

The Persistent Purpose of God - Part 12

by T. Austin-Sparks

The Spirit's power and sufficiency are essential for meeting the greatest needs, and the Lord's will is to swim in the Spirit, not to be ankle deep.

Duration: 56:03

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 28:18, John 7:37-39, Revelation 22:1

Topics: "Purpose Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the symbolism of a river that flows toward the east and how it represents the progressive fullness of the Spirit of Jesus. The river starts small in Jerusalem but grows in scope and potentiality to meet the needs of the whole world. The preacher emphasizes that there is sufficiency in Christ, ministered by the Spirit, to meet any need, no matter how great. The sermon also highlights the significance of the number two as a symbol of sufficient testimony and the importance of the testimony of a believer's life as a reflection of their faith in Jesus.

Transcript

We have only two mornings left and that means that there is a very great deal in Ezekiel that we shall not be able to consider. So this morning I suggest that we give our attention to chapter 47. As you know, this is the chapter of the river.

I think that this chapter is well enough known by you that we shall not have to read it right through. Of course we ought to read also the second chapter of the book of the Acts. Because I feel that Ezekiel 47 and Acts chapter 2 go together.

The second chapter of the Acts is the New Testament. But there is a passage of scripture between the two. And that is in the seventh chapter of John's Gospel.

And we will read that. John chapter 7 verse 37. Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

Now on the last day of the feast, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive.

For the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Now strict interpretation demands to observe one point. That to which the Lord Jesus was in John 7 was not strictly what we have in Ezekiel.

That last day, related to the feast, it takes us back into the life of Israel. You know that the Feast of Tabernacles was the commemoration of their coming out of Egypt. And living in tents in the wilderness.

We need not dwell with the details of that, because that is not our subject. It was to that, that Jesus was in Ezekiel 47. But there are some features which are in common.

Ezekiel 47, John 7 and Acts 2 have some common features. You know that when Jesus said those words, he was in the temple at Jerusalem. It was in the temple that the Feast of Tabernacles was held.

And at that time, pool of Bethesda and poured it out over the threshold of the temple. Jesus took hold of that and applied it to himself. Now the common feature of these three places, Ezekiel, John and Acts, is this.

The waters are flowing out from the house. And then there is another common feature. In the house, as we have seen, everything related to the man glorified in the throne.

Now here in John 7, John makes that comment. He said, this spake he of the spirit which they that believed on him were to receive. For the spirit was now glorified.

Jesus was glorified and the waters came out. Now we come to some details of this chapter, 47. But to begin with, we must note that this whole situation is one that sets forth a condition in this dispensation.

As we said earlier, there is a large school that believes that all this belongs to the Lord. Well, the situation in this chapter is not a situation in... Neither does this fully correspond to the end of the book of the Revelation. It is true that in that book we have the river flowing from out of the... It relates to the dispensation in which we are living.

As you see, it is a situation of need. These waters are to overcome death. And the leaves of these trees are for medicine.

To heal disease. It is a scene of great need. In the millennium, death will be suspended for a time.

And at the end of the book of the Revelation, death is no more. Here, death has to be... Here, an unhealthy condition has... Under the threshold of the... It says that the waters... It seems to be a little contradictory. So, this... But it... For the moment, the waters issued from some secret place under the house.

Now we know that the Lord had said about the sanctuary that it was the place of His throne. And that is a hidden place. You know that God was hidden in the sanctuary.

He is on the throne. We remember that Jesus said that after He would manifest Himself, He would leave the existence. He is a mystery.

He is an unreality to the world. He is hidden in heaven. But there is... Christ in you, the hope of glory.

And Christ in the midst of... You should know that according to the word of God, Christ is a hope of glory among you. That is the mystery. Christ is among you.

The church is the context of those words. The mystery which is great... That is the hope of glory by Christ Jesus. The world can only know the mystery by the light of Christ Jesus.

The light which flows out from the church. That is what happened on the day of Pentecost. By the river which came out from the church.

This is the only way. The waters come out from the sanctuary. You notice that is what it says in verse 12.

Because the waters there are... This is also true today. That is the first detail. The second is that they... The second is that the waters flow eastward.

We should see that the front of the sanctuary flows eastward. Here it says... That is the day of the spirit. That is the new dispensation.

This new dispensation... Because it is new in many respects. All the old things of that past... The old things are tight and simple. Behold, all have become new.

And this is the... All the progressive fullness of Christ. In the beginning there is immense intrinsic potentiality. It may be small in Jerusalem.

It may be small at its beginning. But that is only a comparative matter. Of course it was a very great thing that happened on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem.

But compared with what came after... The beginning is small. In comparison there are all the potentialities to meet the whole world. The scope of this river increases.

It grows fuller and fuller and wider and wider. It is getting fuller and fuller. The Spirit of Jesus Christ is sufficient for all.

That is what it says. Or that is what it means. There is sufficiency in Christ ministered by the Spirit to meet the greatest need.

There is no need however great which cannot be met by this river. It does not matter where the river comes. Where so ever the river cometh, everything lives.

If you study this chapter you will see that there is no such thing as these waters are not equal. Make a reservation in that statement. It says later in the chapter that there is such a thing as resisting the Holy Ghost.

Judas did not come into the good. And that there is in the New Testament the possibility of sinning against the Holy Spirit. Where that is deliberately and then there is not life but death.

But provided there is no deliberate and conscious refusal of the Spirit, the Spirit is equal to every situation. How great is the Spirit? He is all together incomprehensible. The prophet said it was a river that could not be passed through.

This is something that is all together impossible to cope with. How true that is? In Acts 2, the coming of the Spirit is likened to a mighty rushing wind. It will carry you away.

The Spirit came like that on the day of death. You cannot bring the Holy Spirit. This is too much for man.

Oh that we knew the Spirit like this. He refuses to be limited to our traditions. He refuses to be limited to our traditions and our prejudices.

He is too much for everyone. Now for the Spirit to be like that, to be expressing himself in that way, two things are necessary. And this is a very true principle.

There will only be this fullness and power of the Spirit if these two things exist. The first is the absolute authority of the throne. That is the absolute authority of the man in the throne.

We have said again and again that the man in the throne governs everything. Until God gets what he wants. And God has shown quite clearly that what he wants is his church or his house.

And God has shown quite clearly that what he wants is his church or his house. When this is established, then this will happen. If God can get what he wants, then he will get what he wants.

God will not give his Spirit in fullness. So these two things are essential. The throne and the house.

Now what this increasing measure tells us is that the Lord never desires to leave his people ankle deep in the Spirit. It is not the Lord's will that we should have the Spirit. The Lord's will is to swim in.

Because this is rather a terrible situation. That he was a bit proud. Now we go on.

The next thing is the bank and the tree spreading itself all over. He has a way that he will take. He has his own mind.

You have a lot of that in the book of the Acts. And the Spirit will say, He may change his direction from time to time. In Ephesians 4, some pastors and teachers, We all attain unto the unity of the faith, fullness of Christ.

Leading on towards spiritual fullness. Wherever you find the number two, The two is the number. The effect of it.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/1/SID1186.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/t-austin-sparks/the-persistent-purpose-of-god-part-12/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net