

Recovery of the Lords Name - Part 3 of 6

by T. Austin-Sparks

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and aligning with God's divine purpose and calling in our lives.

Duration: 40:07

Scripture: Judges 6:14, Isaiah 55:11, Jeremiah 29:11, Zechariah 14:16-19, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:28, 1 Peter 5:10

Topics: "Recovery"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being gripped and mastered by the fact that our lives are moving according to God's purpose. He encourages listeners to have a vision that goes beyond their individual tasks and work for God, but rather to see the ultimate end and purpose that God has for His people. The speaker warns against becoming too focused on individual or collective instruments that God has raised up in the past, and instead urges listeners to align every aspect of their lives with God's ultimate purpose. The sermon references the story of Gideon and the prophecies of Zechariah to illustrate these points.

Transcript

Emphasis and note in my heart this morning, but I feel it to be a very important and vital one, has to do with this matter of being called according to purpose. We have seen just a little, I think, in the earlier hours of this conference, that God was certainly moving according to purpose when he came and sovereignly called Gideon. And God is still moving according to purpose.

No more in the days of Abraham or Moses or Gideon or David or Elijah or any other, no more then than now, until the purpose is reached and fully realized, God will still be moving according to purpose and will still be choosing according to purpose. The purpose is comprehensive and quite clearly defined. Through one brief letter, the Apostle Paul has given us comprehensively and definitely the purpose.

We are not going to dwell upon the purpose this morning, but rather upon the calling according thereto. The purpose is the ultimate of all God's activities. The ultimate of the initial apprehending of life and calling into fellowship with his Son in what we variously call conversion or being saved or being born again.

However we put it, it is the initial movement of God in bringing us into relationship with himself in Jesus Christ. But the purpose is more than that. It is the ultimate of all the progressive preparation, training and discipline of those who have been brought into that relationship with himself.

These are not things or ends in themselves. All this beginning and continuation of the Lord in life is moving on according to purpose. The great need, dear friends, where you and I and all the Lord's people are concerned is to really become gripped and mastered by that fact.

It is as though the Lord would come to us and say, now stand at my side and look on. Look right on to the end, to the ultimate. Look with me right over all time and all vicissitudes to the end and see with me a universe, people with those who are just showing forth manifesting forth my glory, my eternal glory called unto his eternal glory that runs alongside called according to purpose.

Called unto his eternal glory. Now the Lord says, you see that, that's the ultimate, that's the purpose. The showing forth of my glory in a people.

He would perhaps say that of course there will be different degrees of glory. There will be one glory as of the sun. Another glory as of the moon.

Another glory as of the stars. There will be differences in glory and of glory those differences will depend entirely upon the people concerned. How much glory there will be in and manifested through and by those people will depend entirely upon how much their hearts are set upon my glory.

How far their hearts are undivided hearts. Pure heart in this sense that there is no alloy, no mixture. No two things which cannot be reconciled.

That's pure of your heart and blessed are the pure in heart. He would say that and then he would say to us, you see that's the end. You've got that vision, you see the purpose.

You're called according to that purpose. Then he would say now for a moment look around, look around. Look upon the many who have not yet been brought into that initial relationship with the purpose.

And then look upon all those who are the Lord. And what do you see? How much glory do you see? How much going on to glory? Ah, how much that is very, very contrary to the glory of God. You see? Now then, he would say, though I have called you according to the ultimate purpose, I now call you to some situation which exists, which is not in line with that ultimate purpose in order that you may be used to bring it into life.

That is purpose within the purpose. The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, the God of glory. The initial step to get a people, that step was taken with Abraham.

But look at the seed of Abraham in Gideon's day. Not at all in line with the great purpose revealed to and intended through Abraham. Look at this face.

He called Abraham with the whole purpose in view. Now he must call Gideon because of something that has interrupted the realization of the full purpose. Something that has arisen.

Some contingency. Some digression. Some declension on the path of the call.

And so the Bible is just full of these, shall we call them, intermediate callings. These occasional callings. These specific callings within the calling.

This purpose which has become a necessity in the light of the whole final purpose. Do you see the position? I say the Bible is full of these particular callings. Moses is one.

Joshua another. And so you go on with all these callings within the calling. I think that we see the situation.

Not one of you here this morning would say that the Lord's people as a whole are right in the main line and thoroughfare and direction and way of the eternal calling. Of the glory. You would rather say, oh no.

Oh no. There's a very, very great deal that is not only short of the glory of God but contrary to the glory of God. We were trying to stress that yesterday.

