

# Recovery of the Lords Name - Part 2 of 6

by T. Austin-Sparks

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*The recovery of the Lord's name requires a people who are strong in the Lord, characterized by humility, industry, and concern for others.*

**Duration:** 50:40

**Scripture:** Exodus 21:17, Judges 6:14, Psalm 51:17, Proverbs 22:6, Isaiah 40:31, Matthew 6:33, 1 Timothy 4:12

**Topics:** "Recovery"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Gideon from the Bible. Gideon finds himself in a seemingly impossible situation, with the enemy strongly entrenched and very little hope for deliverance. However, Gideon does not give up and sets himself to do even the least that could be done. The preacher emphasizes the importance of equipping and providing for the younger generations, not despising their youth but rather passing on the faith to them. The sermon highlights the principle of spiritual youth and the need for continual reproduction in the realm of faith.

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## Transcript

We resume our occupation with this matter of the recovery of the honor and glory of the Lord's name in his people. Just a few words to link up with what we were saying earlier. When we were pointing out a certain correspondence between the time of Gideon and our own time, on the one hand, a state of things amongst the Lord's people which is altogether contrary to the glory and honor of his name.

That state being weakness before their enemy, so largely at the mercy of their foes, defeat and helplessness, then poverty, no real enjoyment of the wealth of the land which too was the land of promise and covenants, flowing with milk and honey, but not for them in their state. Food, very scarce and far to be sought. Confusion, a big question, continually dominating their minds as to the meaning of it all and as to the way out.

Disintegration and confusion, no cohesion, no oneness, no solidity and without leaders to speak with that finality of authority in the name of the Lord which would put new hope and new confidence into them. These were the conditions of Gideon's time and as we have said there is something like that today. We'll not traverse that ground again to emphasize or prove, it is true, but on the other hand God moving in a sovereign way for his namesake to recover its glory and its honor by changing those conditions for the honor and glory of the Lord's name is in a people who are strong against their enemies, strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

His glory and honor is to be found in a people who are enjoying their inheritance in Christ of wealth and riches where there is not spiritual poverty all the time. The Lord's people have not got the resources by which they flourish in the land. His glory is found in people who are really truly enjoying the depth of the riches in Christ and in people who have food, who are not starved and miserable because there is no real provision for them to feed upon.

A well-paid people is what the Lord wants for his glory. A people who are sure, have confidence and certainty, not all the time dogged and dominated by Christians which disturb and unsettle and rob them of their sense of security. They've got a great answer in their hearts, that is they know where they stand and why they stand there.

There is an assured life and further the Lord's name is personally glorified in a uniting people. His honor has been sorely and grievously destroyed by the breakup of the Lord's people. All their scatteredness seems that the great great prayer of our Lord recorded for us in John's Gospel chapter 17 very largely centered in that one thing.

That the unity of the Lord's people should be the great contributing factor to the glory of his name. Lord Jesus in that prayer repeatedly referred to the name, keep them in thy name. It was for the name's sake.

Now to have a people like that is not just idealism, a vain hope, but something very near to the Lord's heart. For as we said Gideon in the very first place takes forth the fact that the Lord wants it otherwise and moves to have it otherwise. And Gideon brings into view the movement of the Lord to change that state of things for his name's sake.

So we went on to see to look at Gideon as the kind of instrument that the Lord will use for the recovery of the honor of his name by bringing about these name honoring conditions amongst his people. That's why we take things up today. It is a matter then of the recovery and continuum of the testimony of the name of the Lord.

While Gideon on one side does set forth the absolute sovereignty of God as we were saying, on the other side he indicates the ground on which that sovereignty works. It is not a contradiction to say that while God acts in absolute sovereignty, he does look for certain things to bring that sovereignty into action. Even the sovereignty of God where God's people are concerned demands certain conditions and those conditions are to be found indicated at least in the case of Gideon, this representative instrument of God's honor.

Now I'm going to take some space to say some things I doubt if I've ever said here before but which comes out of a very real exercise of my own heart and which I feel to be of very great importance and it centers in the first thing about Gideon. Gideon was a young man. Gideon was a young man.

