

Recovery - Part 3 of 4

by T. Austin-Sparks

The Holy Spirit is the energy of all divine purpose, initiating, directing, persisting, and completing God's plan, and is the custodian of God's vision from eternity.

Duration: 1:02:25

Scripture: Nehemiah 2:17, Psalm 119:11, Matthew 6:33, Acts 16:6-7, Romans 8:14, Romans 10:14, Colossians 1:27

Topics: "Recovery"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being alert to the tricks and schemes of the devil. They highlight that a lack of a sense of responsibility can make believers vulnerable to being deceived and distracted from God's purpose. The speaker connects this sense of responsibility with prayer and watching, urging listeners to ask the Lord to increase it in their lives. They also express concern that conferences and gatherings should not be seen as mere events to attend, but rather as opportunities to deepen one's relationship with God and take on serious responsibilities in the spiritual realm.

Transcript

Before we resume the message for this time, I feel that I want to say a word with the desire and intent to seek to bring what we are saying in these gatherings into the closest possible practical relationship to you, dear friends. I am always afraid that these conferences might just be looked upon as some special meeting and some particular aspect of teaching that each conference has as its subject or theme such and such a matter. And so we come, so we hear, so we go and wait for the next one.

Now, to me, that is a very terrible thought or possibility. If you knew the spiritual history lying behind these times, you would be fully alive to the fact that we are really brought into relation to very serious responsibilities, that each such time is a build-up upon a tremendous responsibility to the Lord. And that sooner or later, given that it is the Lord's work to us, sooner or later, in some way, we shall find that we are faced with its practical implications in relation to our very life, and it will be a matter of gain or loss in time and in eternity.

God forbid that I should attribute more importance to the ministry than should be attributed, but we do very, very much seek the Lord about these times. There is very deep exercise and much prayer, and it is never, believe me, a matter of getting down to make up some addresses by research and so on. It is always a seeking to have it from the Lord himself as his own word for the times.

I want to say that in order to seek to bring you into a very living relation with the Lord, and to say to you that if what is being said at this time has come from the Lord, and is coming from the Lord, it, the Lord knows, is not just a theory. Somehow or other, it does affect you. It does involve you.

It does mean that the Lord is saying this to you. In some way, it touches your life where you are. My own strong feeling is that this is a word for this local company at Honour Oak at this time, and also for those of you in other places.

Some are in assemblies, some are not in assemblies in other places, but nevertheless, the spiritual principles hold good, whether or not that is the case. And in some way, this has to be taken to where you are and have an outworking. So we are here not just to be speaker and listeners, but the word conference has more in it than that.

We are here to confer on the serious business of God in relation to the time in which we live. To seek God's interpretation of the time, and explanation or revelation of what it is that he has set upon in the day in which you and I live. You will suffer that word because, though you may not share my fear, I have this fear as one who is conscious of talking, talking, talking, that it will just be death.

And I have a horror of death. Having said that, let us turn again to the message, and that part of it which is for this hour. We are, as you know, in the book of Nehemiah.

Now, it is the basis and the background of what the Lord is saying to us, or wanting to say to us at this time. It is too late, we are too far on to survey the ground covered, but we have seen that this book represents in a historic way the greater, more eternal purpose of God. What God has from before the foundation of the world had in his own heart and in his own mind as a purpose concerning his Son Jesus Christ.

That purpose being that in Christ and through Christ, in those in whom Christ dwells, God may have a place, a vessel, for presencing himself and making himself known. That is a sanctuary for God. That is his eternal purpose.

Now, this afternoon, we come to that particular aspect of this matter which relates to the way in which God realizes his purpose. This book of Nehemiah, when it is read in the larger context of its spiritual meaning, is full of valuable instruction as to God's way of reaching his end, realizing his purpose. We have already spoken of one pervading thing throughout this book which has only to be mentioned in order to be recognized.

