

The Divine Anointing - Part 1

by T. Austin-Sparks

The sermon explores the divine anointing of Jesus, emphasizing the significance of sonship and the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering believers.

Duration: 52:22

Scripture: Luke 3:21-22, Luke 4:1-4, Luke 4:9-11, Luke 4:13

Topics: "Divine Anointing"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the significant event of Jesus' baptism and his subsequent temptation in the wilderness. The preacher highlights that Jesus had a deep sense of purpose and destiny as the Son of God. Led by the Holy Spirit, Jesus willingly faced the temptation of the devil, demonstrating his obedience to God's plan. The preacher emphasizes the immense sacrifice and suffering Jesus would endure on the path to fulfilling his mission, including being forsaken by God.

Transcript

Continuing the way of our earlier meditation, we will read this evening from the Gospel by Luke, chapter 3, verses 21 and 22. Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, and Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form as a dove upon him. The voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

Chapter 4, Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness during forty days, being tempted of the devil. And he did eat nothing in those days. When they were completed, he hungered.

The devil said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, command this stone that it become a loaf. Jesus answered unto him, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone. And he led him up, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

The devil said unto him, To thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them, for it hath been delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore will worship before me, it shall all be thine. Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

He led him to Jerusalem, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee to guard thee, and on their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against the stone. Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. When the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him for a season.

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and the fame went out concerning him through all the region round about. Verse 18, Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me. So we continue our consideration as we trust with the Lord's help this matter of the divine anointing.

Jesus spent six weeks in the wilderness fasting. We are not told what he was doing all through those more than one thousand hours. While no doubt much of the time was spent in prayer, there must have been much thought, meditation, and adjustment to what was involved in that anointing.

We might spend a little while in trying to get inside of that tremendously significant event and time. Surmising perhaps, deducing, but I think we shall not be far from the truth in the conclusions to which we may come. We begin by recognizing that there was a background consciousness in Christ of being here in this world as a man of destiny.

As one with whom tremendous issues were bound up in the purpose and counsels of God. He had a peculiar sense in him of his relationship with God as his Father. That had been with him, it seems, from at least boyhood.

And there was in him a spirit of purpose, of a mission. This, as I have said, of a destiny, a tremendous destiny. Strange and uncommon forces had been at work in his spirit, through his life.

An urge and an urgency, deep down sense of mighty things being bound up with his being in this world. That was the background consciousness of this particular time in the wilderness. Then there arrived the day when he knew in his spirit, by the same urge and constraint, that a Christic step had to be taken.

That movement of the spirit sent him to the joy. Undoubtedly, he was being guided by the spirit in his movement. One reason, because those movements so exactly corresponded with many scriptures of the Old Testament which had to be fulfilled.

His movements had in them many prophecies. We know how Matthew was able to discern that. How frequently Matthew said, that the scripture might be fulfilled.

That the scripture might be fulfilled. It was written in the scripture. Here he is, so to speak, marking off, ticking off the scriptures that were being fulfilled in these various movements and activities and utterances of the Lord Jesus.

We are quite on safe ground when we say that the spirit who had given those scriptures was guiding him into those scriptures for their fulfillment. And that his movements were all according to plan. All according to the program.

All according to the word. Here in the wilderness, it comes out so clearly that it is the word that is governing. He is moving in accordance with the word.

The fulfillment of the scripture. In that consciousness of this day having arrived to take the great precipice, he went to Jordan, brushed aside John's demurrer and insisted upon being baptized. This had as its main context the cross.

There is no doubt about it. Baptism implied the great context of the cross. So that undoubtedly with that larger context of the background consciousness.

The fulfillment of the word of God. Obedience to it in every step and movement. And in this capitulation to what his baptism implied and involved, the cross.

The cross. All its significance. Undoubtedly with that full, comprehensive, deep meaning context, the Holy Spirit came upon him.

It was heaven's attesting and seal. And then, what might we have expected immediately? Well, whatever we should have expected. Next thing is not according to our expectation at all.

It's the wilderness. All that as a background. Mighty consciousness of destiny and mission.

An absolute and meticulous obedience to the word. And a complete, undeniable capitulation to the way of God. Heaven answers that.

Spirit breaks through the cleft heavens. Comes upon him. With all that, the wilderness.

The wilderness. That's not what you expect. You've gone as far as that.

You've got all that. The foundation. Don't expect the next thing to be the wilderness.