In saying that and what it implies we really do get to the point of God's reactions, God's recovery and continuance of his testimony, the honor and glory of his name. What is true in nature is true in the realm of things spiritual. The great factor and principle of spiritual youth.

The law of nature is ever fresh reproduction. As soon as any organism in nature ceases to reproduce, death has commenced and death is the law. The law of life is reproduction.

God having once created does not create a second time. He proceeds by reproduction not by fresh creation. Every new generation is meant by God to be the past values brought into freshness.

No new generation is a new creation. Creation and generation are two different words belonging to entirely two different things. I think some young people think that they're a new beginning.

They're not. They are to be the gathering up and carrying on of what has been. But to gather it up and to carry it on in freshness.

They are to be the sum of what has gone before but brought back again to its final freshness. That which is past. You like old.

I repudiate that word but for the sake of explanation I use it. It's kept fresh by new generations. Now this has two sides.

The side of ourselves we who are a passing generation. Some of us are a passing generation. But if you're included in that our freshness and life will be just in so far as we equip the next generation.

If we hold things to ourselves but all what tragedies are resulting from old Christians keeping everything to themselves. Old servants of God still hanging on keeping it in their own hands. If we keep everything to ourselves things will die.

And die with us. And we are bringing things to them. This of course is the spiritual law of the blessing of family.

See everything has a spiritual law behind it in God's mind. The blessing of families is on the one side to keep the old people young. Find the old people who have no young people around them and they're old indeed.

They're older than they ought to be. You might sometimes feel that you must qualify that. They have a way of wearing you out.

But nevertheless the principle holds good. It's a divine principle. The blessing of families on the one side is to rob old people of their age.

To stop them getting old. That's the principle. That's the law.

That's the divine principle. The mark that God has not come to an end is not finishing up but means to go on is that he brings young people in. My older friends take note of that.

Don't you be jealous of the young people. Don't feel that they're getting in your place. You are having to hand everything over to them and they're being too much made of.

Talk to them in a minute. Let me talk to you first. No.

You see we're getting old some of us. And we are we are seeing the day of our departure. Joy dear.

And we can become weak. We can lose our precious. That thing can creep on us and over us and begin to bring us into a severe limitation.

We we need something to save us. We need to be delivered. Or as I have said we may cling and cling and if so good bring in death.

What is our salvation? What is the renewing of our youth? What is the way out of that sense of an end? Pending end and growing limitation. What is the way out? It is to equip and provide for the generation that follows. To do everything in our power.

To see that the thing is passed on to them and that they are ready to take it up. Not to suspect their youth. Not to criticize them because they are young.

Not to do what certain evidently were inclined to do over Timothy. The apostle had to say let no man despise thy youth. When I first started ministry I was quite a young man.

And I had to assume the responsibility for a church. And there were some old men who were saying but he's so young. But I had a chap here among them who said but he's getting over that every day.

Better attitude isn't it? Yes let me repeat. A mark that God is going on and needs to go on is that he brings on young people. That he brings in young people.

Thank God. Thank God. They are not going to die if this gathering is true for them.

But you see it is not years after all that govern. Years are not the criteria. Spirituality is the criteria.

And that need not be a matter of years at all. There are some people old in years who are bathed spiritually. There are bathed spiritually who are far ahead of many of their time elders.

It is not that. But let's turn over to the other side. A new generation must succeed in an inward way to that which is possible.

I underline certain words in an inward way to that which is possible. The young people the followers on must succeed. Those who have carried the testimony of the Lord before them they must succeed.

Not officially. They must succeed spiritually. Inwardly.

Here is the rigid law of the Bible and its principle again. For there is always something deeper than what is on the surface of anything that's in the Bible. That rigid law of the Bible in the penalty of dishonoring and repudiating parents.

There were fewer any more rigid laws and penalties in the old dispensation than those connected with children dishonoring or disparaging or repudiating their parents. In those days you had only to do that as a son to your father and stoning was the penalty. Your life is finished.

I say behind that there's a divine principle. The divine principle is this. That a father, a mother, a parent from the divine standpoint is supposed to have a knowledge of the Lord which is indisputable to their children.

And let the children despise or set aside the parents and to despise what they have seen that they need for their own life. And their life is forfeit if they despise. That's strong but it's true.