That is the spirit of leadership. Now, we have to see that that is not something impersonal and abstract. However strong and however energetic it is as found in this book, and it is unmistakable, the book simply throbs with a mighty energy in initiative, in leadership, spirit of having a great business on hand, supreme importance, calling out all the resources of spirit, mind, and body.

I say the book throbs with that which we have called the spirit of leadership. But, I repeat, what we now have to see is that in the larger setting than the merely earthly and historical, this is not something impersonal and it is not something abstract. We must see in the book of Nehemiah the energy of the Holy Spirit.

I think there is no doubt that the energy that is here corresponds to the energy of the Holy Spirit. It is not just an abstract energy, though very positive. And it is not just the sole force of a man or of some men.

Behind it, there is the energy of God. And I repeat, as seen in the larger spiritual context, the Holy Spirit is very much in evidence in this book as the one who is carrying out this great enterprise and moving toward the realization of this great purpose. And that is perfectly in keeping with all that we have said regarding Christ and God's purpose.

We have pointed out that this temple and this city and this wall with which this and the companion book of Ezra are occupied is but an earthly representation of Christ as the dwelling place of God, as the sphere in which God is to be found. Christ it is who is here in this book in the terms of the temple, the city and its wall. Christ in nature, character, what he is in the mind of God, the meticulous prescription for any dwelling place of God, whether it be tabernacle or temple or church, God is so very, very careful and strict as to the prescription, as to what it is to be like, as to its character, as to its components and constituents, simply because it is an expression of Christ.

And Christ is the very effulgence of his glory, the image of his substance. God dwells in his own character and nature and comes through in any expression of that. So he is very particular.

Well, it is Christ that is in view here, who will read the book from that standpoint, as to nature and purpose and function of Christ for God. If that is true, we quite naturally make the transition from Christ to the Holy Spirit. Christ is presented.

And presented as God's pattern, God's model, God's idea and conception of his own dwelling place, where he will be, on what ground he will be present. It is a tremendous revelation. And if that were all, and it were brought to us and imposed upon us, we were told, well, there you are, you've got the pattern, see what God wants, and now provide God with that, every one of us would sink back and say, no, impossible, impossible.

As far as we are concerned, it cannot be. It's quite hopeless to satisfy God in that way, or even for us to do anything toward fulfilling the purpose of God. That is our constant temptation to despair of realization of anything like this.

So that the counterpart and the complement of this is our salvation from despair, the mighty energies of the Holy Spirit, praise which has occurred more than once during these gatherings, the zeal of the Lord of hosts, shall perform this. So here in the energy which pervades this whole book, we must see the Holy Spirit working this thing through to fulfillment. It is the Holy Spirit who is the energy of all divine purpose.

Always was, though. God conceived the rescue of this cosmos from chaos. Spirit of the Lord brooded upon the face of the deep.

I have read that, thought about it, and brought it into this book of Nehemiah, read the first chapter of this book. I have asked myself the question, what was the attitude and the feeling of the Spirit of the Lord when he brooded on the face of the deep, when he hovered over that chaos? If the first chapter of Nehemiah really does represent the disposition of the Holy Spirit, we see Nehemiah looking at the ruins and then telling us that he wept, and he mourned, and he fasted some days before he took action. May we not conclude, when the Spirit of God brooded over that chaos, it was the spirit of grief, the spirit of disappointment, of sorrow, the spirit of tears.

It was a heart relationship to the situation because of the way in which that situation must have been contrary to what God would have. Spirit of God moved on that ground. The energies of the Holy Spirit are

the energies of a great concern for God's pleasure and satisfaction.

They are the energies which are a reaction against anything that does not honor and glorify God. That's what this book says. The mighty energies here, working through Nehemiah and through this people, it's all prompted by the Spirit of God who says this is not to the glory of God.

This is very... May it is utterly contrary to what God ought to have. Remember, dear friends, that is the nature of the energy of the Holy Spirit. Whatever may be our thoughts about the Holy Spirit working in power and so forth, let us remember that the Spirit begins with a great heart concern and longing for the satisfaction of God.