Whether you expect it or not, very often it is. Well now, he's in the wilderness. And what we note here is the focal point of Satan's attack.

Satan focused his attack upon the question of sonship. There's no mistaking that. Varying his methods and his means of attack.

Coming along different lines. The one, the one thing that is present every time is. If thou be the son.

If what was said there at Jordan is true. If thou be the son. That's the focal point of every kind of Satanic attack.

Make no mistake about that. What is after? That's the thing that matters. But when we have said that.

It is not just the fact of sonship that Satan is attacking. It is the significance of sonship. What sonship implies, signifies and involves.

What sonship involved and implied personal and family inheritance and heirship. That consciousness of the Lord Jesus was a consciousness. Consciousness which was not just a feeling.

Just a sense. It was a mighty knowledge. A mighty intelligence.

Read later. And you have a phrase like this. Jesus knowing that his hour had come and that the Father had delivered all things into his hands.

Come back. All these things will I give thee. All things.

All things. Paul with that amazing revelation and insight. Tells us the full story of the counsels of God from eternity.

The sum of all things in Christ. By him, through him, unto him were all things created. The word sonship.

Yes. What it implies. For himself personally as the heir of all things.

Whom he appointed heir of all things. But not only for himself. But for this family of which we were speaking this afternoon.

This family which God by Christ as Father was reconstituting. This divine family. Family of which the word quite definitely says we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

We. This inheritance. This heirship.

Which is signified by that word son. That's the focal point. It is not just the position or the office or the title.

It's what this is going to lead to. If in some way it is not subverted. It's tremendous.

That is why that was made the focal point. It carried with it no less an issue than world dominion and universal authority. Notice that Satan used that word.

All this authority. Thus where the risen Lord is all authority has been given to me in heaven. Now that's the involvement.

Here. Yes. Dominion.

Over this world. And universal authority. As vested in sonship.

That then meant an immediate and direct challenge to the prince of this world. Sonship meant that and always means that. Therefore.

Therefore the son must be tricked up somehow. He must be in some way ensnared. Here we are.

Well let us leave it there for a moment. Go back to Jordan. The Jordan meant that that destiny.

That destiny for himself and for his fellow heirs. And all this divinely intended purpose was only to be reached by way of the cross. That's what Jordan meant.

And he knew it. And accepted it. And was committed to it.

But that was no small committal. That way. That way.

He knew quite well. All its meaning and implications. That way in its spiritual and moral significance.

Would be the most devastating way to his humanity. It would mean that his soul would be exceeding sorrowful. Even unto death.

It would mean that he would be in a great anguish. Sweating as it were great drops of blood down to the ground. It would lead to being forsaken of God.

For one terrible unmanning eternal moment. A moment like an awful eternity in despair and utter darkness. That was involved.

He was human. He was a man. And he could shrink.

Shrink from all that. And cry. Cry out of his humanity.

Is there no way out? Is there no other way? Oh, that it might not be necessary. That this cup might pass. Not going back upon his commitment.

But the awful battle of that commitment. And all that it involved now. In full force breaking upon him.

The baptism meant that the great end would only be reached along that line. By the way of the cross. Was that what he was fighting out in the wilderness? Was it? Was that the great battle that brought him to physical and mental exhaustion? Over those many, many long drawn out hours of day and night.

Was that it? Is he facing it all? If we are right in our surmise that it was that. Then, then we can understand the diabolical and cruel attack of the enemy. There is another way.

You need not go that way. You can have it all without the cross. Are we right? I feel that that uncovers the whole thing.

Yes, that was the battle. That was the meaning of the wilderness. Satan was saying in other ways and words.

It need not be. There are other ways for you to reach your end and realize your destiny. Use your divine power to save yourself.

That was King of the Serpent, wasn't it? When he was actually on the cross. Save thyself. From beginning to end of this way, the way out, the way through is save thyself.

You need not wait. Or do something to make an impression. By some trick, cast thyself down.

Suddenly appear amongst the crowd as out from heaven. Make a tremendous impression. You'll capture them.

You'll not have to argue that you came from heaven. They're dead. Patent.

Or, failing that, cede to me some right of world dominion. Acknowledge me as the prince of this world and come alongside of me in my government of this world. Forget it all.

And all that in the hour of physical exhaustion and weakness. You only got to know something a tremendously exhausting time. Over some soul.