When a people are as the people were in Gibeon's day. Weak and defeated before their enemy. Starved and poor without food and wealth.

When there is no cohesion and authority under which the people of God are moving like an army with banners. That is something contrary to and other than the purpose of God. God's movement in sovereignty is to call to deal with that.

Have not I sent thee? Thou shalt save Israel. That's a specific calling made necessary because of a general defensive. Well, I think probably you'll agree to that mostly.

At any rate. But I want to follow that with this. That divine presence and divine support and divine resources are always bound up with divine callings.

If you are not in the specific thing that God wants done at any given time you cannot count upon God's support. You cannot just generalize about this thing. Generalize about it.

And just keep it all together this work of God without discrimination. At different times in different realms God has to act specifically and distinctively. So that within the all of the compass of his inclusive purpose there are essential purposes.

Because of situations which have arisen and he calls in relation to those specific purposes which are the present time purposes of God. And God supports, sponsors, commits himself to that. Dear friends, let's be very very honest about this thing.

There is a great deal of activity which is ostensibly for the Lord which does not have the Lord's support. And the result is that anything and everything has to be done to get support for that which is called the work of God. And that encompasses the whole range of what is called organized Christianity.

It's one great system of launching schemes and enterprises and doing everything that art and wit and cunning can do to get support for it. If God wants a thing done and has sovereignly decided that that thing, that thing shall be done according to purpose and he can get hold of a people and bring that people right into line with that thing God will commit himself to it and support it. And lift the onus of resource from the people and take it on his own shoulders.

Yes, the presence of God, the support of God, the resources of God go with his calling. He never, it is an old old saying, he never sends us a warfaring at our own charge. He never gives us a commission and then leaves us to find what is required for its carrying out.

He stands in to all the liabilities. If these resources are withheld, something is wrong. The motive may not be wrong, the intention may not be wrong, the sincerity may be not lacking.

But let it be understood that motive and idea and enthusiasm have never, never been substitutes for divine purpose, specific purpose. David found that out, did he not, over the bringing of the Ark on the Philistine cross. He made a very very serious discovery by a very tragic accident.

He found that the responsibility rested upon him for what happened. No, the purpose of God must govern. Firstly, the whole purpose, the ultimate, must always be in view and everything must be brought into line with that.

It just must be brought into line with that. Everything has got to be considered and contemplated from the standpoint of how is that going to reach God's end in the manifestation of his glory. And then, what would God do now or what is God wanting to do now? What is God doing now in relation to that? What is the present movement or what are the present movements of God to which God has committed himself? Don't you agree with me, dear friends, when I say that the deepest cry in our heart is this.

Oh Lord, oh Lord, bring me into the thing that you are doing. Straighten me from the things that I am doing for you and want to do for you and that I think you want done. Bring me not into things that are a kind of abstract vision but into what you are doing.

What you are doing. That with which you are occupied now. That's the deepest cry of our heart.

And that's a cry which enters into his heart. We should be found not doing a lot of Christian work or hunting round for a job in the work of God. Oh, pathetic situation and yet there are a lot doing that, not doing that.

Trying to find a job, a place in the work of God. Going round all the time. Trying, trying to be taken on in the work of God.

Isn't that terrible? Dear friends, I can't tell you how badly I feel about that. My understanding with the Lord is this. Lord, Lord, if you haven't got a positive and definite place for me in something that you are doing, I'm going to give it all up.

I'm going out. It's a very utter thing this. No one ought to be looking for a job in the realm of God's purpose.

No, not at all. Well now, there is a tremendous strength as well as a tremendous value in the consciousness of being bound up with a specific calling of God in relation to the full and ultimate cause. I say there's a tremendous value bound up with it.

It's a perfectly wonderful thing to know, to realize that you're not just called to be a Christian in order to be saved from sin and its consequences now and hereafter and to get to heaven and all that sort of thing. But there's a great definite positive purpose in your being saved. And that purpose relates to now in this life.

But this life is to be characterized by something quite precise and quite definite in the ultimate purpose of God. Tremendous strength in that. And a tremendous value in that.

But there's this extra factor. That while that is true, and must be. Perhaps I'd better stop here for a moment or put in a parenthesis.

Let no one think that this implies that they are individual Gideons or Elijah or any other of this company of the chosen. We're not going to label ourselves Gideons and this and that, something else. You see, you must realize that God's whole purpose embraces the church.

