

# The Holy Spirit Came Especially for the Purpose of Creating a Spiritual Order of Things

by T. Austin-Sparks

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*The Holy Spirit came especially for the purpose of creating a spiritual order of things, which is a fundamental shift from the old Jewish dispensation that was governed by the natural senses.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 11:15, John 3:6, John 4:24, Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 2:14, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:25, Ephesians 2:18, Hebrews 12:9, Revelation 2:7

**Topics:** "New Birth", "Spiritual Order"

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## Description

T. Austin-Sparks emphasizes the transformative impact of the Holy Spirit in establishing a new spiritual order following the coming of Christ, contrasting it with the old Jewish dispensation that relied on physical senses. He explains that the new order is characterized by spiritual faculties, enabling believers to perceive and understand divine truths beyond mere physical experience. Sparks highlights the necessity of being born of the Spirit to access this new reality, where spiritual sight, hearing, and discernment replace the limitations of the old system. He warns against reverting to a soulish Christianity that neglects the leading of the Holy Spirit, urging believers to embrace the spiritual nature of their faith. Ultimately, he calls for a return to a Spirit-led existence that reflects the true essence of the new covenant.

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## Transcript

This morning we come to what I feel to be one of the most important messages that we have been giving. We have been seeing that the Letter to the Galatians is a concentration of the great change which took place with the coming of the Lord Jesus. That is, that the coming of Christ into this world changed the dispensations, and changed the whole nature of things. So that Christ stands as the dividing of two whole systems. The whole system of Judaism which had existed up to the time of His coming was set aside when He came. From that time, as He said, a new order was introduced, and that is represented by His repeated phrase, "The hour cometh and now is." Now this morning, we are going to consider the essential nature of that great divide. How the new dispensation and the new order differs from the old. This is a matter of supreme importance for us here this morning, and for all Christians if only they would accept it, because Christianity as we know it has been largely constituted on the old dispensation. The great difference between the old and the new has not been fully recognized. So let us get to business and try to understand the difference between the old and the new.

The obvious nature of the old Jewish dispensation was that it was all in the realm of the natural senses. Firstly, it was in the realm of physical senses. Everything was a matter of seeing with the physical eye, of hearing with the physical ear, of feeling with the physical hand. It was something that could be touched, something that was tangible, something that you could put your hand upon. And then it was a matter of physical smelling. You see, the offering and the incense were a matter of physical smelling. They could smell the sweet incense. And then it was a matter of physical tasting. All the feasts of the Jews were a matter of tasting. That needs no argument; that is perfectly clear and simple. To begin with, their whole system rests upon the physical senses.

But it did not stay there, it also went into the realm of the soul. We understand the soul to be composed of three things, reason and emotion and will, that which appeals to the natural reason, and that which appeals to the natural feeling, and that which appeals to the natural will. So you see that body and soul governed everything. God gave them a tabernacle that they could see and handle; God gave them the incense that they could smell; God gave them the feasts that they could taste; however, they were blind to the meaning of these things. In brief, that was the nature of everything in the old Jewish system.

We pass over to see the difference in the new spiritual order. What is the essential nature of that which has come in with Jesus Christ? It is a spiritual order. It is no longer a matter of the natural senses. This whole new order begins at another point. Now we are keeping very close to the Letter to the Galatians. I suppose it would not be fair if I were to ask you how many have read the Letter to the Galatians right through this week. One of the advantages of knowing the Word of God is that you are able to see what is right. There are many other advantages. But in this Letter to the Galatians, the word "Spirit" occurs twelve times, and that is very largely the key to the letter. It is no longer after the flesh, it is now after the Spirit. This is essentially a spiritual dispensation that has come in.

You will remember our message on the words of the Lord Jesus to the woman of Samaria. She had said, 'Men ought to worship in this mountain, and you Jews said, men ought to worship in Jerusalem.' "Jesus said, 'Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father... God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.'" That is the nature of what has come in with Jesus Christ. We know from the Word of God, and I trust from our own experience, that men are not born of the flesh in relation to God: But they are born of the Spirit. Not of a man but of the Spirit, that which is born of the Spirit, said, Jesus, "is SPIRIT."