You may pray to be filled with the Spirit. You may think many things as to what it means to receive the Holy Spirit, to be anointed by the Spirit, to be governed by the Spirit. Let me tell you this, that if ever the Spirit of God gets a purchase upon your heart, the first thing and the continuous thing and the last thing will be that you will become possessed of a great concern for the satisfaction of God.

Not that you may be something or do something or that there may be something, but one thing only. And anything that disappoints God or deprives God of what He ought to have touches your heart very deeply. Yours will be a life that is dominated by this one thing.

God must be satisfied. God must be glorified. And if I see anywhere anything that is contrary to God, it gives me a pang.

That is the Holy Spirit. That is the energy of the Spirit to make us deeply grieve about things contrary to God in ourselves, in one another, in the people of God, in the world. That is, mark you, the first mark and characteristic of the Holy Spirit's energy, to link our hearts with God for His pleasure and His satisfaction and glory.

I was saying that is how it was at the beginning of creation. Spirit of God was the energy of all divine purpose. What was true in that initial instance has always been true, always been true, and is true today.

Spirit of God is the energy of divine purpose. And divine purpose is to find that satisfaction to which He can commit Himself forever. So the Spirit is seen here initiating, just spontaneous.

No committee of men sat to discuss this rebuilding of Jerusalem and the wall. No board of directors to carry this through, to lay the plan. We know nothing of that kind at all.

Simply comes about because God found a man with a heart, a man with a heart for Himself. And so it's almost natural, it's quite spontaneous, the thing opens in that way and begins. But here it is a purely spontaneous initiation of this thing by the Holy Spirit.

There's very much more in that than perhaps appears from what I'm saying. And if we were really thoroughly dealing with this whole matter, especially for the sake of responsible servants of God, we should say very much more. But this thing which is indicative of what I mean can clearly be seen.

You will look in vain for any laying of plans and drawing up of designs and organizing of enterprises and schemes at the beginning of the book of the Acts, so-called of the apostles. I do not believe that those men intended in a way to do what they did do afterwards. They had not even foreseen what they would be involved in.

The simple basis of everything there is that God got hold of the heart of a band of men. They didn't know where they were going, what they were going to do. They didn't know what it was going to mean at all.

They did not foresee the whole development and indications from the Lord certain things they would do. But until the Holy Spirit really came and got his grip upon those men inwardly, they never, never moved if they intended to move as they did. It was a perfectly spontaneous movement.

Indeed, there are indications that they were settling in Jerusalem, they were building up in Jerusalem, increasing multitudes in Jerusalem, and although the Lord had indicated beyond Jerusalem, it took a real movement of the Spirit to get them out of Jerusalem and to get them abroad. You see, the point is that the initiation of the purpose of God is in the hands of the Holy Spirit. And if the Holy Spirit can really get hold of our hearts and get hold of our lives, he brings us into his own initiation of purpose and into his own energy or his own energy into us.

It would be like that, a spontaneous thing. Might I say this? We, beginning of things so many years ago, here, never foresaw how things would develop and what would happen. We had no plan, no scheme.

We hadn't thought it out and put it on paper what this would mean, how it would work out to the ends of the world, all that has happened. Pardon me, I don't mean to draw attention, I'm only illustrating. We just didn't have it.

But God got hold of our hearts. And I think we can say in such a way, in such a mighty way, that he could do, progressively, not all at once, because he got still to get more ground, but progressively through the years he could do what he wanted to do. And those who know best would say, well, we didn't foresee this and this and this, the new stages and the new phases that would come from time to time.

But they were quite spontaneous. We never planned them. We never decided this and that.

They just came along the line of life. Not that this is anything very much, but it's like that, I believe. The Holy Spirit has the initiative in his hands.

And not only the initiative to initiate, the Holy Spirit has the direction. The direction here in Nehemiah is very clear. It's wonderful if you follow this development, movement, progressive movement, the developing movement, the way, the wisdom, the insight.

It's all there. And it is not just human acumen and ability. It's the energy of the Spirit directing this whole thing from stage to stage and phase to phase.