It is a church purpose. It is not just individual. And in line with that full thought of God concerning the church as the called.

As the called. You and I are parts of a whole. Parts of a whole.

Parts of something comprehensive and inclusive. We're not just individuals. And what I want to impress upon you and I want you to see is this.

That it may be that you are called to be a part of an instrument which is collective and corporate. Which God is seeking to have for himself to meet a need. And that your definiteness of calling is a related one.

It's not just an individual and separate one. I know how that appeals to our romantic hearts. I know how when a young man, I read about D.L. Moody.

And read those so well known words about D.L. Moody. He said that he'd heard someone say that if God could get hold of a man. He would show what he would do with and through a man.

Whose heart was wholly toward himself. And D.L. Moody said, I said I'm going to be that man. I'm going to be that man.

Well that was all right for Moody. And I suppose it's all true but you know there's an appeal of that to this man. I'm going to be a D.L. Moody.

Or something like that. I'm going to be. Rather the emphasis is upon the first three words.

Listen, I'm going to be or the first four words. I'm going to be. There's an appeal.

No, no. The discipline of all that may come along the line of our having to be a part of something that God is doing. Just a part.

Just a part but a part. And it is in that whole. In that whole.

In a related way. That I have to have just as great a sense. Listen.

Just as great a sense of being called as I would have if I was singled out as an individual. Have you got that? Tremendously important. You would have a tremendous sense of vocation if the angel of the Lord came to you as he came to Gideon.

And singled you out. Mentioned you by name and said great things to you personally. You would say that's calling indeed.

I'm called according to purpose. But we have got to have that in a related and corporate way dear friends. Just as strongly and really.

God has made me a member of the body which is the vessel of his eternal purpose. And as a member. Not as the whole body.

And not as separate from the rest. But as a member. My eternal vocation is found.

It's got to be very real. Very real. The angels of God may be reached through companies.

Through groups. Just as much as through individuals. Having got that.

Let us go on. We must be very careful. That we bring everything.

Every part. Every aspect. Of the Lord's movement toward his ultimate full purpose.

Into line with the great end. The point of that. The importance of that is this.

That God has again and again raised up instruments. Individual and collective. In relation to his ultimate purpose.

And by them. Done something in their day. Which was quite definite and distinctive and positive.

But. The thing has become bound up with them. And.

They have become the beginning and the end of it. And when they have gone. Well there's been a carrying on of the work that they started.

But that distinctive and specific thing. Has not gone on. It's something now being carried on.

Carried on. And the responsibility. Is lying upon men.

To carry it on. And then. There is a reverting.

Again. To this. This other way.

Of. Getting support to carry on. Now my point is this.

All succession. All continuation. Has got to be as definitely by divine call.

As initiation. Therefore. Succession.

Is not official. It is by anointing. It's by anointing.

You see. The church. Does not belong to any one time.

Any one age. It is an eternal thing. It is the eternally elect vessel of the full purpose of God.

But the church is the anointed vessel. You cannot carry on the church with an organization. You cannot carry on the church by any human means at all.

The church is instituted at the beginning by the anointing. And it's got to go right on to the end by the anointing. So that.

This. Continuation of divine purpose. Requires fresh and ever fresh anointings.

Where specific vessels and instrumentalities are concerned. You cannot get a conception of the divine purpose. And then say now we'll have a committee.

And we'll have a board. And we'll have an organization. And we'll have this and that in order to do this thing that God wants done.

You just can't do it. You can have them if you like. But you'll find that you've got to take responsibility for them.

For everything. You see. Every vessel has got to be God chosen and God anointed.

In relation to something that is eternal. And not of time at all. And not of this earth.

And in our place. In our relationship to what God may be doing at any given time. In our own time.

We have got to come really under the anointing of the Holy Spirit for that. Just as much as those who went before. Who were the chosen instruments of God to bring that instrumentality into being.

Just as much as they were anointed in their calling. We have got to be anointed. If that thing is to go on.

Heaven has got to come in. And carry it to the next stage. We cannot.

Nothing dear friends is an end in itself. Everything is related to the so much more of God's intention. God's purpose.

Your salvation is no end in itself. Any dealings of God with you are not just, just for the time. They are not an end.

Anything that God has raised up and brought into being must not become an end in itself. A crystallized rounded off piece of work. With a hedge rounded.

And that is something inclusive and exclusive. Everything has got to be in line with and open to the ultimate fullness of God's purpose. Therefore.

Therefore. We must be open to the Lord for something more. And something fresh all the time.