In the Letter to the Hebrews, chapter twelve, the writer speaks of the Father of our spirits. He is not the Father of our bodies. He is not the Father of our natural souls. He is the Father of our spirits. We are going to come back to that later on. But what is it that happens when we are born of the Spirit? What really is the nature of the new birth? This is, of course, the very meaning of the advent of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came especially for the purpose of creating a spiritual order of things. And He begins with the individual. The word to each individual is, "You must be born again," and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. What then happens when we are born of the Spirit? When we are truly born of the Spirit, we receive a new set of spiritual senses. They correspond in purpose to the old senses. But they are spiritual and not physical.

We, by the Holy Spirit, receive a new faculty of sight. You know how much there is in the New Testament about having our eyes opened. Jesus pointed to this principle by opening the eyes of the blind. He was illustrating the great spiritual truth that in the new creation, we get a new faculty of sight. And every truly born again child of God ought to be able to say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." The truth about a child

of God is that their first thing is, "Now I see." They have received the faculty of spiritual sight. It goes by different names in the New Testament. Sometimes it is called spiritual discernment. Sometimes it is spiritual understanding. Sometimes it is spiritual perception. But whatever the name is, it means the same thing. I now see what I was never able to see before as to the true meaning of Divine things. I was born blind, but the Holy Spirit has performed the great miracle of giving me new eyes.

This spiritual faculty of sight has introduced us to a new world altogether, not the material world, but the spiritual world. Listen to what the Apostle Paul says about this, he says, 'Things which eye did not see, things which ear did not hear, things which entered not into the heart of man, these things God has revealed to us by His Spirit.'

The first faculty of new birth is spiritual sight. Can you see the difference between the old dispensation and the new? You see, Israel had all these things which they could see with their natural eyes. They could see the tabernacle or the temple. They could see the priests and the sacrifices. They could see the feasts. But they were totally blind to the meaning of those things. And because they were blind to the meaning, they crucified the One Who fulfilled them all. With all their power of natural sight, they were spiritually blind. So the first work of the Holy Spirit in new birth is to give us new spiritual eyes.

Not only is this true of seeing, it is also true of hearing. In the old dispensation, they heard everything with their natural ears; but they were quite deaf to the Voice of God. It did not go any further than the drums of their ears. Now in the new order of the Spirit, we are given a new faculty of hearing. We Christians have a way of saying, 'The Lord has spoken to me.' We do not mean that we have heard something with our natural ears. We know what we mean, 'The Lord has spoken to me. I have heard the Lord speaking in my heart;' that means we have received a new faculty. And this new dispensation is built upon this principle. When Jesus spoke His parables, He finished by saying this, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 11:15). And you know that was His Own Word to the seven churches in Asia. After He had spoken to those seven churches, He repeated seven times, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith" (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22).

But you must remember that speaking to the churches was not with an audible voice. Those churches did not hear a voice from heaven with their natural ears. It was what "The Spirit saith to the churches." And spiritual speaking is spiritual. It is not physical. We could illustrate this in many ways. We speak of spirit to spirit speaking. We meet some other child of God, and we do not have to say much with our lips, but we know that is a child of God. Their spirit speaks to our spirit. We have a spiritual language. We know that we belong to the same family. We can discern the Spirit in one another. We have got this new faculty of spiritual hearing. It is not outward hearing, but it is inward hearing. And what is true of seeing and of hearing is true of all the other senses.

