

Daily Open Windows

Excerpts from the messages
of T. Austin-Sparks

T. Austin-Sparks

Theodore Austin-Sparks (1888-1971) left behind a treasury of messages filled with the Wisdom, Life and Revelation of Christ. This book contains short daily portions from a selection of these messages. In his own words, "Perhaps this is just like a window opened into heaven. If you get the right window you can see quite a lot. You can see great things and you can see far things. But the best that I can hope is that this has just opened a window, and that as you look through it you are seeing one thing - how superior is Jesus Christ to all else, and how superior is the dispensation into which we have come, and how superior are all the resources at our disposal to all that ever was before!"



Daily Open Windows

Excerpts from the messages of T. Austin-Sparks

“The best that I can hope is that this has just opened a window,
and that as you look through it you are seeing one thing –
how superior is Jesus Christ to all else!”

T. Austin-Sparks

Printed 2012
(Not to be Sold)
Second edition 2022

This book
is available free upon request
by writing to:

EMMANUEL CHURCH
12,000 East 14th Street
Tulsa OK 74128-5016 USA

In keeping with T. Austin-Sparks' wishes that what was freely received should be freely given and not sold for profit, and that his messages be reproduced word for word, we ask if you choose to share them with others, please respect his wishes and offer them freely - free of any changes, free of any charge and with this statement included.

Scripture versions used by T. Austin-Sparks are usually not identified, but generally he used the ASV, RSV, or KJV.

Unless otherwise noted, the Scripture at the beginning of each daily message is taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked ISV are from the Holy Bible: International Standard Version®.
Copyright © 1996-2008 by The ISV Foundation.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INTERNATIONALLY. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2010
by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations marked AMP are from the Amplified® Bible, Copyright © 1954, 1958,
1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation.
Used by permission. www.Lockman.org

Scripture quotations marked NLT are from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, Copyright 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189.
All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked ESV are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®)
Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved. ESV Text Edition: 2007

Scripture quotations marked RSV are from the Revised Standard Version, Copyright © OT 1952, NT 1946, Second Edition 1971, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.
Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked CEV are from the Contemporary English Version Copyright © 1991, 1992, 1995 by American Bible Society, Used by Permission.

Scripture quotations marked GW are from GOD'S WORD®, © 1995 God's Word to the Nations. Used by permission of Baker Publishing Group.

Scripture quotations marked Darby are from A New Translation From the Original Languages, J. N. Darby, 1889. Public domain in the United States.

Scripture quotations marked Phillips are from The New Testament in Modern English, Copyright © 1958, 1959, 1960, 1972 J. B. Phillips.

Scripture quotations marked WNT are from the Weymouth New Testament, Richard Francis Weymouth, 1912. Public domain in the United States.

Editor's Note

We are forever thankful to God for our friends in Tulsa, Oklahoma (Emmanuel Church) who first sent us books by T. Austin-Sparks ten years ago. It is due to their love, obedience, generosity, and service that this book has been published and is in your hands today.

Through the years of our publishing books and articles on Austin-Sparks.Net, we have talked of wanting to compile a series of excerpts similar to Watchman Nee's "A Table in the Wilderness," published by Mr. Sparks' son-in-law, Angus Kinnear. We felt that not only would shorter daily excerpts be easy to digest, but they might also inspire readers to read a complete message or book that they may not have read before. This project began in January 2010 when we began to send out daily messages to the Daily Open Windows email list. These continue to be sent daily in email form from Austin-Sparks.Net.

