

The Persistent Purpose of God #14: Questions and Answers

by T. Austin-Sparks

The sermon emphasizes the cost of true discipleship and the importance of discerning genuine spiritual experiences from false ones.

Duration: 47:41

Scripture: Joshua 7:21, Ezekiel 20:43, Matthew 6:33, Acts 2:41, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Hebrews 12:5-6, Revelation 2:4-5

Topics: "Purpose Of God"

Description

The video discusses two distinct periods in the spiritual journey of the local churches. The first period, which occurred six years ago, was characterized by an easy experience of salvation and a strong love for the Lord. Many people came to know Jesus Christ and dedicated their lives to serving Him. The second period, which has been ongoing for the past three years, has been more challenging and dissatisfying. The speaker compares this period to the deeper stages of a married relationship, where the initial excitement fades and a deeper, stronger connection is formed. The video raises questions about the current state of the churches and seeks guidance on how to address the issues and help others in their spiritual journey.

Transcript

The same seems to have applied in the case of Paul. He first had the heavens opened to him, and it was that opened heaven and the vision he saw through the opened heavens that provided him with the resource to be obedient to the heavenly vision and not to do anything contrary to the requirements of the vision. Is it not that the open heaven itself and the vision which comes through the open heaven provides the resource the heaven is in itself? The answer is that it works both ways.

The Lord Jesus was very careful to make his disciples know that there was a cost attached to discipleship. Today, discipleship of the Lord Jesus is made too cheap. John 12, 24 makes it perfectly clear that there is a big price attached to discipleship.

The Lord told his disciples that unless they were willing to lay down their own souls, they could not be his disciples. They had to go by the way of the cross in order to work that way. I anticipated this question this morning.

I knew that a lot of people would say, now how do we get an open heaven? We pay no price. That is without money and an open heaven. Now we follow the word of the Lord.

Jeremiah immediately saw what it would cost. And he felt that he could not. The same was true of Isaac.

He failed to see during those two years. He had two years in which to weigh up the whole. He had to face the cost.

And he got more. The open heaven does mean strength to endure. As the Lord gives, so we are strengthened.

So this matter works both ways. Buying an open heaven doesn't come into it. And there are times when those I have a certain things in the life.

If there are really things, there must be spiritually mature that the plan in all the thousands of years. He just took. If it is not personal, it may be in our home.

Do remember that the Lord, when he is going to do and always brings in. When he said that, there is always a winter before this. When you look at the fruit tree, he is forcing his way up.

There is no groaning and cracking. You may of course, it is possible to have these experiences just in the realm of the soul. They may just be emotional experience.

On the other hand, they may be completely false. They may be deceptions of the devil. That would come, of course, along the line of the soul.

We'll just take those matters first. Let's illustrate from a great deal of false spiritual experience. It goes by a certain name in our time.

There is a situation like this. It is a very terrible situation. Many of our mental institutions are full of people.

They believe that they have committed the unpardonable sin. They therefore doubt whether they can ever be saved. These are Christian people.

How did this come about? They got caught into a great emotional or soul-ish realm. They were told that the sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was speaking with time. Therefore, they set themselves upon having that baptism.

And they strained with all their soul to get that experience. And then something happened. And these experiences came.

That went on for some time. The devil immediately came in. And said, you have sinned.

You have sinned against the Holy Ghost. The result is, they lose their mind. They lose their assurance of salvation.

The whole thing, the whole thing. That was not the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That was a purely psychical thing.

The devil came in on that. And gave them something. An extreme situation.

It is possible to have that quite mildly. I mean that if you go out in your soul. With all your emotions.

You can get some experience. That is one aspect. You must remember that new experiences of the Lord are usually accompanied by some.

There is something very wonderful about it. And you live on the surface of that for a time. But the Lord does not intend that experience.

The Lord does not want us to live on an experience. He wants us to live on him. The thing goes down deeper.

Supposing I illustrate that. The beginning of marriage. It is all very wonderful.

But the thing goes deeper. But the hallelujah is deeper down. I know the Lord better now than I knew them.

The Lord drives things down. And after a time we discover.

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