He has it in hand like a clearly defined course where he is concerned. And not only that, initiating and directing, but we cannot explain the persistence to a conclusion on merely human grounds. My, look at the discouragement.

Look at the opposition. Look at the difficulties. People themselves were always ready to give up, to throw in their hands.

One of the things constantly assailing was discouragement. Discouragement which did for a time suspend everything. You read the whole story, you find that there was a period perhaps of twelve years when they were just too discouraged to go on.

Things were too hard, too difficult. But nevertheless the Spirit again energized and re-initiated and then the thing was finished. And you cannot explain it on the basis of merely human energy and persistence and determination that completion can only be explained by the energies of the Spirit of God.

And what is true in this book is an illustration of the moment so much greater the Spirit initiated at the beginning of this dispensation. Clearly he directed in those early years and the continuance. The continuance of the Church and the continuance of anything of God.

The persistence can only be accounted for by an energy that is superhuman, that is not natural, persisting to the conclusion when it can be said, so the wall was finished. Oh, but what a tribute to the energy of the Spirit to be able to say that in view of all that sought to make that issue impossible. Initiation, direction, persistence, completion.

All the story of the Holy Spirit's energies. So looking into this book we see as an illustration this great truth of the energy of the Holy Spirit in anything that is of God. Dear friends, you and I committed to something of the Lord which is countered by many, many adversaries and much discouragement and heartbreak and disappointment.

I'm quite sure Nehemiah was often disappointed with his people and with his brethren. There's signs of that, more than signs of it, evidences of it. Time to time they failed him, they disappointed him.

We may find much disappointment in the directions where we should least expect to find it. All that, all that. But if the thing be of God there is the committing of the Holy Spirit with all his energies to it, to see it through.

I take comfort from that. I take comfort from that and you should do the same. Of course the important thing is to be in line with God's purpose and then you are endowed with God's power.

The thing does not rest with your weakness, only be faithful and not disobedient and the Spirit will see it. That is Nehemiah's energy. But note this.

The vision of it all was with Nehemiah alone to begin with. He came by that sovereign overruling and ordering of God to Jerusalem. He went out by night.

I told no man, I told no man. I told no man. Went out and surveyed the situation by night and went home.

We are not told in as many words what happened when he got home but we know from the issue what happened. Nehemiah surveyed and saw there was very much rubbish, walls broken down, the gates were bound. A deplorable situation and he went home after surveying it.

And the issue clearly indicates that Nehemiah did not say it's a hopeless situation, nothing can be done. I give it up and go back to my job as cupbearer. In the silence of the night he planned.

He saw. He conceived. He became possessed of and gripped by the vision of a rebuilt Jerusalem and wall and inhabited city.

It was with him alone to begin with. After that he drew others in. It was with him alone to begin with.

After that he drew others in. Two, then more and then more and inspired them with his own vision. Now, the point is this, that the vision of all was with Nehemiah alone to begin with.

And if Nehemiah represents the energy of the Holy Spirit, this is the point. The Holy Spirit is the custodian of God's purpose, of God's plan. It's with him and to begin with it is with him alone.

I'm very glad of that. Aren't you? I'm glad that I never conceived this thing. That it was never my idea.

That I drew up this whole scheme of things and decided to carry it through. Well, it would have been short-lived. It wouldn't have gone very far.

Quite sure of that. But no, the Holy Spirit has the vision of God's purpose from eternity and it is with him alone to begin with. He only has it.

That means far more than my words indicate. You and I do not know the whole thing. We do not see it all.

Perhaps it's as well that we don't. It's as well that we don't. I wonder how many of us would have gone through if we had seen all the coming years and what they would hold in the work of God.

Probably we would have said, no, thank you. I'm not going that way. The Holy Spirit has it all, the whole pattern with himself and he will unfold it gradually, bit by bit, make it known.

But it is all known to him. I'm glad of that. The Holy Spirit is not making discoveries by experiment.

Make no mistake about that. He is not finding out by trying to see if it will work. Not of it.

