

The World Vision

by T. Austin-Sparks

The Church must grasp the truth of Christ's victory over Satan and function in its rightful place as a world-Body, a spiritual Body, composed of many members, of which Christ is the Head.

Scripture: Matthew 16:15

Topics: "Kingdom Living", "World Evangelism"

Description

T. Austin-Sparks preaches about the valedictory service of the apostles as they received commissions from Jesus to go into the world and preach the Gospel, emphasizing the need for every aspect of life to be subjugated to Kingdom interests. The apostles became conscious of their role in a Kingdom that transcends the world and creation, leading to a world consciousness and responsibility. The intense purpose of the Spirit today is to bring believers into a conscious union with Christ to establish His Kingdom on earth. The Church is called to proclaim Christ's victory over Satan and operate in the power and authority given by Jesus.

Transcript

Matt. 28:18. "All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth."

Matt. 16:15. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation."

Luke 24:48-49. "Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high."

John 20:22. "He breathed on them, and saith unto them. Receive ye the Holy Spirit."

These commissions, recorded by four evangelists, are not four different records of the same words, but commissions given in different places, each with its specific significance. Together they form the valedictory service of the apostles in their first moving out into the great world purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ. The going forth of men and women is only the outcome of the process of getting every other interest in life subjugated to Kingdom interests. After that you naturally go out in life for that Kingdom. Whether it is a geographical going forth or staying at home, the world can, and will, be touched if the process is complete. You are bound to touch the world, you cannot help it.

These apostles became conscious at this time that they were in a thing that was not smaller than the whole world and the whole creation. So in response to that revelation and conception we find no question

as to how their affairs were going to get on. They capitulated to the commission and its accompaniment, and became world factors in the Kingdom which ranges heaven and earth. When we get our spirit there, everything else will follow. Whether we go or stay in the purpose of God, we become part of a thing which ranges the universe.

Now we are in that, if we are in the Kingdom of God. The test of our citizenship in that Kingdom is how far we are counting in spirit to the bounds of creation. That lifts us out of our pettiness and takes the humdrum out of life. It ought to be the big broom which sweeps trivialities from our door.

The Lord Jesus Christ is moving today with a world purpose perhaps more intense than ever before. This is necessarily so if, as we have reason to believe, the end of the age is upon us and the dispensation is nearing its close. If we are near the end, of necessity there must be a mighty intensification of the age purpose of God. There must come to God's people a new world consciousness. The Body of Christ is a world-Body, a spiritual Body, composed of many members, of which He is the Head. It is by that Body, and that Body alone, that the Head is to triumph in the world and take the Kingdoms unto Himself and make of them one Kingdom. The members being in all the world we must have a world relationship (as to dimensions), and not only that, but a world responsibility.

What is the intensive purpose of the Spirit of God today? To bring that world Body into a conscious and intelligent apprehension of its union with a victorious and triumphant Christ, and in the consciousness of that union to take the Kingdom from the usurper for its Lord and Creator. That is a statement of the doctrinal facts. It is going to be thrust on our attention more and more.

Going about, one finds God's people everywhere suffering an intense oppression, deprived of that tremendous kick of power and authority which we have a right to believe is the right of those who are in union with their victorious Lord. There is a disparity. We believe we have a Christ Who met all the hosts of hell, the full force of that entire hierarchy, entered a life and death combat with it, and then threw its monarch, the devil, from his very throne and rose a victor over the last thing that monarch could do, triumphantly ascended to the throne of the Majesty on high, and there reigns. We believe it. We accept it. But here is the Church, baffled, defeated, agonizing in despair at her barrenness, unable to cope with situations, trying every means that ingenuity can suggest, - earnest, honest, sincere believers against mighty odds, unable to deal with them. This disparagement, is a contradiction. It ought not to be. If the Church (not a human organization, but that mystic Body of believers who are born from above, all members of a spiritual order, made so by being baptized into one Body in Jesus Christ) claims a citizenship of the Kingdom of God, our responsibility is to see that that throne is fitly known among the people of God.

What was the first of that series of commissions which the Master gave to His disciples? "All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth, go ye therefore -." All jurisdiction involves power to choose, power to insist upon obedience, power of government, power to utter the final word. It is that power that is needed in the Church, and such as know the truth have a world responsibility to make it known. Among Christians the defeated foe is having things all his own way. This is not in keeping with a victorious Lord. What about you? What about me? Many Christians are being continually flung back from the field by repeated disaster there. Those who know victory are few, on the foreign field or at home. But every time the message of Christ's victory over Satan is spoken, it is as if a live wire were touched and the thing was done. That is the message for the Church today. We are heading rapidly up to Rev. 12:11, "- but they overcame him -."

It is important to remember that this commission was given to a type of people who understood His Calvary, had been baptized into His death, had gone down into despair over their own lives. God only knows the black ignominy and remorse that those men went through after His death and resurrection, realizing that they all forsook Him and fled while the greatest thing in the universe was taking place. Then the marvel, - they knew what it was to be baptized by His Spirit into His death, resurrection and ascension. "Jesus Christ is Lord." That is the Gospel. These apostles were in league with that transcendent throne, and it was to function through them. They went forth with one affirmation, "Jesus Christ is Lord." Here in the New Testament are four books describing the life of Christ, one book concerning the evangelistic message, and twenty-one epistles describing the results in the Christians who believed the message. The word went like a flame for one reason only, that Jesus Christ had made world conquest and they were in it.

If you know that truth it is for you to enter experimentally into it, and then know you have something to meet the need of the Body of Christ worldwide. When you do that you are going to meet the need of the Body of Christ in an apostolic way. Even among those who are true there is a sense of tremendous resistance, of being up against forces with which they cannot cope, and which are getting the upper hand. Every country will feel the impact of the gospel as never before when the Church realizes the full-orbed message of Christ's conquest.

We have got to let go all the local, parochial and personal, and expand to a twenty-five thousand mile circumference and beyond that even unto the sphere of spiritual principalities encircling the earth, and remember we are touching the endless ages with the present hour. We are not children of time. We have entered into a life which never had a beginning and never will have an ending. We have entered into that boundless plan which covers this world and enters heaven.

Prayer

....The only compulsion we would know is, Woe is me if I preach not the gospel. Lay upon us all the passion of the Kingdom... We would stand in Thy presence to minister life to others, to stand against the devil's work, to hold the curse of God over these works of his, to command hands off the children of God. We would stand for the Body of Christ that she be all out of this prison, all chains fallen off. And we would claim perfect protection.... May we be fitted into our place in the world purpose of the Body, and find ourselves in the wondrous plan of God, for His name's sake.

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