

# The Great Transition From One Humanity to Another

by T. Austin-Sparks

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*The sermon explores the great transition from one humanity to another, from the old to the new, with Jesus Christ as the central figure.*

**Duration:** 45:10

**Scripture:** Genesis 5:2, Matthew 6:33, John 4:21-24, Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, 2 Corinthians 5:17

**Topics:** "Humanity"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of focusing on the world to come and the need for a deeper understanding of Christ. He shares a story of a conference where ministers expressed their experiences, with some claiming to have had a wonderful time while one man admitted to feeling devastated and in need of a bigger understanding of Christ. The speaker highlights that God's ultimate goal is centered on humanity, not material possessions. He warns against getting too close to worldly things and losing perspective, using the example of the Israelites being instructed to keep a distance from the Ark of the Covenant as they entered the Promised Land.

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## Transcript

Our Father, our God, we ask Thee now, Thou who didst say, let night be, will shine into our hearts at this time to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It is that face we together have said we are seeking now. We seek Thy face.

We thank Thee the veil is taken away. We thank Thee that the heaven is open. We thank Thee that the Holy Spirit has come.

What we pray for in our need, so deeply conscious we are of it. Our own impotence and helplessness, inability to do anything, to say anything, worthy of Thyself, O Lord, we confess utter dependence upon Thee, but we say to Thee, Lord, we trust Thee. Now make this then time of entering into the good of that open heaven, that anointing spirit, that revelation in the face of Jesus Christ.

We ask it in His name. Amen. I want to lay the foundation for our meditation in this morning session, first session through this week, by asking you to turn to several passages of Scripture from the Old Testament and from the New.

Beginning in the book of Genesis, at chapter 5, chapter 5 in the book of Genesis, And thus two, male and female, created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Man. Now right away over to the New Testament, in the first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 15, verses 45 to 49. 1 Corinthians 15, 45, So also it is written, the first man became a living soul, the last, Adam, a life-giving spirit.

That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earthy, the second man is of heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy.

And as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the likeness of the earthy, we shall, or let us also, bear the image of the heavenly. And then please, in the letter to the Colossians, letter to the Colossians, chapter 3, at verse 9. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doing, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge, after the image of him that created him, where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

And finally, in the letter to the Hebrews, chapter 2, at verse 5. For not unto angels did he subject the world to come whereof we speak. But one has somewhere testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that thou visitest him? As I have said this morning, we are laying the foundation for these meditations in these morning hours. Therefore we shall be some part general and comprehensive and later work inward to get to the real heart of things.

But it is necessary for us to have a comprehensive view and vision of what is before us. I have no doubt that not a few of you who are here at this time have come with problems. And I find that Christians everywhere, the world over, are full of problems in our time.

If it isn't problems about their own spiritual life and themselves, as it is in many cases, it's problems about other Christians, or it's problems about the church generally, and perhaps particularly locally, and problems about the world. These problems are manifold and they are apt to drain our spiritual life and get us very much locked up and held up in our spiritual progress. There was an old lady once who lost some of her nice silver teaspoons and couldn't find them in the house.

So when the garbage man came, she said, I have lost my teaspoons, will you please look through the garbage, see if they are there. Well, he had a horse drawn, trapped, for collecting the garbage. And his horse's name was Dovin, and he turned to Dovin and he said, Gee up Dovin, our job is not to look for silver spoons in the garbage.

That sounds, of course, not very kind, but it's like that, you know, like Bunyan's Man with the Muckrake. Do you remember him? Not seeing the golden crown over his head, but thinking about the rubbish, trying to find some treasures there. And a lot of Christians are doing that today, they are missing the glory, because their eyes are either turned inward or upward, that's their problem.

Do you remember when the people of Israel were going over the Jordan into the Promised Land? The word for them was this, you shall set the ark, a space between you and the ark, of 2000 cubits. Because you have not passed this way heretofore. There's a wealth, a mind, a profound wisdom in that simple prescription.

A space of 2000 cubits between you and the ark, because you have not passed this way heretofore. If you get too close to things, you'll lose your perspective, and you'll lose your way. Keep things in proportion, in

perspective, don't get too near.

Now don't you agree that we have got too near to things, and we have made things be everything. Is that true? Yes, be everything. Even our Christian doctrines, so precious, so important, vital, essential, yet we have isolated our doctrines and made this and that and that, be everything.

Even the cross, you know, we can make the everything, or the doctrine of the cross. And I can mention many other things which are like a circumscribed circle for many Christians today, and they can't see beyond that. They can't see anything more than that.

If you talk to them, they have no interest in anything but that. You come back to it every time, and hold you to it. This loss of proportion, and perspective, and vision in its entirety is the cause of many of our problems, and much of our arrested spiritual life.

Now why am I saying this? Well, of course, for two reasons. You'll have to get a larger vision than your personal problem, and see it in a related way. I don't know very much about the science of relativity, but I come down very strongly on the principle of relatedness or relativity.