See the Lord does not just take account of any rebellion against parents or disobedience to parents as in itself. He looks at the principle behind it. For when things are on the divine pattern and level it is like this.

That the children cannot live without the parents. They die without the parents. In this sense that they are absolutely dependent upon what the Lord has already developed and stored up for them in a previous

generation.

Yes it's a very very strong law there in the bible. You see as I said before young people are not a new created humanity but they are generated a fresh expression of humanity with the good that has been before. It's significant isn't it in this connection that when Gideon became an old man and the men of the country came to him and said be our king and rule over us.

Gideon would have nothing on it but his seven sons were to rule over him. Instead of the father should be the children. It's the principle again.

Age giving place to youth but not you in terms of sonship. That means spirituality. Now young people got that.

You've grasped that and all of us. We are we are on the way to the recovery of something. The recovery of the Lord's name.

You don't need that I stay to discuss with you how on the one hand that which is spiritually owned and worn out and finished with takes from the glory and honor of the Lord. Let me put that another way. The Lord's glory and honor is expressed in perennial youth.

You do not need me on the other hand to argue that if young people just as young people repudiate the older and take hold and put themselves in and begin to govern and rule and arrange the things of God's house as though everything began with them and ended with them how much dishonor has been brought to the Lord by that. No these are spiritual things to be taken note of and perhaps they will be helped out by what I have yet to say this evening. Let us look at some of the qualities in Gideon upon which the divine sovereignty operated.

Some of the qualities which marked Gideon. A young man and here we find a tremendous amount of spiritual maturity and what were the marks of spirituality and spiritual maturity in this young man. And the first and it shall set you everywhere was his humility.

His humility and humility is the the primary mark the hallmark of spirituality and the spiritual maturity. Oh what a lot of history is so often required before the Lord gets that in his people and in his servants. Humility.

Look at him. No pride of person. Far from thinking anything of himself.

He thought very little of himself. Read the story again. No pride of family.

My family is the least in the natural and I am least in my father's house. Now he could take 10 servants all the same out of his father's house. No.

With all. With all. And it seems to me that from the story about the men of the city and Joash.

All that Joash did stand for something. He had a position. He had an influence.

It was Joash who had that altar to Baal. It was Joash who had that Asherah. It was to Joash's Asherah altar that all the men of the city came to worship in the early morning.

Yes. Did you? No pride of family. Whatever there was there.

The point of course is this. If you hadn't 10 servants you hadn't won. You hadn't anything at all of place, prestige, recognition, influence.

You might say well of course. It's only becoming under such circumstances to be humble. But no.

It was there. But I'm least. I'm least.

No pride of achievement. He could point to no accomplishments, no degrees, no successes in the military, the academic, scientific or any other realm. No pride of achievement.

No pride of ambitiousness. No trace of any of these things. And certainly no spiritual superiority.

He did not point the fingers at the other people and say see, see. Look at them. Look at the mess they're in.

Look at their condition. Look, I am different. He just put himself amongst them all.

He was one with them in their faith. He was involved in their condition. There was no spiritual superiority.

Young men, young women. Not because you are young are you going to succeed. To the responsibility of the Lord's testament.

Not because you've got life before you are you going by the law to be pushed in. Given recognition and place. No.

It'll be like this. Of course we've all often heard people say well perhaps we've expected something more of the young than we should. We mustn't put old heads on young shoulders.

But the Lord does. And requires. You have got to take up that which has drowned before.

And what the Lord has been doing in a spiritual way has been to bring about this state of things. This humility. And you've got to begin there and go on there.

If there is any mark about any of us of pride of person, of achievement, of position, any spiritual superiority in looking down at others and criticizing and judging and condemning. The Lord will not do as he did with Gideon when he said the Lord looked on him. No.

The Lord will not look on him. It is like that. He will not come into his view.

That can never bring glory to his name. Or may I appeal to you to guard against criticism which comes from a spiritual superiority. Guard against it as you would guard against a plague.

It's not our business to let it be known that we disapprove of people. It's our business to find the basis at which we can help them. Help them.