Over some spiritual interest. Over some tremendous emergency in the things of God. And the point of fainting with weariness to know how cruel and diabolical the devil can be.

So it was. Well, you can have it all without the cross. That's the point.

You need not go that way. What a value he gave to the cross. If that is what he meant.

So I think the meaning of it all is divulged. He won. He won that fundamental battle.

Though the time will come when its desperate and terrible reality will break upon him again. The foundation of his victory is laid in the wilderness. He'll be able to say in the day of the most terrible ordeals of prince of this world come unto me but had nothing in me.

I got through all that. Then I accepted the cross in principle and meaning. Then he won the fundamental battle and came from the wilderness strengthened by the spirit and by angels.

Now, what do we come to? No wonder that there was such authority in his steps, in his spirit and in his ministry. You see, the whole issue, dear friends, is that of authority. Authority.

The way of authority. The way of divine power. The way of the anointing, which is only another way of saying the same thing.

The anointing operating in power and authority. And you see, he's a man straight to Nazareth. Spirit of the Lord, God, Jehovah is upon me.

He is not a weakling. Man defeated with a question and onward. He has everything in his hands.

It's amazing how everything was in his hands right into the judgment hall. The authority was not with the high priest. The authority was not with Pilate.

They are like pawns in his hands. It's with him. He's able to say concerning his life, no man take it from me.

I have authority to lay it down, take it again, and this authority I receive from my father. Yes, the very beginning, this kind of authority, know how we need it, springs out of a settling of major issues fundamentally. Leaving no place for a divided mind or heart.

Man or the woman who has a question has no authority. Never and always pull between two ways. Divided heart.

No power in that life. No authority in that life. There's no impact coming from that life.

Does not register. Here is one who knows where he's going. And knows where he stands.

Knows what he's after. We have got to settle some, as far as possible, once and for all, in principle. We've got to settle some things.

We have got to settle some, as far as possible, once and for all, in principle. If there's going to be power, there's going to be authority. When I use that word authority, I do want you to recognize that in his life here, in his life here on this earth, it was not official authority at all.

It was moral and spiritual. And it's like that with us. We have no office.

No place. No position. No recognition amongst men.

No official authority. There's a greater than the official. It's the spiritual.

That man, that woman, young or old, knows. That's all there is to it. They know where they stand.

They know the way they're taking it. They know what they mean. They have settled certain fundamental issues which has delivered them from a divided mind and a divided heart.

That brings in tremendous moral strength and moral authority. It's not the fierceness and forcefulness of a strong, natural mind. It's the settledness of a heart in God.

That, I believe, lies behind this. He came from the wilderness and the power of the Spirit. The power.

All this speaks to us because, dear friends, we have already said that in so, so very much of what was true of the Lord Jesus, we are involved. There are only a very few things in his case in which we have no place. We have no place in deity.

We have no place in atonement, which he wrought. Thank God. The very few things, though, in which he is unique, in most of the things which were true of him, we have a place.

And at this present time, we are occupied with this one thing. Paul speaks of that we have been anointed in him. The anointing which was his was his as head for and of the body.

And we inherit that anointing when we are baptized in one spirit into one body. Come into the anointing. But you see how the anointing works.

You see what the anointing has as its goal. The anointing has as its goal no less a thing than this. Joint heirs with Christ to the all things of God.

And dominion with him in reigning forever and ever. That's tremendous. What we call to.

While it may be true that the atoning aspect of his cross is his and his alone and not ours. There is such a thing filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ. For his body's sake, which is the church.

It is only another way of seeing that there are aspects of the cross in which we have fellowship with him in his suffering. The way to this great destiny is this way and there is no getting out of it except. And there is a way.

There is an exception. Satan's way of compromise. Come down.

Come down. Save thyself and all this other. We are left with only those two alternatives.

What was Satan trying to do in that wilderness? First of all then, he was seeking persistently to bring the spirit of sonship into question. That is patent. But all do recognize that that is one of the things in which we are involved with Christ.

I don't know whether you have any exercise about that matter. But I make this confession to you. In the consciousness of the intensifying conflict, stress and pressure, suffering.

I have feared how I might finish up and have found myself praying many times that my faith might hold out to the end. And that I should not at the end come under a cloud of doubting my sonship. That's an issue that is a very living one.

I don't want to frighten you. Make things difficult. But dear friends, that is what the Lord's people have had to face so often right at the end.