What shall we say about spiritual smelling? Do you know what spiritual smelling is? Well, you have only got to go into some atmospheres, no one has to say anything to you, but you sense that something is wrong; you sense that it is not life here, it is death. This is not the Lord, this is man. This is not the Spirit, this is the flesh. You sense this with your spiritual faculty of smell. You may meet another person. You do not have to speak, or they do not have to speak, but you know that there is suspicion in that person. There is prejudice in that person. There is a closed heart in that person. They are not open to you, they are trying to deceive you, they are holding something back from you. How do you know it? You smell it. It is a spiritual sense. But it is a very important faculty. By this faculty we sense what is of the Lord and what is not of the Lord. You see, the incense in the old dispensation was a sweet fragrance. It was something very

pleasant. The corresponding spiritual faculty of smell is, this is very pleasant. This is something very pleasing to the Lord. This is an atmosphere of life.

Therefore, it is a guiding principle. When naturally you go into a place where there is a bad smell, you hold your nose and you say, let me out of this. This is unhealthy. Your nose may save your life from a fever. Your nose may save your life from one of the bad diseases. And that is very true in the spiritual life. If this spiritual sense of smell, or this faculty for spiritually discerning were really keen and alive, we would know what is life and what is death. We would know what is spiritually healthy and what is spiritually unhealthy. I am not going to follow this further. I am just saying that when we are born again, we are given a new set of spiritual faculties. And just as the physical faculties governed in the old dispensation, it is the spiritual faculties which are to govern in the new dispensation.

If you will read the First Letter to the Corinthians, you will see that that letter is built upon this very difference. The Corinthian Christians were living on the basis of natural things, and they were not living on the basis of spiritual discernment. So Paul said to them, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." The natural man cannot receive those things, because those things are only spiritually discerned. And then he adds, "He that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned by no man." He is the mystery of the world. A spiritual man and woman is a mystery to the world, they just do not understand. Paul illustrates it in this way, "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" If you and I are going to understand one another as human beings, we have got to be human beings and have human nature. Other orders of creation do not understand the human order. Men understand one another simply because they are men. Now Paul says in the same way, "No one understandeth the things of God except the Spirit of God that is in him."

Now I must get to perhaps the most difficult part of it all. If you will look at the Letter to the Hebrews, we will come to it. Chapter four and verse twelve begins in this way, "For the Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (ASV). We can leave the second half of the verse for the present, and just note this, "The Word of God is quick, and powerful, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." You notice how that statement begins. It begins with a conjunction. It relates to something. It connects with what the writer has just been saying. What has he been saying? He has been speaking about Israel in the wilderness, and Israel's failure to enter into the promise land. And it says, "If Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another rest." He is saying that Israel after the flesh failed to enter into God's rest. They failed to enter into that for which God had brought them out of Egypt. That whole generation with the exception of two men died in the wilderness. And they never did come into the purpose of God in their redemption. Now that is the statement, that is the background, and then you have this conjunction. For, or because, the Word of God is living and powerful, piercing to dividing asunder of soul and spirit. What does that mean? The Old Israel lived entirely upon the basis of the natural soul. They lived entirely upon the basis of these natural senses. Everything for them was a matter of what they could see and handle down here on this earth. Theirs was an entirely soul life. And the writer says, because of that they failed to enter in.

The Word of God cuts clear in between the soul and the spirit. The new dispensation and the new people who are going to enter into all the purposes of God must be a spiritual people, not a soulish people. They must be constituted on the basis of what is spiritual and not what is natural. This whole letter to the Hebrews is built upon the difference between the old and the new. It takes a lot of space to show how the old fails. The old law fails, the old priesthood fails, the old sacrifices fail, the old tabernacle fails, the old

temple fails. It was complete failure, because it was built upon natural ground. The ground of the soul.

Now the new is not going to fail, the letter brings in the new order. A High Priest is in Heaven. The One Sacrifice has been offered forever, and so on. It is all a spiritual order. And the Word of God divides between those two. When you get to the end of that letter to the Hebrews, to chapter twelve, the writer is saying this, 'We have had fathers after the flesh, they chastened us as it seemed right to them. And we gave them reverence.' I wonder if that is true of all of us. When our fathers after the flesh gave us a good thrashing, did we revere them? We did not say, thank you, we felt very bad about our fathers after the flesh. When we grew up to be men, we said, 'Father was right, that chastening was the best thing for us.'