See everything in its relatedness to everything else, and not just that thing as the end all. The other reason why I'm saying that is that what is on my heart, and what is so much alive to me now, is this comprehensive setting of the spiritual life, getting it in its greatness, its vastness, its immensity. Now immensity can, of course, be awe-inspiring to the point of making you stand still and hold your breath.

But immensity can also be an emancipating thing. You see the greatness of that into which we have been called in Christ. The greatness of Christ.

Oh, if we could this week get a new apprehension, grasp of the infinitudes of our Christian calling, we'd go away an emancipated people. Within that setting, then, let us begin. We read these passages, how I would have liked to have added many more of the same kind to them.

Fair enough, as a starting point. Do you recognize what they were all about? From Genesis, the beginning, right on. One thing, man.

Man. No. Two men.

Two men. And what we are going to be occupied with is this double humanity, or the two humanities, that are the subject matter of the whole Bible. If you think your way along with me, you'll see very much more than I will be able to see.

If you have knowledge of the Bible. The Bible is the story of God and man. Everything is gathered into it.

Nothing in the Bible. That's what relates to that. Because it begins with God in the beginning.

God. The fact of God. Please stop.

Do not bow down before you come on man. And human history begins with God. God as a fact.

God initiating everything. Taking the initiative. God at work.

God's mind working out in action in what he does. Remember that's a Bible principle. If you want to know the mind of God, you will come to know it by what God does, not always by what he says to you.

More often, God's mind is revealed by how he deals with you, and by what he says in words in your ear. God is speaking in his actions. Speaking very, very loudly in his words.

God's mind being revealed in his actions. God is at work. At work preparing everything for man.

Everything prepared for man. When he has made that preparation, and brought man in, God says there's nothing more to do. At this stage, we can rest.

And God is at rest when he has man introduced into his prepared place. That man, the New Testament tells us, is a figure of him that was to come, in whom God will ultimately find. His full rest.

Man constituted, the man conditioned, the man environed, the man probationed. All God's interests are centered in humanity. In humanity.

Not in things as such. No thing is an end with God. Man is God's end.

Humanity is God's. Seeing we're all human beings here this morning, at least I think that we are, we are right there at the very center of the interest of God. Humanity.

But that man, as we know, disappointed God, failed him, and was rejected by God. And at that point, God reacted, reacted with the intimation of another one. Another man.

A representative man. Whom God had followed in. Before the foundation of the world, followed in.

Now forecast, foreshadowed, and that line of the reaction of God towards the man, the man, against this other man, runs all the way through like a red line through the Old Testament. In figure, in type, in prophecy, in spirit, the spiritual history of an elect line, all moving on towards that other man. That other humanity.

The different humanity. Till we reach the New Testament. New Testament, Christianity, like that.

Or have you thought of Christianity, well, in its parts, its fragments. Atonement for man's sin, man's personal salvation, man's securing of eternal hope and glory, all the parts of salvation, made so much of them. Well, you can't make too much of the parts, of course, until you reach the point where the parts become less than the whole.

And dear friends, we have got to readjust our conception and idea of Christianity at this point to see that with the coming of the Lord Jesus a crisis in the whole history of humanity is reached. It is the crisis of the final word of rejection of a humanity. A kind of man.

And the introduction of an entirely different kind of humanity with the person of Jesus Christ. You know your whole Bible is going to come alive. It will come alive.

What have we come into? What is regeneration? You call it conversion, being born again, or you call it regeneration. What is it? It's generation into another humanity altogether different. As a member of a different race of creatures, a different species of humanity.

And with the New Testament, this immense crisis in human history is introduced. Crisis of humanity. Here is introduced with our New Testament the full and the final type of humanity that God is going to have.

Remember seeing here, see, here is the one in whom all that belongs to the perfection of man is found. All that belongs to the perfection of man is found in this representative one. That is introduced with our New Testament.

Jesus stands in a unique relation to the human race. And do you now see how rays of light focus upon this great fact? What is it that God is doing with you, with me as an explanation of our experience under the hand of God? Do you know when we get under the hand of God we are going through it. We are going through it.

What are you expecting this week? When you go away from here, you'll make friends and they'll say have you had a happy time? I think I told you once before here of a conference that I was at once and at the end a large number of ministers were there at the end. Testimonies were asked for from these ministers as to what the conference had meant to them. And one and another got up and said oh I've had a wonderful time.

I've had a glorious time. This has been the best time in my life and so on and so on. And then one man got up, his eyes were red, his face was strange.

He said I don't understand this. I've had an awful time. This week has made devastation to me.

Everything that I held as important as God I'm left with a necessity for a new Christ. A bigger Christ than ever I have known. What are you expecting? Well I hope you have a good time.

But your good time, dear friends, in the light of eternity may be a very bad time. Understand that? When it comes to seeing the real fruit it may come out of a devastation. Well that by the way, what is God doing? He is devastating one kind of humanity.

You're going to see that as we go on. Day to day. He's doing it.

