

The Holy Spirit - Part 5

by T. Austin-Sparks

The Holy Spirit's work is hindered when the king is out of his place, and the remedy is to bring back the King, or reinstating the Lord Jesus in his absolute authority.

Duration: 47:06

Scripture: 2 Samuel 5:1

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the subtlety of Satan's tactics in deceiving and stealing the hearts of people through fair words and a fair presence. He emphasizes the importance of God's anointed king being in his rightful place and the disastrous consequences when this is not the case. The preacher highlights the need for individuals and the church to learn from painful experiences and acknowledge their failures through repentance and confession. Finally, he emphasizes the importance of seeking and inviting Jesus to take his rightful place in our lives and in the church.

Transcript

Will you please turn to the second book of Samuel. The second book of Samuel, firstly in chapter five. Then came all the tribes of Israel to David and to Hebron and speak, saying, Behold, we are bones, we are thy bones, and thy flesh.

In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was thou that led us out and brought us in this trial. And the Lord said to thee, thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be leader over Israel. So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron, and king David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel.

Chapter 19, at verse 10, second part of verse 8. Now all Israel had fled every man to his tent, and all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king delivered us out of the hand of our enemies, and he saved us out of the hand of the Philistines. And now he fled out of the land from Absalom, and Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore, why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back? King David sent to Abiathar the priest, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? Seeing the speech of all Israel is come to the king to bring him to his house, ye are my brethren, ye are my bull and my flag.

Wherefore then are ye the last to bring back the king? Say ye to Amasa, Art thou not my bone and my flesh? God do so to me, and more also if thou be not captain of the host before me continually in the room of Joab. And he bowed the heart of all the men of Judah, even as the heart of one man, so that they sent unto the king, saying, Return thou and all thy servants. So the king returned, came to Jordan.

Having spent this day in the second chapter of the book of the Acts, I think we can say the thing which has been uppermost, foremost in our consideration, as the preeminent work of the Holy Spirit on his coming, was the proclamation, the demonstration of the fact that the king was in his place and the kingdom was come. We can say, I think quite truly, that the book of the Acts is the account of what things are like when the king is in his place. We so often hark back to those times, to those days.

We so often crave that it might be like that again. And we so deeply deplore that it is not so with the church today as it was then. The terrible, empathetic change and difference now from what it was at that time.

And dear friends, I am going to suggest to you that the change, the painful and grievous change, is due to the one thing. That there came a point at which, so far as the church on the earth was concerned, the king lost his place. The place that he had had.

And all the trouble of these centuries and today, the weakness that we deplore, many other conditions we grieve over, all may be due, very likely is due. And if we think about it enough, we shall go beyond that and say, yes, it is due to this one thing. The Lord Jesus has not his place that he had at the beginning.

That means that the Holy Spirit has been in some way interrupted in his great work of making known what it means and what things are like when the Lord Jesus really has his place. That is the thing, that is the issue upon which any season of gatherings like this should really end. I can conceive of nothing more important, more vital, more appropriate than that the last note should be that of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Everything must head up to that and issue in that. Now we have read from the Old Testament, in this one book, the second book of Samuel, of two occasions when the king was out of his place. The king, of course in this case, being David.

In the book of the representations, figures and types of heavenly things of New Testament, here we have these two accounts of the two occasions when David, the anointed of the Lord, was not in his place. If you read probably a chapter that you do not read, the first chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, that is all of it, you have that long, long list of people who form the links in the chain of the ages from the beginning right up to Christ. And there are 42 generations, and if you look through that list, you will not find in the list any mention of Saul or Absalom.

Saul the king, Absalom the usurper, they were not in the divine line of the divine choice and appointment for the position that they came to take. Neither Saul nor Absalom are mentioned in the long chain. They came in, one by man's choice, the other by his own personal ambition.

And they represent two factors, two principles if you like, two elements that not only have no place in the divine course of things, but get in the way of the divine. And, as they did, bring about a great deal of confusion and chaos and suffering and loss. In the case of Saul, it was the principle of worldliness brought into the realm of the kingdom of God.

Make us a king like unto the nations, said the people. Give us that which corresponds to what the world does and how the world does it. Give us that which the world chooses and favors for doing its work.