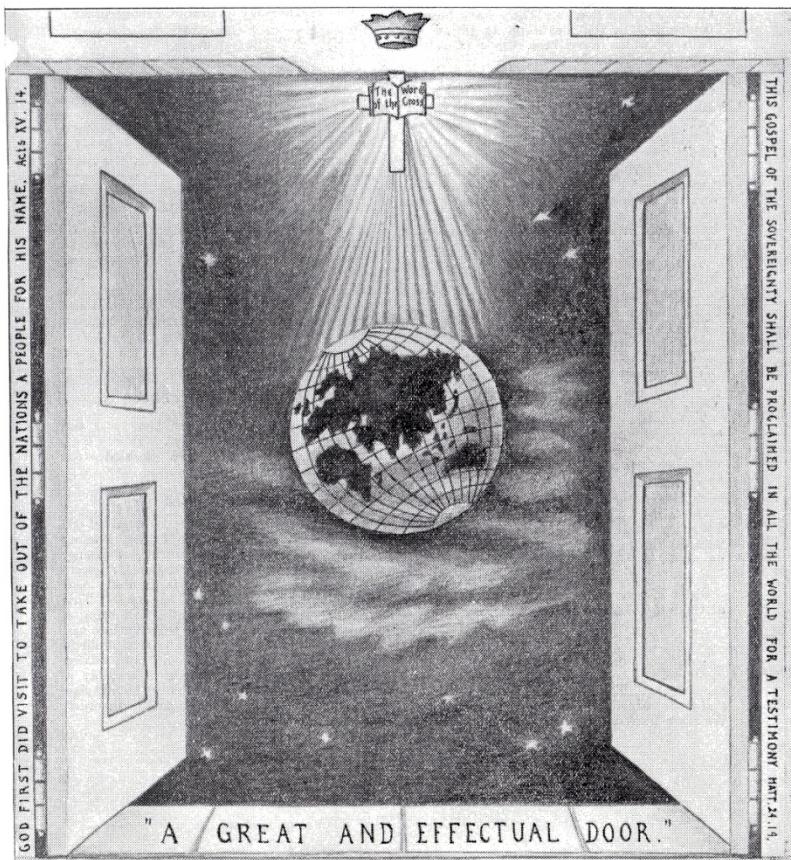
As many of you will be aware, Mr. Sparks was from Scotland. He, therefore, used British spelling in his writings; however, many transcripts of his spoken messages have since been published using American English. The website reflects a mixture of both British and American spelling, but for the sake of consistency, all excerpts in this book conform to American spelling and punctuation.

Due to these daily messages being excerpts, they are abbreviated and some have had unnecessary words removed, such as "here this evening...." Also, some daily messages are a compilation of several excerpts from one original message. This is usually indicated with a pause in the text: and a reference to the complete source document is always provided. You will also notice that different versions of the Bible have been selected for verses that precede each daily message. Sometimes these Scripture references appeared within the context of the original message, but mostly these have been chosen by the editor with, we trust, the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

As you look through these "open windows" we pray that you will not only look out and *see* Christ, but you will also *hear* Him and open the door of your heart so that He can "eat with you daily" (Rev. 3:20). Our desire is that these messages will not simply be "inspiring," as daily devotional messages often set out to achieve, but also challenge you; lifting your vision, opening your eyes, revealing Truth, bringing Life and Light, and enabling you to let go of misconceptions. Light is not always welcome when it first shines into the darkness that our eyes are accustomed to. However, Light is absolutely necessary in order to see. And so we pray that through these messages your eyes will be opened (Eph. 1:18) and we will together "see one thing – how superior is Jesus Christ to all else!"

*Austin-Sparks.Net
Wellington, New Zealand
January 2012*

The image below was used on the cover of the 1928-1929 "A Witness and A Testimony" magazines which T. Austin-Sparks published and edited.



January 1

Called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)

God has a very great purpose for His people by their eternal calling and by their wonderful redemption. A very great purpose... so much greater than the majority of Christians have realized. I do not think I am saying a false thing when I say that perhaps the larger number of Christians have got little further than to know that they are saved, and to be very glad that they are saved, to rejoice in being saved. Comparatively few are really in the good of God's great, great purpose from eternity, "*Called according to His purpose*" (Rom. 8:28). It is not for us now to say what that purpose is, to explain it. It is sufficient to state the fact. We are called with a very great purpose, not just even to get out of Egypt and the clutches of the devil, but with an object, a tremendous object, nothing less than the infinite fullness of God's Son, Jesus Christ, and an eternal vocation. It is a great thing to which we are called in Christ, but how many Christians are really in it, and if they know they are in it, are tasting of the meaning of it: that this Life is an inexhaustible Life, that there are new vistas all the time?

I am not exaggerating. The heavens are opened and we see more and more, and ever more, of what it is to which we are called. It is just wonderful... You are not meant just to be saved and get to heaven, to know your sins are forgiven and to have a certain number of blessings which come with salvation. But there lies before you and reaches out through eternal ages such a purpose of God concerning us all that "*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him*" (1 Cor. 2:9).

From: The Cross and the Way of Life - Chapter 8
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002852.html

January 2

If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV)

The Word teaches us very clearly that Christ has been taken right out of this old creation and set at God's right hand in the heavenlies. On the other hand, it shows us that His being there, and our being in spiritual union with Him, means that for all spiritual purposes and resources, we also are in the heavenlies in Christ.... Let us ask the Lord to give us a real, spiritual, quick, living apprehension of this great truth concerning our Lord Jesus, the great realm of the new creation into which we are brought, and let us apply it, practice it, put it into operation from day to day.