However, the apostle says, 'We had fathers after the flesh, who chastened us as they thought was right and good. And we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of our spirits?' The natural is down on that level. The spiritual is so much higher, the Father of our spirits! Is that what happens when we are born again? Not our souls born again, but our spirits. That innermost part of our being which died with Adam, was separated from God in Adam's sin. So that by nature all the children of Adam are dead in that spiritual sense. Our spirits died with Adam.

In Christ they are made alive again. The new birth is not the new birth of our body. It is not the new birth of our soul, because we have got a soul. It is the new birth of our spirits. And God is the Father of our spirits. That is why I pointed out in the Letter to the Galatians - which marks the great divide - the word Spirit occurs twelve times. The Father of our spirits, then we are not the children of Abraham, we are children of God, and that is a very big difference. You see, this is what Paul is arguing in the Letter to the Galatians. He is saying to these Galatians, "Oh! foolish Galatians, how foolish you are! You began in the Spirit, and now you are going back to the flesh, you came out of the old dispensation and out of the old order, you came into the new life of the Spirit, and now you are going back, you are going to forfeit your rest, the very purpose of your redemption. Oh! foolish Galatians, how foolish a thing it is to live in the old dispensation!"

But note this, dear friends, the Christianity with which we are familiar is very largely constituted on the old dispensation. It would take another hour to show that in any fullness. But do you see how Christianity goes to work now? It begins by building religious buildings. They are called churches, of course, a false name entirely. The Church is not a building made with hands. And then they set up a certain order in it. And then they appoint certain officers to do the work. When they've got the building, and when they've got the officers, the minister and all the others, and when they have got their order of service, then they ask the Lord if He will come into it. The organization comes first. The outward thing comes first. It all builds upon the principle of the soul. It is all a matter of reason and emotion and doing. That is Judaistic Christianity.

It is just the reverse with God's method. Where does God begin? God does not begin with churches even if they are companies of people. He certainly does not begin with buildings. And He does not begin with ritual, or with a system of things. And He does not begin by calling a congregation together. A congregation is not God's beginning. God begins by a work of the Holy Spirit in individual lives. It may just be one to begin with, and then another and then another. And if those two or three find themselves in one city, they are joined, not because they have accepted Christianity, but because they have the one Spirit in them. That is the beginning of the Church in that place.

And what is true of the beginning, has got to be true of everything afterwards. Man's hands must be kept off the things of the Spirit. Man must not try to form something that is of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, Who began this, is perfectly capable of forming what He wants. Hence our responsibility is to be led by the

Spirit, to always seek the guidance of the Spirit. And until we are sure that the Holy Spirit is really guiding us, we keep our hands off. We will do nothing about it. This thing must be of the Spirit. This is the order of this dispensation.

Do you see the difference between the beginning and what we have today? In the first thirty years of Christianity, the Gospel spread all over the world that then was. There were churches in almost every country of the world. Thousands and thousands were joined to the Lord. It was a mighty thing. It only took thirty years to do that. We have had two thousand years since then. We have put multitudes of missionaries into the world. We have spent millions of dollars upon this. We have worked tremendously. In two thousand years, there is nothing to compare with those thirty years.

Why has it not continued? Because they brought it all back again unto a soul basis and not unto a spiritual basis. When things are out of the hands of men, and in the hands of the Holy Spirit, things happen. My great concern is that there should be something like that here. That is what I have come to say to you. If things are wholly of the Spirit, you will see something happen, the enemy will be stirred up against it. And that is always a good sign. If the devil feels that there is something that he has got to fight, he knows that means something against his kingdom.

So I must stop now. I have not finished this part yet, we have another morning, but do not leave it till tomorrow morning. This is the word for us today. If I were to go away tomorrow, and never see you again on this earth, I feel that I have spoken to you the most vital word that could be spoken. This represents the complete change from the old to the NEW, from the natural to the spiritual in the things of God, from the things which are of men to the THINGS which are of God.

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