He sees the whole thing, all the involvement, all the cost, all the demands. He sees it all. He's got it all before him.

Have I said it? I'm wrong. He sees Christ, the perfected man, the perfected representation of God's thought for a dwelling place. He sees all.

The Lord Jesus has told us, when he is come, the Spirit of truth, he, he shall take of mine, reveal it to you. He shall not speak of himself. He shall guide you into all the truth.

He's got it all. The Holy Spirit has the whole perfected pattern of Christ fully in view. And he says, God intends that to be reproduced in a people.

I'm committed to that. That can be because God wills it in every detail. Take this to heart, dear friends, that what God really has purpose, he can carry out.

There's no doubt about it. He can realize it. He can fulfill it.

And the Spirit of God has assumed responsibility for God's eternal purpose. He's taken the responsibility. But, it's with him.

And that also carries with it this further factor, you and I as believers and responsible believers need to know that God never commits the whole pattern to us. He resolves it to the Holy Spirit and we'll only get any fragment of it as we live in and walk after the Spirit. It is most essential.

You and I are impressed with this fact that God does not hand over everything to man like that. But God says, walk with me today and you will know that which belongs to today. I'm not going to tell you anything about tomorrow.

Today. You walk in the Spirit today. You assume nothing.

You presume nothing. You recognize that you have got to go step by step in hand with the Holy Spirit and as you do so the pattern will unfold. You're in the dark today as what next week, next month, next year may hold.

Don't worry about that. My law is that this is tied up to the Holy Spirit and you cannot know one fragment unless you walk in the Spirit. That's a good thing.

But you see, it makes great demands upon us. The developing purpose, the unfolding plan requires that you and I who are related to it know what a life in the Spirit means. Oh, that does mean much more than I have time to explain.

But I do see, dear friends, that so much of the tragedy of the situation today amongst Christians and the chaos and the confusion and the weakness and the limitation, the spiritual limitation is due to the positive fact that so many of the Lord's people do not know what life in the Spirit means. They have got their idea of a Christian life in an objective way. To be a Christian is so-and-so according to certain doctrines and beliefs and responses.

To be a Christian is to do a certain kind of work, be concerned about the salvation of souls and be working for the Lord in many ways. It's so objective. So objective.

Now, if I had the opportunity, I could take you back to the book of the Acts and show you that the basis was this mastery of the heart of these men, and they had a great concern for the salvation of souls, there's no doubt about that, and for the building of the Church of God and the churches and all that. But, but, the Holy Spirit has left it on evidential record that with all that they could not do what they decided to do. They can never act according to their own judgment even with all that.

They knew God wanted men's souls saved. They knew God wanted the Word preached everywhere. They knew in a general way like that and their hearts were in it.

But here it is. Here it is. The Holy Ghost suffered them not.

They were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in certain places. What is this? What is this? Well, it's clear, and we know it from our own experience perhaps, that if they had persisted in spite of the Holy Spirit, it would have been disaster. At least, it would have been disappointment.

Terrible disappointment. No, even with all that the Lord wanted and with all their concern, they had to move in each movement with the Holy Spirit and in the Holy Spirit, and it proved fruitful. It proved fruitful every time.

And if you can ever detect that they did otherwise, you'll find they didn't prove fruitful. The law of the Spirit. The Spirit retains the right and the prerogative to just hold the pattern and plan of God to Himself and only show it as He has men and women who are wholly governed by Him.

Vast amount of Christian work, activity and organization all over this world that is not getting through. Not getting through. After two thousand years, vast part of this earth has never yet heard the Gospel.

No, in our own country, in this country. Deplorable situation of ignorance of God. Many, many there are in this country who don't know anything about the Bible and many who do not know the existence of the

Bible.

Think of that. A country like this. To many in this country of Christ, I don't know, who are you talking about? What is the matter? A Spirit-governed church would not leave a situation like that.

It did not at the beginning. Not at the beginning. Well, you see a lot in this.