You may have to go into a place where there is not much spiritual wealth on the outside, not much upon which to feed. Remember you have Christ, the whole Land, lying before you. You may have to go into scenes where there is anything but rest, spiritual rest; where all is fret, care, drive, strain. Remember that you are in the Land; you are in Christ; you have Him as your Rest. You may have to go into the conflict, into the battle, into the tremendous activities of the enemy to overthrow you. Remember you are in Christ, Who is Victory, complete, final victory. That remains true, whatever the enemy may say about it. Christ is all that we need for a life which is glorifying to Him. It is what Christ is, what we have in the new creation.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002212.html

January 3

*I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection.
(Philippians 3:10 NIV)*

Resurrection always means that we are outside of the world. After His resurrection the Lord Jesus never again appeared to the world. He never manifested Himself personally to the world after His resurrection. The resurrection means that He had passed, in that sense, out from the world and stood apart, and His power over the world was His apartness from it. His ability to deal with the situation is because He is no longer involved in the situation. Resurrection Life means that we are outside of the world spiritually, and in a superior position....

We have to learn how to live by the power of Christ's resurrection, so that the death around us is not able to so impinge upon us as to bring us into its grip. Resurrection union with the Lord Jesus means that we are not involved in the death that is all around us. We can move in scenes of death and not be touched by death. This is a very important lesson to learn, how to be in Life in the midst of death.... In the resurrection of the Lord Jesus we are delivered from the curse – that is, from the death which works vanity – and we have been brought into the place where we can go right through to the Divine end, the full realization that vanity no longer rests upon us. We are no longer held up; no longer in the position that we live and come to a point and that is the end, and we can go no further. We can go right on now! The fruit of Life can come to perfection because the power of death in the curse has been cancelled in the power of His resurrection. The condemnation has been removed.

From: The Power of His Resurrection - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001158.html

January 4

The words “once more” indicate the removing of what can be shaken – that is, created things – so that what cannot be shaken may remain.
(Hebrews 12:27 NIV)

In the destruction of Jerusalem – toward which the Letter [to the Hebrews] pointed – the whole earth was shaken so far as Jewry was concerned. The Temple, as the focal point of that whole world, crashed even with the ground. The priesthood, as gathered up in the high-priestly order, passed away. The temple service ended, and the nation ceased to be an integrated and unified people. These were things capable of being removed. And yet how long they had stood! What forces they had withstood! What confidence there was that they could never cease to be! How assured they were that God was so bound up with it all that it could never be destroyed and cease to be! How they fought and clung to it to the last terrible extremity! But it was of no avail. God was no longer wanting the framework and earthly system, which had taken so much room, and energy, and expenditure, before the really spiritual was reached. The percentage of spiritual value was so small after all, and spiritual interests lay so far along the labyrinthine ways of religious machinery and tradition, that it was not worthwhile. The means to the end was not immediate, that is, there was far too big a distance between the means and the end. There was no *immediate* touch with the real Divine requirement, and there was far too much that was intermediate. And so it had to go, and, rather than preserve it, God Himself shook it.

What remained after the shaking was just that, and that only, which was Christ in a spiritual and heavenly way: Christ in heaven, and here by His Spirit, the gathering point, or occasion of assembling; Christ in heaven the High Priest and Sacrifice; the order of God's house here a purely spiritual and heavenly one – not formal, arranged, imposed, imitated, or material. Order grows out of life, and if that Life is Divine, and unchecked, Divine order will be spontaneous.

From: Editor's Letter, Nov-Dec 1952
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002091.html

January 5

*And the remnant... shall again take root downward,
and bear fruit upward. (Isaiah 37:31)*

The Lord must have something which cannot be carried away, which cannot be removed, cannot be shaken, and certainly something which cannot be rooted up. That is His remnant. That, He must have for His own glory, and, that being so, He will take every measure with His remnant to

have them after that kind, with roots downward. Of course, unto fruit upward. We speak much about the upward side of things, life in the heavenlies, sitting in the heavenlies, and our warfare and work – the fruitfulness of our life in union with the Lord. That is only possible as our roots are downward. In order that that might be so, we have to get into a place of unshakeableness where the roots have got such a grip that nothing can overthrow. And I believe that explains a very great deal of what the Lord is doing with His own spiritual people in these days.