We may in our own heart of hearts feel bad about certain things with their concern. But that's to stay there. Not to come out in our influence and our attitude and our looks and our words and our arguments and our attempts to tell them where they're wrong and wrong wrong in their associations and connections and all the other things.

That's not our business. Humility is find a point of spiritual helpfulness and work on that. If you will take that to heart you may be found within the view of that divine power and action to bring glory to the Lord's name.

To recover his testimony. The next thing we find about Gideon was his industry or his industriousness. Gideon was pushing out corn in the wine press to hide it from the Midianites.

Very little seemed possible. Most people had fled to caves and a whole very little seemed possible. Looking out on the situation question might have been asked, so what can be done? We can't do anything.

And because of the situation just join them and say well it's no use. Looking out on the situation question might have been asked, so what can be done? We can't do anything. And because of the situation just join them and say well it's no use.

No use trying to touch this. The enemy has got so strongly entrenched, so widely spread over. There's so little for the Lord and so little that can be done.

Paralyzed and impotent because of the appell impossibility of doing anything. But Gideon was not. Not much could be done.

But Gideon set himself to do even the least that could be done. He did not give up. He did not abandon it all.

He gave himself to doing what could be done. He looked out on the situation so difficult, hard. He said well at least, at least I can beat out some corn here up in this corner.

At least I can do something a little over against the situation. The Lord took note of that. You see it was right there over against the winepress where Gideon was doing that that the Lord came and looked on.

I wonder if it was because of that that the Lord said the Lord is with me. Thou mighty man of God. I am certain the Lord is with no slothful person.

Diligence is a very great thing with the Lord. Not slothful in business says the Apostle. Firm and in spirit serving the Lord though that may be in a very limited and cramped capacity.

It's the spirit that the Lord looks upon and it was the spirit of Gideon which was doing all that could be done however little that might be. The Lord takes note of that my dear friend. See a gesture is enough with the Lord.

Whether you make for the armchair directly you enter the room. That's enough. The Lord doesn't look in that way.

See what I mean. I don't mean that literally. It's a gesture.

Whether you are inclined to be a shirker, to evade, to get out of, to skirt round some responsibility or whether you're alive and alert for anything. The Lord takes note of gestures. The Lord looked upon him.

The margin says the Lord turned towards him. Further Gideon's concern for others. Of course it's a part of what we just said.

Concern for others. He looked and he said my these people are starving. The enemy, the enemy is taking away their bread, their food.

The enemy is doing all he can to say that these people are undernourished, underfed and so weakened that they'll never be able to lift a hand for their own salvation, deliverance and Gideon had a real concern about the starved fate of other people. Their needy condition. You know how much Paul has to say that look not every man on his own thing but on the things of others.

The outward look. Gideon was not one of those introverts. Always occupied with himself and his poor, poor situation.

A young man, a young man. Think of a young man and his profit in a situation like this. What kind of a life lies before Gideon? A young man.

But he doesn't sit down and nurse the adversities of the coming to his life as a young man. He's sorry for himself. Snuggling himself with with self-pity.

Drawing attention to himself and his own unfortunate loss. He was not that kind of man and the Lord does not look toward that kind of person. You can go on like that and you'll not find the Lord turning toward you if you like that.

The Lord will turn toward those who it's quite true their lot is a difficult one. No doubt about that and God knows that better than anyone else. But nevertheless who are turned out for the sake of others.

Really concerned for others. See his secret activity and exercise to defeat the enemy for the sake of the name of the Lord. Secret activity.

Secret exercise. In his heart Gideon seems to me to have been saying I'll beat them if I can. I'll outwit the enemy if I can.

I'll spoil their plans if I can. I'll see that they have as little success as in new life as the spirit. Further Gideon betrays a real soul perfectly and stubbornly.

Which it seems to me is the outcome of real heart exercise. When the Lord comes and says the Lord is with thee. Thou mighty man of valor.

He instantly answers if the Lord be with us. Why does all this come upon us? Why does all that which our fathers told us are the formal activities and wonders of God. Why is none of that today? There was a big cry in his heart about the situation.

He was exercised about this. He was concerned about this. He was trying to find some explanation.

He was reaching out to get the key to this thing. And the situation was creating real pain. I was going to say real bitterness.