Make us king like unto the nations. The worldly ideas and conception of government, the thoughts of men, the ideas of men, the things made by men, machinery constructed by men to run the things of God. That's a large subject and embraces a very great deal and covers a lot of painful history.

But that's a principle and a force, a mentality which displaces the true anointing, the anointed one, a true God-chosen king. And we who know anything about church history can put our finger fairly accurately upon the point where that began to come in, in the church's history. When from Holy Spirit order and government, the absolute lordship of Jesus Christ, institutions and many other things were introduced to govern the things of the church and the kingdom.

That word, world, is a very, very big word. And I say it again, it's very impressive when the Lord Jesus has spent all that time in instructing his disciples about the new era that was coming with the Holy Spirit. A long discourse from the table to the place of prayer between John 13 and John 17 inclusive.

Speaking of that coming day, his departure and the coming of the Holy Spirit, it is impressive that as he, having said it all, turned to prayer, he recognized that the chief enemy of it all was the world. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. How often that word occurs in that prayer.

This world and worldliness in its spirit and its mind, its methods and its principles, is a great enemy to the throne of the Lord Jesus, to his kingship. It's a matter, dear friends, about which we, people of God, need all the time to be very watchful. The apostle beseeches believers, be not conformed to this world.

Do not take the form of this world. Be ye transformed by the making anew of your mind. There's a kingdom-mindedness that is to indwell us.

Soul, then, is the embodiment of a worldly principle in the kingdom of God. And look at the result. Not only is the truly anointed king forced out and driven away and persecuted, but as we shall see in a moment, consequences were very deplorable.

In the case of Absalom, here we have the personal ambition and pride of man forcing itself into the realm of the anointing, where Lot said about the personality of this young man, the subtlety of his attractiveness, his manner, and how he sat in the gate and ingratiated himself with all who came in and went out and stole their hearts by fair words. A fair presence with fair words deceiving, stealing the heart, pride in man, ambition in man. I'm not dwelling a lot upon that this evening, although there's a lot of history there.

Just man in his own self-importance getting in the way of the anointed one. Now the strange thing, mysterious thing that is to us such a problem is that the Lord allowed it. The Lord allowed it.

He is the Lord, high over all. Everything is under his power and in his knowledge. And he allowed it.

You might even say so far as Saul was concerned, he seemed to be a party to it. He allowed this tragic and disastrous thing to happen in both instances. And therein lies a lesson that we do well to learn.

It's a very painful lesson. It's a very painful thing, this permission of God. Why does the Lord allow things like this to happen? Not only in these cases, but again and again, he's allowed that sort of thing to happen.

We have very often cried with that question, why have you allowed this? Why didn't you prevent it? You see, that question could apply to the whole state of this world, couldn't it? But there it is. There was God's allowing permission. Why? Just for this, that it is necessary both to God and to the people concerned to prove, to prove, to demonstrate the disaster that comes from his king not being given his place or being put out of his place.

It is useless to theorize about this matter. Indeed, it is vain to even teach it. We might here stand behind this table and year after year and conference after conference and week after week say these things with very, very little effect.

The Lord finds it his grievous necessity to let people prove that if his appointment in his son, Jesus Christ, is violated, the most grievous consequences follow. And that's the way in which we learn most things, isn't it? By painful experience. Because we don't learn them in any other way, really.

And so the Lord allows Saul to get in the way of David for a considerable period. With my word, the ultimate reaction, secure something and establish something stronger than there was before. The Lord allowed that scoundrel for a man who will take it upon him to kill his own father.

He's nothing less than a scoundrel seeing who and what David was. But the Lord allowed him to do it. And we've read what the people said in the long run.

You notice, Saul, the Lord said to Samuel, they have rejected me from being king. They have rejected. Of Absalom, we've read, the people said, the man that we anointed, we anointed.

Not the man that God anointed. He could never say that. We, we.

Therefore, in both cases, the responsibility lay at the door of the people, and they have got to learn thy grievousness. And in the end, the man that we anointed is dead. And the man who really did the work of our salvation has been driven out.

It is terrible, but here it is. But with the results of God's anointed man, the type of the Lord Jesus, we are keeping our eyes on the Lord Jesus. The results of God's anointed being out of his place, well, it seemed for a time to go on all right.