Here we could in parenthesis look at humanity today. My word, what a sight. What a sight.

They talk about progress. Progress. Development.

The rise of man. We're nearer today the utter desolation of the whole human race on this earth than ever the world has been before. Man is so clever.

God is doing it on the one side. He is doing it. He is aiding and abetting that man to the disclosing of what his cleverness can be.

That cleverness that he made a bid for in the gardens. To be clever, as clever as God. But God is doing something on the other side.

I don't know what your experience is. I know it's mine. I know it is the experience of many of the most used and blessed servants of God that they are going through a terrible time.

Spiritually. They have come to the place where if the Lord does not really stand by and take over and sing through it's an end even of their long spiritual experience. All the past will not stand instead unless the Lord comes in in new ways.

Isn't that true with many? Yes. Well that is what he is doing. He is working on this very ground you see of the two humanities.

That which we are by nature and the other which we are in Christ. In Christ. So what we are to be occupied with this time is first of all to behold the man.

To behold the man. And I would pray and do pray that when this week is finished we shall be able to truly express our hearts in those wonderful words of a poet known to many of you. These are some lines from that wonderful poem Christ.

I am Christ and let that name suffice me. I and for me he greatly hath sufficed yea through life through death through sorrow and through sinning he shall suffice me for he hath sufficed Christ is the end for Christ was the beginning Christ the beginning for the end is Christ. I say those words express what we would all like to be the issue of this time.

Christ. A new captivation of Christ. A new wonderful appreciation of Christ.

A new seeing of the significance of Christ in God's universe. Now for these remaining few minutes of the introductions you recognize that's all it is. I want to just pinpoint this one thing.

Have you recognized perhaps you have without putting it in these words or having it put in... Have you recognized that the very heart and pivot of our Bible is an immense transition. An immense transition. I say the heart where the Old Testament ends and the New Testament begins.

Two halves of human history. Two halves of human history. Of humanity.

Right there, at that point we come on this great, this immense transition. The New Testament is wholly taken up with the meaning and nature and fact of this transition. This movement from one thing to another in humanity.

You will recall so much in your New Testament when I just mentioned. First of all it is a transition from one man to another. From Adam to Christ.

We read that in 1 Corinthians 15. The first man. He called him? No.

He called them. Man. That's racial.

That's humanity in a nutshell. Called them. That's very simple.

First man. Adam. It's the same thing.

Adam and man as you noticed in the margin of Genesis 5. Called them. Man. And the New Testament wholly bears upon this transition from one humanity to another.

One racial head and inclusive person. First Adam. Be careful of how you quote scripture.

Not second Adam. Last Adam. Final humanity.

Nothing beyond. Transition then which is a racial one. From Adam to Christ.

From the first man to the last man. Secondly from one nation to another. I know room for a lot of controversy there.

Now Israel nevertheless the New Testament and Christ himself came down on this quite emphatically. The kingdom of heaven shall be taken away from you. That's Israel.

And given to a nation. Bringing forth the fruit thereof. Heavenly fruit.

Modestly. Transition from one nation to another. And Peter holds Peter.

Wonderful. I'm amazed Peter. Aren't you? That erstwhile Judaistic traditionalist who had a battle with the Lord over Gentiles in Caesarea going to the house of Cornelius and even saying in a contradiction of terms to the Lord not so.

Lord. You cannot put those words together. Say Lord and not so.

The other man you remember when he met Christ said What wilt thou have me to do Lord? But Peter hasn't got out of his tradition quite yet. And even at Antioch dissimulation when James and the elders came down from Jerusalem Peter withdrew himself from eating with the Gentiles. He's still got a little bit of grave cloth left on him.

But marvel of marvels when you come to his letters. He's out. We are an elect race.

Who? The saints scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia and Bithynia. An elect race. He's out of the one nation now into the other.

The transition has been consummated in this man. But with a battle you know. There was a battle over this whole association with the natural man.

We're going to see much more of that. Well, it's transition. Then it's a transition from one economy to the other to another.

Your letter to the Hebrews is one solid argument for this transition. I'm so impressed with the constant recurrence in the New Testament of one phrase leaning out, linking words. The phrase is not, but.

Not. John began that, didn't he? Christ to the women of Samaria. Not in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem.

But. In spirit. Not, nor, but.

And you find that occurring again and again. And here when you come to this great transition from one economy to another, taking in the great ministry of angels in the old economy. That's a subject for a morning in itself, isn't it? The ministry of angels in the old economy.

The law was given through angels. Angels came again and again. To Gideon.

To Daniel. The archangels. Marvellous ministry of angels.

But the letter to the Hebrews opens up. Not unto angels. But what a change.

And the following argument is that this new economy infinitely transcends the ministry of angels. But we've come into it. And you get on toward the end of that letter to the Hebrews you have another of these

transitory phrases.

We are not come unto a mountain. A palpable mountain burning with fire. But.

We are. How vast is this movement. From that old economy and you have to bring in one thing only in your New Testament.

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