That went so far. But God intended more. Have you not seen how many a thing started by God definitely under His anointing.

Really an instrumentality serving Him most wonderful has just gone so far and stopped. And stopped. And from that time it has gone no further.

It has come under arrest. And it belongs, really belongs to the past although it has been kept going. It is living on a tradition.

It is living on a past. It is living upon a name and a reputation of the last generation or generations ago. There is nothing right up to date in fullness.

Why? Because it was not realized that that was only in line with something more. It was never intended to be something by itself. The ultimate full purpose encompassed that and followed it up.

It was related. Now some of you will perhaps see the point of this more than others. It is tremendously important that we recognize that any vision that we have does not stop short with the thing that we are in.

It does not stop short with the present aspect of things. Any God given vision which is for a specific time is only related to the ultimate and must give place to the ultimate. And the fuller must come in and swallow it up.

Oh let us ask the Lord to save us from settling down into something less than He intends. There must always be with us this sense, this deep down consciousness we are called according to purpose not yet

fully realized. There is a wonderful future with which we are related.

This is not the end of everything. We must have that sense. Have you got it? Have you got what we have here before called this sense of divine destiny? Is this something calling you on, pulling you on, not allowing you to expect anything less than all God means? That is vision in reality.

Or does your vision just reside within the narrow limits of a piece of work that you are doing for God or trying to do for God? Is that your vision? It is not adequate. It is not adequate. So called according to purpose.

I am as close but... Or does your vision just reside within the narrow limits of a piece of work that you are doing for God or trying to do for God? Is that your vision? It is not adequate. It is not adequate. So called according to purpose.

I am as close but... I have read in conjunction with these chapters about Gideon the later chapters of the prophecies of Zechariah. Of course you wonder how they can be brought together. But they are part and counterpart.

Those later chapters of the prophecies of Jeremiah still have in view God's full purpose and its realization. Where Israel was concerned. Oh read them.

You... You are amazed. You are almost bewildered. What is said there of God's purpose yet concerning the land and the people.

I hear in these prophecies. You have the uttermost things said. That all, all from all over the world to come and bow and worship at Jerusalem.

And if anyone will not come and worship the Lord at Jerusalem there will be a curse upon him. And upon his cattle. And upon all that he has.

A terrible curse. And it is described in language that we today can understand better than Zechariah could understand. When he penned it.

Their eyes shall dissolve in their sorrow. We understand that don't we. Their tongue shall wither in their mouth.

The atomic age. That is. Now all who will not come to worship the Lord at Jerusalem are going to be involved in that.

That's tremendous isn't it. A divine purpose. But here I look at the book of Judges.

And I say my word. My word. Something has got to happen.

To get Jerusalem into that position. To get Israel into that state. Where all will come and worship the Lord at Jerusalem.

From every nation. Yes. But Gideon.

This is the point. Gideon was apprehended in relation to that outlaw. So far as God was concerned the full vision was still in view when he took hold of Gideon.

And it's like that. We may have conditions. Such as those in the days of Gideon.

But the Lord has still got his full purpose in view. And he'll lay hold and say, Heaven are thy sent thee.

Go and thou shalt save Israel. From this unto this. All that there might fall upon us dear friends.

This new sense of divine calling and apprehending. In relation to his full purpose. But meantime it may be connected with something that is out of line.

Out of accord with that purpose. And the purpose where we are concerned. Within the whole purpose.

Is this. It may be evangelism. It may be to bring in those who are called unto his eternal glory.

It may be any aspect of ministry. But it must be in full view of the end. It must be a related thing.

It must be under the anointing. And not just some piece of work that we have taken up. Are trying to do for God.

But this sense of tremendous calling. Tremendous vocation. Tremendous apprehending.

This is the thing to which God has called me. This, this. So many there are who are wondering about missing the way.

Are in a state of ineffectiveness because they are in the wrong position. They are trying to do something that God never called them to do. They have seen Christian work is such and such.

And so they have taken it up and they are trying to do it. But no there is no sense that God laid hold of them for that. Trying to do it.

I wonder if you have grasped the emphasis this morning. Call according to purpose. Ultimately in its fullness.

At present. In some way necessary unto the ultimate. Whether whatever it is it has got to be this that you and I know that our lives are apprehended lives.

Until we get there and have that consciousness. There will be weakness. There will be loss.

There will be confusion. We have got out of the purpose. The Lord draws by a mighty new sense into the thing that he is himself concerned with at this present time.

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