It is true that the true children of God are going through a time of intense trial and testing spiritually in these days; everywhere it is so. Why? Because the Lord must have something against which hell is impotent and by which He demonstrates to the universe that strength of His might which causes to stand and withstand, and having done all to stand. If one were asked what the last issue for the Church in this age is, I would say that it stands, and that is saying a tremendous thing. Oh, you say, that is surely limiting things, are you not expecting much more than that? Progress, advance, sweeping movements? The Church will have all its work cut out in the end to stand, but its standing will be its victory. Just to be able, through testing, trial, when everything is blowing round you like a blizzard; when everything is dark, mysterious, and even God seems far away and unreal, and faith is tested and you are being assailed on the right hand and on the left, and there is every reason outwardly for your moving, giving up, falling down, surrendering, lowering your standard, just to stand and not be moved in your faith is the greatest possible victory....

We are passing through deep experiences, the enemy is doing it and the Lord is not preventing him, but we are coming to a fuller knowledge of the power of our God and a deeper rooting beyond all previous shakeableness. And the Lord is seeking to have a people who cannot be shaken, against whom hell with all its demonstration of arrogance and pride, is impotent. *“And the remnant... shall again take root downward.”* That is what the Lord needs.

From: Rooted and Grounded
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002932.html

January 6

We have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:16)

Our natural mind is a great obstacle in the race which we are running, cropping up all the time with its complexes, its arguments, its interests and its methods. When the Corinthians were brought into the Church they left behind their obvious sins, but they carried over into their new realm the old, natural ways of thinking and reasoning which belonged to the world and not to the Spirit of God. But the apostle remonstrated with them: “But we

have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:16), so urging them to allow the Cross to be planted between the natural mind and the spiritual.

We shall only come to the fullness of Christ as we leave behind the mind of the natural man and move on more and more in the progress of the mind of Christ. On everything; every judgment, every conclusion, every analysis, and every appraisal; we must ask the Lord: "Is that Your mind, Lord, or is it mine?" We may sometimes feel that we have the strongest ground for taking up a certain attitude or coming to a certain conclusion; we may feel that we have all the evidence and so are convinced; and yet we may be wrong.

The man who wrote the letter to the Corinthians knew from deep and bitter experience that this was the case. "I verily thought... that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," he said (Acts 26:9). There was no man who had stronger convictions as to the rightness of his course than Saul of Tarsus. The great revolution which took place in him when he came to Christ was that he had to say: "I have been all wrong in my fundamental way of thinking." After that confession he made good headway in the race because he was always ready to subject his thinking to the jurisdiction of his crucified Lord. This is the way of spiritual progress. We shall not get very far while we hold to our own opinions and our own conclusions, even though we may have the support of others; we have to learn to conquer our natural mind by submission to the mind of Christ. This is most important if we are concerned about spiritual progress. And spiritual progress is the increase of Christ – there is no other.

From: God's Purpose in All - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002968.html

January 7

*None of you can be My disciples unless you give up everything.
(Luke 14:33 GW)*

Nothing is truly established until it has been yielded up and has received the brand of the Cross upon it. Have you got that? Even though that may have been given to you from God, there is still always the danger of something in ourselves impinging upon something that God has given us. We insinuate ourselves into it, and make it ours somehow. This Self! This flesh! Oh, yes, God gives us a ministry and then we get hold of it and become jealous about our ministry and afraid of other people getting in our way and taking our ministry away from us; interfering with *our* ministry, you see. The flesh comes up in that way and in so many other directions and connections. God does something, and then we come into it. We get into the picture.

Somehow or other this flesh cannot keep itself out of even the things that God does by a miracle. We turn them to the glorification or the gratification of this flesh of ours, and even a thing which God may give – and you are thinking perhaps of different things which God may give – will never be established and confirmed until it has been yielded up and knows the mark of death to ourselves and that is only alive for and unto God, and we are only alive for and unto God in that connection, whatever it may be. The Cross is the way of Life in everything and immediately the Cross is nullified by this thing upon which the Cross says, “No, No!” Immediately anything of that comes up again, we counter the life of that thing, we strangle its life, and we limit its life. We not only arrest the progress, but we bring into smallness God’s intention of multiplication. Why cannot God increase? And the answer is clearly and definitely this: that somehow or other man has come into this business of God and turned it to himself. The Cross has not been kept in its place to give God a clear, full, free way.

From: Christ – All in All

<https://www.austin-sparks.net/english/000617.html>

January 8

He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him. (2 Corinthians 5:15 NIV)

We can only know Christ after the Spirit, so that Christ for us in this dispensation is spiritual in the sense that all that we know of Him or can have to do with Him can only be in the Spirit. “*Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer.*” (2 Cor. 5:16). He is known after the Spirit. Our resources are spiritual. The weapons of our warfare are spiritual. Everything has got to come to us from above. The one great effort of the enemy, which is again and again successful through this dispensation, has been to bring the things of God down to the attachment with this world, attachment to this earth, to make them something here....