The dark cloud, physical exhaustion, mental exhaustion, whose suffering creeps over the mind so often the light of God seems to fade out. The great question of sonship is raised. That's a terrible issue.

Well, if that sounds too terrible, and for young people especially, it makes things look very difficult. Let me remind you of this. You have got the Holy Spirit.

That's the point. It brings me right back to why we are speaking about this at all. The tremendous importance, but the unspeakable value of having the Holy Spirit within.

Said John to Christians in the time of terrible persecution. When all the questions of faith were right, the anointing which you have received abided in you, abided in you. Oh, it's a tremendous thing for the conflict to have the anointing.

We cannot make too much of the importance of the Holy Spirit dwelling within. So, rather than be frightened by what I have said, remember that the spirit of sonship himself is in you. And rest you upon him.

Stay you upon him. Count you upon him. Believe you in him.

This is not, let me say, this is not a matter of being a very clever person or a very intelligent person or a very gifted and able person. This is something for the nothings and the nobodies. And I say that with a tremendous background, the word of God, that the anointing will never, never function for your self-importance is on the throne.

The very functioning of the anointing spirit requires that we ourselves are at a discount. It was at the point of exhaustion and weakness that Christ came out triumphant because the spirit and heaven ministered to him in his weakness. Way back to your Old Testament.

Remember when the spies went over to the land, came back with their majority report, they said, we were in their eyes as grasshoppers. And so we were in our own eyes. All right.

That's not such a terrible thing. That's really not a bad thing at all. If Joshua is really a type of the energies of the Holy Spirit, then he made the grasshoppers drive out seven nations mightier than themselves.

Grasshoppers. Do you like that? Grasshoppers. There's a famous football club in America who wins some wonderful victories and they have named themselves the grasshoppers.

All right. You'll be a grasshopper if you're winning the victory. You see, it's the Holy Spirit, not ourselves at all.

The Holy Spirit in us and through us who is the mighty energy. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. That's a tremendous thing.

First thing then that Satan was trying to do was to bring the spirit of sonship into question. Oh, be guarded on that matter. The second thing that he was trying to do was to sabotage the supreme issue of sonship.

That is, spiritual authority. That's the supreme issue of sonship. Spiritual authority.

And lastly, he was trying to nullify the inherent potentiality of sonship. Heirship. The inheritance.

Possessing a kingdom. That's what he was trying to do. He's always trying to do that.

Always trying to do that. But again, I come back and say, if Jesus had not been anointed at the Jordan, he would have gone ill with him in the wilderness. But ye have an anointing.

Ye have an anointing if you really, really have come into the meaning, the true meaning of being a child of God. You have the spirit. I know the various theories and interpretations of this whole matter, the doctrine of the spirit.

Whether everybody who is born again really has the spirit. I'm not careful to try and argue that out tonight. I simply say this, that no new birth can take place without the Holy Spirit.

And if the new birth is an inward thing, the Spirit does it inside. And with the new birth, the consciousness of a new inward government is established. And that is no other than the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Some of us, years after we were saved, came into a new experience of the Spirit. A fuller experience of the Spirit. But we knew in those days before, when we were doing many, many things that today we are horrified at ever having done.

We knew even in those days that working within that we never had before we were the Lord. That throne of judgment, that adjudicating on matter, that troubling of us at certain times. We learned much before ever we came into a greater understanding by the very fact of the Spirit.

The fact of the Spirit. Now you can go away if you like and become involved in all these contentions about the doctrine of the Spirit. But let us rest back on this, that if we are children of God, the Spirit of God is in us.

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. That is where we begin the Christian life. We learn much as we go on.

And oh dear friends, I say this to you, that the point upon which so much of the trouble and confusion and misunderstanding rests and turns is just this, that it is a matter of the measure of the Spirit's liberty and way in us more than anything else. If any of us have at any time had a crisis come into some fuller knowledge of the anointing we truly have, the very big crisis it has been, it wasn't because of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It was because the cross was allowed to do some more drastic work in us to make way.

The cross always does that. The measure then of the Spirit's power in our lives, the measure of the functioning of the anointing, the measure therefore of our victory over the enemy and of our coming to that end to which we have been born by the Spirit. The measure will be the measure in which, like our Master, we have faced the meaning of the cross and accepted it, capitulated to it, fought out its issues if necessary, where this world is concerned and our own interests are concerned and every other, and have no divided mind about these things.

The Lord help us.

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