situation into something for his own glory. Putting everything on his glory.

Everything on his glory. Now, you see, what is he doing in all this? He's putting our life upon the same basis as his own. He came and put his life on that ground, the glory of the Father.

Nothing that was not the glory of the Father. All was to be for the glory of the Father. Everything was tested and challenged by this, how much does this serve the glory of the Father? If it doesn't, there's no place for it.

Only if it does do I entertain it. Now, he turns that over and puts our life onto that. He put the people in Cana on that ground.

He put the woman of Samaria on that ground. He put Nicodemus on that ground. They're left out.

One case, the man in the pool of Siloam. What a story of hopelessness that is. In chapter four, at the end of chapter four.

He'll let you know that he feels his situation is a hopeless one, that man. Been there thirty-eight years and every time he tried to get into the water, somebody got ahead of him. Cry.

He was putting this man's life on the same basis as his own. He was putting this man's life on the same basis as his own. All the way along like that.

It's a very safe position, dear friends, to have your life on the same basis as the Lord Jesus had his. Isn't it? And you know, that is the destiny of the church. What is it that Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians, chapter three, verse twenty-one? Unto him be the glory in the church by Christ Jesus unto all ages forever and ever.

How? How glory in the church forever and ever, just this way, that the church's life has been a life of impossible situations turned to glorious realizations. Isn't that the history of the true church? All the way along. Look at it.

Again and again. See from the beginning. See impossible, nero, nero, slaughtering ten million Christians.

Shows how the church had grown how quickly and mightily. But it is computed that he had massacred no fewer than ten million Christians. So that's a lot.

That leaves things pretty small and pretty weak and pretty hopeless. And again and again the church has gone that way. Hasn't it? Through history, it's gone that way.

But on it goes. On it goes greater than ever today. Hopeless? Yes.

Impossible? Yes, but for Jesus. And what is the object? What is it that's governing this? Oh, it's not because the church is anything or you and I are anything. His glory governs everything.

It's unto His glory. Unto Him be the glory in the church by Christ Jesus. There's much more to it in those passages which I read.

Remember one occasion, the feast, near the end, the feast, the Passover. There were at Jerusalem amongst the multitude there certain Greeks who came up to the feast. And going about looking at the sights of Jerusalem both personal and material they included in their sight-seeing this one of whom everybody was talking Jesus of Nazareth.

And they came, the disciples, and said we, sir, we would see Jesus. Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew.

Andrew cometh and telleth Jesus. What did Jesus say? Immediately. We are.

We are His children. The Son of Man should be glorified. Except the coil of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth by itself alone.

If it die, bring it forth from its root. How is Jesus glorified? There. How is Jesus really seen? They said we would see Jesus.

And He said, Jesus, in effect, you don't see me just when you see me after the flesh. You'll see me when you see a great multitude which no man can number out of every tribe and kingdom nation and tongue. One grain having died reproducing itself in a mighty harvest.

That will show forth my glory. That will let you know who I am. Not just one of the sights of Jerusalem.

One of the sights of heaven. A new, new revelation and knowledge of the Lord Jesus you see. That was the thought there.

How Jesus is really known or seen in how He is produced in other grains of wheat. You and me and the many others. That's how He's glorified.

He puts our life on that basis. And so He says to us that it's to be the same with us as it was with Him falling into the ground and dying. It immediately ends.

Except man loses life for my sin. He cannot find it. He that loseth his life shall find it.

He that saveth his life shall lose it. Same basis as mine. You let your life go for Christ.

You pour out your life unto death in His interest. Glory will come along that way. That's the way of the glory.

I think I've said enough to make the point clear. This is the world. I could go on of course for hours but it's not necessary.

We've got it here. The Lord Jesus has put everything of His own life and ours upon this one foundation. His glory.

Challenging everything according to that. Testing everything according to that. Governing everything by that.

Saying to us now it must be true of you as it was of me. That you have your life governed by one motive and one interest. How much does this minister to my glory? How much? That dismisses all talk about well, must I? Or may I not? Have I got to? No place for any talk like that, dear friends, when we are being mastered by this, His glory.

If this does not serve His glory then let it go. If this way can be to His glory no matter what it means to me then that's the way I'm going. It's the way of the glory all the time.

The ground of the glory. May the Lord raise this word deep in our hearts and make us men and women who are committed, committed people to the glory of our Lord Jesus.

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