You know, the Lord is as clever as men. And the Lord, the Lord can be subtle. And so, he gave, in both cases, for a time, for a period, an apparent success and prosperity.

So that the people began to congratulate themselves, feel very pleased with what they had done, what they were doing. Saul seemed to be the man. Things were going all right.

Absalom, well, yes, all right. Absolutely false and illusionary success. For a little while, for a little while, the perpetrators congratulating themselves.

That's a build-up, the overthrow of which is going to make the ignominy all the greater. The Lord must do that. So, let it go.

Let it seem to prosper. Let it seem to be successful. That's its greater doom in the long run.

The disillusionment will be the most, be the more terrible than if God had stepped right in and cut it off from the beginning. False prosperity. And then, at a point, we are not able to put our finger upon exactly,

but it's here in the record, at a point, an awakening awareness that things were fundamentally doubtful.

A sense creeping in and growing somewhere, somehow, things had gone wrong. An apprehension, consciousness that things are not as right as was thought, as good as was imagined. It's coming in and you'll find David out there in the cave of Adullam.

There is a stealthy secession. Day by day, it says, day by day, they went out to him, those who were discontented and in debt, disappointed and disillusioned, because this thing was not putting them in a position to meet their obligations. This thing was hollow.

So, they went out. The number increased. I would like to have heard what they said when they got there.

I don't think we would be wrong, far from the truth, if in our eavesdropping, we heard them saying, look here, we backed the wrong horse. May I use that slang? We, we've made a great mistake. We've discovered what we thought was the way, was the right thing, the good thing, thing that was going, bring about what we wanted.

We've discovered that we've been on the wrong road. Something about it, it's all wrong. You notice in the end, when the real crisis came, the verdict came out in full.

It was thou, even in those days, when Saul was king, it was thou that led him. It was thou that the Lord appointed, said thou shall be leader of my people. What a confession.

What a realization. You see, in both cases, it amounted to this. By man's way, man's worldly way, man's earthly way, man's fleshly way, the whole principle of spiritual authority was lost.

And when that goes, there will most surely soon set in disintegration, confusion, frustration, questions and doubts and fears, and glowing acknowledgement something's wrong, somewhere. Now I say that that is true of a very great deal of Christian realization and confession in our place. Things are not right.

There's something wrong somewhere. We've lost, we are all at sixes and sevens, like that. That really does explain Christianity in a very large measure today, and can be true of the individual life.

It can be true of any company of the Lord's people, just like that. What is the remedy? What is the remedy? How shall this whole thing be put right on a single issue? I like to think that there's always one key to many doors. There is one answer to many questions.

There's one issue to a large and many-sided situation. It's usually like that, usually like that, when the Holy Spirit just puts his finger upon a single point very often, a whole lot of things collapse, one thing, and the one remedy for all lost cohesion, power, testimony, for the loss of those conditions which we read in the book of Acts. The remedy is bring back the King.

Bring back the King. That's the answer here. When the King came back into his place, the situation very quickly changed.

It very quickly changed. It's almost thrilling to see the change, all the changes we face, the renewed national unity, the renewed national ascendancy. Read the context, why David is hardly anointed, as we have read in Hebrew before.

The Philistines know all about it. The Philistines know all about it. That menace to the kingdom, that long-drawn-out menace to the kingdom, they know all about it when David is in his place, the place to which he was anointed.

Forces of evil will know all about it when Jesus is in his place. They will, but we are struggling and wrestling unto defeat with these evil forces, making little or no headway against them, and they just play with us. And we need somebody right at the heart, in control, with absolute authority.

The only one appointed for that is the Lord Jesus. Not in his place, dear friends. Not in his place, dear friends.

Maybe he is not in place in your life, and therefore yours is a life of disintegration, scatteredness, division, a life of defeat and weakness, a life in which the great enemy is having far, far too much of his own way. It may be true in some company of the Lord's people here, as it is true so very largely, without barking upon unhappy criticisms, so easy, it is so easy to criticize and judge Christianity, and yet we all have to recognize that the Church of God is not that force to be reckoned with in this world that it was at the beginning. These conditions do obtain the answer.

Bring back the King. Now you can see that that has two applications. It has a spiritual one for the present.

A spiritual one for the present. There needs to be a reinstating of the Lord Jesus in his absolute authority in the life of the Christian, in the life of the local company of Christians, and in the Church of God at large. I don't think there's any question that when that is so, we shall see mighty things happening.