The Spirit knows that He demands complete government by Himself in every detail of the purpose of God. You notice, again, in this spirit of leadership, energy of the Spirit represented by Nehemiah, the discerning responsibility which characterized him. Discerning responsibility.

And one's thinking about a real sense of responsibility resting upon him in this matter. Can't get away from it. Read it again, the whole book.

In the light of that one thing, how Nehemiah felt himself charged with a great responsibility God brought. It was the thing that saved him again and again. This was not something that he was doing for man.

This was not something that he was doing for himself. Well, this was something that was for God. He felt his responsibility to God all the time.

I wonder how much that conveys to you of impress. Because, you see, if you follow that through with Nehemiah, it was that that made him so alive and so alert to everything. This man, speak of Nehemiah alone, this man right on the mark all the time.

You could not steal a march on him. You could not ensnare him. He was alert.

He was alive. He saw through every subterfuge. He saw the implications of every counter-movement.

He's just all eyes. He's just all eyes. Alive.

And that alertness, aliveness, discernment, perception, insight, foresight, throughsight, it was all born of this sense of responsibility. God, Lord. You know, it's true, if you have any sense of responsibility for a thing, real, real sense of responsibility, that that's your responsibility and it's very important, it's very vital.

You are not caught asleep. You're alive to everything that's going to touch that, to affect that. Dear friends, how the Holy Spirit needs to create or impart his sense of responsibility to the people of God, as Nehemiah did.

People are caught, oh, how they're caught, by almost any little trick of the enemy, of the devil. Christians are caught these days by anything that the enemy likes to put up, and very often he has to put up something very clever. Something so simple, and they're caught.

The Lord has something relating to his great purpose in his Son in view. They ought to be there in relation to that. They're involved, they're a part of it.

Well, some little thing arises over the telephone, a call, a seeming demand. Some thing to divert. The enemy puts up something, either simple or more complex, and they're caught.

The truth is, they're not there. They're not there at the time, they're not there at all. They've just been caught, and afterward, well, no real purpose served in the other direction, and the purpose of God entirely lost in this.

What is the reason for that? Oh, take this to heart. Be alive. The wiles of the devil.

The wiles of the devil. What is the thing that will counter that and save you from being tricked and snared and misdirected and preoccupied so that you cannot be in what the Spirit of God is doing? It's a lack of a sense of responsibility. God what? We have that.

It will create an alertness, an energy of discernment, and we shall see, oh, that's a move of the enemy to get me off, to keep me away, to cut across. I see. That is why the Apostle Paul links with prayer and watching thereunto, all perseverance, watching thereunto.

But this sense of responsibility to ask the Lord to create it in you, to increase it in you, for there's a serious need, an almost tragic need amongst the Lord's people for this, that they realize that they are responsible people in this whole time. I'm a part of this. If I fail in this, if I'm caught, the whole thing is going to be somehow affected.

See it like that. The Holy Spirit in this book was active all the time along two lines. He was active in his energy along the line of God's no on the one side.

God's no. And it is clear, as you read, that it became quite apparent and quite evident that God was taking a negative attitude toward a certain kind of thing, certain state of things, and certain things. God was saying no.

I can't bring them all out. You see, it would take months to empty this book of its content. But the Holy Spirit was making aware of that toward which God took this attitude.

No. No. None of that.

Not that. On the other hand, he's not only negative, he's positive. The Spirit was saying yes.

Yes. Yes. And there's a very great need in us, dear friends, to register that no and that yes of the Holy Spirit if God is going to reach his end.

I hate to say things like this, but the Lord loses so much because so many of his people are not sensitive to the Holy Spirit saying no. Not that. Not that way.

Or sensitive to the Holy Spirit saying yes. Yes. Now, you see, you have got a greater than me homage, for example.

For look at the Lord Jesus. Anointed, governed, filled with the Spirit. And notice that anointing again and again and again in his life saying no.

No. And he saying amen to the Spirit, no. No.

Not that way. Not that thing. Not that time.

Not yet. The Spirit was saying no. On the other hand, positive, yes.

