



# The Online Library of T. Austin-Sparks

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## Liberty

by T. Austin-Sparks

Extract from [\*The Heavenly Calling, Conduct and Conflict of the Church - Chapter 2.\*](#)

The ascension of the Lord Jesus is essentially His emancipation, His liberation, release and victory over the world-rulers. "When He ascended up on high *He led captivity captive*". As He went out, He made a way out. "Translated out of the authority of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of His love". That is said to be our blessed position: transferred from one Kingdom to another. Well, John 17 again - "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world" (geographical, physical), "but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one" (v.15,16). Later we shall find that the Lord Jesus has turned us from the power of Satan unto God, that in Christ we are outside of the domain of satanic authority. The essential thing for believers is to recognise that there is a heavenly position, heavenly life, heavenly resource and heavenly everything if ever they are to know the fulness of liberty and capability in doing the Lord's work, in living in the Lord's life.

Let us look at that in the other way, the reverse position. Immediately you and I get down into that realm where Satan functions and operates and has his rights, we lose our power and we lose our liberty. We immediately come into spiritual limitation and defeat. We can only know complete release as we maintain our position in the heavenlies. This is the history of the church. The church has always lost its power, its effectiveness, when it has become an earthly thing in any way. The Lord's people always come into limitation when they get down into that realm where the enemy has everything to play with. The more you and I and the Lord's people know our ascension union with the Lord Jesus as outside of this world and outside of the authority of darkness, the more we shall know our liberty and our ability to go on in the work and purpose of God.

Now, it seems to me very clear that this is the explanation of Pentecost, as we call it. The great days at the beginning of the dispensation which emerged from that day, took their rise in that day, all that

took place then and all that immediately followed, was because the Lord Jesus was in heaven, because He had gone outside, and that now, by the Holy Spirit, He had a heavenly people. And you see that in all their conduct, their behaviour immediately after: they are exemplifying a heavenly life. The earthly things have dropped away. You cannot bring those things about by telling people to do them, that they ought to do this and ought not to do that. If you have got five hundred or a thousand pounds, a few houses or worldly possessions, and I say, "Go and sell all and bring the proceeds and we will divide it among the Lord's people", I do not know what might be the result of doing that. I should be optimistic if I expected to get apostolic New Testament conditions immediately and spontaneously without any Holy Spirit in it. But when you get a heavenly life by the Holy Spirit, heavenly things happen; that is, earthly things assume an altogether smaller importance than before and they are much more easily let go. And so you find that there, for one thing, they that had goods and property and so on, and sold them, brought the proceeds, and they were distributed for the saints, for the church. Get the position and the other thing is quite simple. It just happens.

Now, I say that, I illustrate it because it operates in so many other ways. "They continued in fellowship". What a struggle it is to get fellowship! What a lot of trouble there is about this fellowship matter. We are always labouring along the line of fellowship. But get a heavenly position and you have *got* fellowship. Get off earthly ground in union with Him in heaven and you know fellowship - it comes in spontaneously. As we have often said, teams of wild horses would never have dragged Saul of Tarsus out of Judaism and separated him from Judaism, but the heavenly vision did it with very little trouble. It was an accomplished fact out of heaven. So they preached, but they preached with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. It is that which is heavenly and it is all bound up with the spiritual value of the ascension, that we lose our grave-clothes; not only are we raised, but our grave-clothes, bonds and limitations go when we are outside.

Oh, for an emancipated church, a people living not a false life, not a life of mere imagination, abstractions, unrealities, but really knowing a heavenly life by reason of the heavenly Spirit of the heavenly Lord reigning within. There will be liberty and we shall see that Christ in heaven answers to our hopeless, bound condition by nature.