We shall again see something, something that corresponds to this book, when that is so. Oh, that we might see the great need of our time. It is, if we use a word concerning a thing, it is authority enthroned.

But what we mean by authority is Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, Lord over all, High over all. For me, bringing back the King now in a spiritual way, spiritual way, but of course it has its dispensational application. Nothing will be wholly right till he comes, whose right it is to reign.

Nothing will be just as it should be in the purpose of God until the King returns. In this world, we know it true. The answer, the answer, fully, finally is the coming again of the Lord.

It's the answer. Unto that, unto that, the whole creation groans. The whole world is in unrest, waiting his, what will bring him back.

Well, you see, if you look at these accounts again, you will find three things that result in the return of the King. One, that they truly learned their lesson. The Lord never, never moves until that is the case.

It may take a long time. It may be a long, drawn-out, miserable history, but it's got to be never so long. The Lord will not move until the lesson is learned.

The one thing that this world has got to learn, and the one thing that the Church has got to learn, and the one thing that we have got to learn, is that it is a most disastrous thing for God's anointed King not to be in his place, and for us to come to the place where we say. And we know the only thing, the only thing is not this and that as a remedy. The only thing is the Lord himself being where he ought to be, and what he ought to be.

We've learned that through painful experience, and it's something worth learning, and what the painfulness. They learned their lesson. It's quite evident, isn't it? In both cases, they were quite intelligent as to why it was, the reasons for their state.

The second thing was their confession, which included repentance, confession. Confession is a very big factor, mark you, in the Lord's new movement. Being quite ready to go right down and acknowledge the failure, the fact of the failure, the cause of the failure, the thing itself.

Not just the consequences being felt badly, and you want to get out of them, but no, no. This is wrong before God, before God. Before heaven, it's wrong.

It's all wrong when Jesus has not his full place. Anywhere and everywhere. It's all wrong.

Repentance, confession, and finally, the quest. The quest. I think it's grand, that movement, isn't it? When they from their side sent to David, and you are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

And all our trouble is because you're not in your place. Come back! We need you, we must have you, we cannot get on without you. That's what it amounted to.

Our very life and future hangs upon your being where God appointed you to be. That's the Lord Jesus. And there must be this quest, this heartfelt quest.

Dear friends, if what I'm saying does not come home to you because you feel that this is not true of you, that you have not so behaved toward him, and that in your case there has been no driving him out, won't you join in the quest for his church? Won't you join in the quest for others, for his people? Won't you be the representative of a nation like Judah, who took the initiative in this matter, for others, for the church's sake? Whether it be local or universal, won't you be drawn out of this matter for a new instating of the Lord Jesus? Won't you do that? It's the only solution. But then as to the dispensational application, there is something to be done to bring back the Although God may have his fixed times for the next intervention in this world's history, the times and the seasons which are in his own keeping, there's another side to it. There is another side.

Shall not God avenge his church which cries unto him day and night? That's a side. There is an earnest looking for and hastening of the day of the Lord Jesus. There's work to be done.

There's the testimony to go into the nation. There's the preparation for everyone that hath this hope in himself, purified himself, even as he is pure. There is all that which the Lord must find in us when he comes, and not finding it may delay his coming.

I don't know whether that's dispensational truth or not, but I believe it's spiritual truth. The Lord on one side waits for his people to be of those who are on stretch for his coming, and being on stretch, are active, occupying till he comes, and doing everything possible to prepare the way of his coming. This is Holy Spirit work.

Put the king in his place, and to restore the king if he's not in his place, and to energize us all in this matter of bringing back the king. Why speak ye not a word of bringing back the king? The answer, because you don't realize that this is the cause of all the trouble, that he's not where he ought to be, or that you have settled down to wait for something to happen. Oh no.

The exercise, the quest, the outreach. He's got to be brought back, that's the point. Brought back.

You say he's coming. Say he's coming. He will come in his point of time, but I say he's to be brought back.

And I, when I say I say, I believe that's what the word of God says. Something to be done to bring him back. Oh may we be found in that prayer of the church, the spirit and the bride in combination, saying come, come, and come Lord, come quickly, in both these senses, now spiritual, and soon literal.

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