Yes. Yes. And our Lord was governed like that.

And he is the fulfillment of God's promise. And it's very essential that it should be so. Now, in order that it might be so, there's one tremendous thing that comes up in this book.

There were people around about who wanted to sponsor this thing and who offered their service and said, let us come and work with you and help you in this great thing that you're doing. Where the Holy Spirit came in with one of his notes. And this is where the spirit of discernment and responsibility through responsibility is so manifest.

Not only did Nehemiah say to these people, you have no part nor lot in this business, but there was a point in this history, in this history, when every man who was going to have any place had got to prove his genealogy. He had got to provide his birth certificate. He had got to have evidence that he's a pureborn Hebrew.

Jew. There's no taint in his blood. You see, these people who were offering were not such.

They were a mixture. A mixture of Assyrians and Hebrews who had intermarried in the land. A subtle trick of the enemy to get in that way.

But discerning responsibility saw what that would mean. What that would mean. God's hatred of mixture.

And so the demand is only spiritual men, spiritual men, born of the spirit and governed by the spirit, can come into this purpose of God. Pureborn, purebred, heavenly citizens to come into this city. Men of the spirit from their very beginning.

It's essential. Is it not due to failure in that particular thing in the history of the church that the church has been paralyzed, crippled? People not born again coming into the church and coming into the work of the church. Unspiritual people.

No, no, this is not something that even in sincerity can be taken up. Even in sincerity, though you might want to help along the work of God, you can't do it. Your motive, your meaning, your intention may be very good, may be very good, but you just can't do it until you are under the mastery of the Holy Spirit.

Christianity has drawn in people to help on the work because, well, they've got money or they've got a title or they may have influence in the business world or they have considerable acumen in some branch of civil life or industrial life. They're great business people. Therefore, bring them in.

Let them serve the kingdom of God. No. No.

A thousand times, no. The only basis on which anybody can have a place or a path is that they are filled with the Spirit. That was the beginning of the church.

They are under the control of the Spirit of God born again, no matter whether they've got millions. If they haven't got the Spirit, they're out of court here. They may be the cleverest men in business.

Having been most successful in the things of this world, they have no standing here on that ground. If they're not men of the Spirit, all the energies of the Spirit require men of the Spirit. The purpose of the Spirit requires spiritual men and women.

That is a great declaration in this book. Well, I'll stop there for the afternoon. It isn't everything about the Spirit as you can well see.

But I would close with this. The energy that is in this book, which is in figure, the energy of the Spirit, did one wonderful thing. It may have been progressive, but it came out all right.

The energy through Nehemiah, type of the energy of the Holy Spirit, gave the people one vision which united them as one man. As one man. The people had a mind to work, it is said.

A mind to work. The people had a mind to work. They were welded, melted into a one mess so that they were as one man.

The whole wall was united. United. And all the people on the wall were united.

And they were united in this man, Nehemiah. He was the uniting, integrating personality of the whole thing. Seeing him then represented the energy of the Spirit, and the energy of the Spirit creates a oneness of vision which makes the people of God one.

If you and I have diverse visions, conceptions, well, we'll not be one. We'll be apart. And that will be our weakness.

And that will be the defeat of God's purpose amongst us. We must be men and women with one vision which makes us one. Not two visions, not pulling apart, not tearing us asunder, not wanting different ways and different things, but we see clearly what it is that God has purposed and has in hand, what the Spirit is committed to, and we are in that without reserve or division.

And if you can get a dozen men and women like that, you've got a solid whole. That means so much. The effort of the enemies of Nehemiah and this work was to divide these people, divide these people, by division to weaken and eventually nullify this whole undertaking.

That is the enemy's perpetual way to divide. But oh, may the Lord give us a clear perception of His Christ, not of a thing, but of His Christ as His objective, His aim, His purpose, His pattern, to which our hearts are committed. And the energy of the Holy Spirit welds us as a people wherever we are, set on that one thing, God's satisfaction.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0073.mp3>

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