And you know there's a kind of bitterness of the spirit that is permissible. That is not wrong. If we become bitter and sour against the Lord in rebellion that's a wrong kind of bitterness.

But there was a bitterness in the heart of Anna. Do you remember when she prayed at the temple? And Eli misunderstood the moving of her lips in prayer and charged her with drunkenness. No no my Lord thy

handmaid is a woman of a sorrowful spirit.

A bitterness because of the situation in Israel. Have you got anything that corresponds to that? It's so different from a theoretical position. Isn't it? We've got all the doctrine and all the teaching and we know how what people ought to be like and what they ought to do and what they ought to know.

We've got the answer to it all. And I said oh no if it does not come out of the wine press it's a no-go. It's got to come out of the wine press.

It's got to come out of the soul traveling where we've had deep exercise in this. To such the Lord will look. Do believe me.

Whether you may be old or young it's got to be like this. Don't you go out and think that you're going to save the Lord's name and honor and deliver his people by doctrines, by theories, by wonderful interpretations of truth, wonderful vistas of spiritual things. Not at all.

Not at all. The Lord is looking for hearts that are brittle over spiritual conditions. Irian was so distressed and perplexed and was suffering inwardly and his crying was not the cry of a recalcitrant, the cry of a man in trouble.

Why? Oh why are things like this? My last word this evening is here. Irian destroying the enemy in his father's house will never destroy Satan and his kingdom. Will never destroy the Midianites if privately behind the scenes in the background there's some complicity with Satan's kingdom.

And sometimes I may always, always the father's house is inside him. Adam has his residence here and Adam brought about complicity with Satan. And that's inside our own soul.

You and I know it. How easy it is, how easy it is to listen to Satan, to agree with Satan, to be carried away by his arguments. There's something inside of us which seems to be in alliance with the very devil himself.

Father's house is here and until, until that is dealt with and overthrown and in the place of Baal's altar, the Lord's altar is erected. And more than that, the very thing that belongs to Baal is brought and made the thing for the glory of God. That's being more than conquerors, not only conquerors.

It's taking the enemy's strength and bringing it to the Lord. Well, if you don't understand that, don't worry. But here it is.

Before Irian could go to save Israel and recover the honor of the Lord's name, something had to be done in the background of his life. He did it. He did it fearfully.

He did it in no strong, high-handed way of self-confidence and self-assertiveness. No. In the same meekness which is characterized in him all along, he takes ten men, ten servants and under cover of the night does it.

It may, it may want something, be wanting in something. You may say it's wanting in courage. Well, let it be what you like, but it was done.

That's the thing. Day or night it was done. The thing is it's got to be done.

But when we have said all, what is the motive? The motive of all this? The motive of all. Because these are not just things in themselves. They are all motivated, done by a tremendous dynamic.

What is it? Jealousy for the name of the Lord. Jealousy for the name of the Lord. It's the Lord's name.

This state of things is dishonoring to the Lord. This, whatever it is, however little that can be done, must be done for the sake of the name of the Lord. It is not honoring to the Lord for me to accept this situation and sit down and be passive and flaccid about it.

The name of the Lord requires that I do something to be governed by the honor of the Lord's name. Oh, have a heart for that name. We must see the Lord's people saved.

We must see them enjoying the wealth of their inheritance. We must see them on their feet standing up. We must see them brought together.

We must see them in a state that glorifies His name. Not because we want to be in Christian work in a great enterprise and undertaking. Not because we want to see something flourishing in which we have a part.

But for the sake of the name. Oh, the Lord give us a heart for His name. Looking on everything and through His name.

Does this honor the Lord's name? Is this glorifying the Lord's name? Is this worthy of the Lord's name? My relationships with others. Everything. Everything.

Is this glorifying the name of the Lord? If not, then. If we want the Lord to be with us. And the Lord to make use of us.

Individually and together with others of His people. As a vessel. We must be after this kind.

A vessel after the order of Gideon. Gideon and looking at Gideon. You might, if you took his estimate of himself, feel that he is rather a poor thing.

But, remember there were those things which the Lord regarded as of tremendous importance upon which His sovereignty could encamp. These were the things.

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