You only need to read John to see how unattached everything is, how everything is lifted clean out of this world, and everything is bound up with the fact that Christ is in heaven, and that the Lord’s people are here, but not here; here, but not known; in the world, but not of it; a mystery people in this world so far as the world is concerned... unrecognized, unknown. And yet by that very means and for that very reason, the most potent force that this universe knows: the spiritual, hidden, secret people of God in this earth.

To take hold of Christianity and mold it, and shape it, and systematize it, and crystallize it, and make it some mighty movement here; with its roots here, with all its associations such as man can see, appreciate and

approve; to register itself upon the ordinary consciousness of this world as being something; all of that is contrary to the Word of God and is contrary to spiritual life and spiritual power. Christ is in heaven, and we are lifted out, translated, seated together with Him in the heavenlies. Our present purpose in this world is testimony only, by which others will be taken out of the nations, a people for His name.

From: That Which Was From The Beginning - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002953.html

January 9

He must increase, but I must decrease. (John 3:30)

What is spiritual growth? What is spiritual maturity? What is it to go on in the Lord? I fear we have got mixed ideas about this. Many think that spiritual maturity is a more comprehensive knowledge of Christian doctrine, a larger grasp of scriptural truth, a wider expanse of the knowledge of the things of God; and many such features are recorded as marks of growth, development, and spiritual maturity. Beloved, it is nothing of the kind.

The hallmark of true spiritual development and maturity is this, that we have grown so much less and the Lord Jesus has grown so much more. The mature soul is one who is small in his or her own eyes, but in whose eyes the Lord Jesus is great. That is growth. We may know a very great deal, have a wonderful grasp of doctrine, of teaching, of truth, even of the Scriptures, and yet be spiritually very small, very immature, and very childish. (There is all the difference between being childish and child-like.) Real spiritual growth is just this: I decrease, He increases. It is the Lord Jesus becoming more. You can test spiritual growth by that.

From: Christ – All, and in All
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000617.html

January 10

*Everything was created through Him and for Him.
(Colossians 1:16 NLT)*

The key to everything with God is Life.... We must realize that Christ's ascendancy, supremacy, power, ability and all that goes with Headship, is in terms of His prerogative of Life. He is the Son, vested with Life; He has the right given Him of God to give Life to as many as believe. That is why He is Head. You can set up people in office and make Popes of them and they may make great claims, but what does it amount to? When

you come up against death, what can they do? But bring in one who has the power of life over death, be he ever so humble on this earth, he is head, he is master, he is lord. You may bring all the greatest physicians that the world knows into the presence of death, and when death takes charge, they are helpless. But supposing you bring in a little, insignificant person who is nobody, with no capabilities whatever in this world, no training, and that one be invested with the power of life over death, he rules out all these others, they are as nothing in his presence, he is lord of the situation.

Christ is Head, not just by appointment, but in terms of Life. We may be very insignificant people on this earth, nothing at all to be taken account of by the world, but if only we have Christ in fullness of Life we are in a supreme position, we make all the great organizations and institutions as nothing. It is a spiritual thing, the impact of Christ; not tradition, not history, not theology, but the spiritual power of His presence in terms of Life through faith and righteousness.

From: The Meaning of Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001873.html

January 11

As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world has been crucified, and the world's interest in me has also died.

(Galatians 6:14 NLT)

A truly crucified people are never in danger of the world. It is only when the Cross has not done its work that the world has a place. The world has no place with a crucified man or woman, or a crucified company of believers. The Cross is a great defensive against the world. *If you want to keep the world out, put the Cross in its place.* If the Cross is truly in its place in fullness, then everything else will come into order. *The Cross* is the great defensive against the world. *The Cross* is the great defensive against evil powers. *The Cross* makes everything safe; it makes everything safe for the Lord. You see, the Lord wants to commit Himself. He wants to trust Himself to His people, but if the Cross is not there at work, the Lord cannot trust Himself to them. The Lord says, "It is not safe for Me to give Myself there, or I should be involved in their un-crucified condition." The Cross makes everything safe for the Lord, and the Cross makes everything safe for the Church. If the Cross is really at work in all of us, we can trust one another. It is quite safe to trust yourself to a crucified man or woman.

From: The Altar (The Cross) Governs Everything
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000434.html

January 12

Because I live, you also will live. (John 14:19 NIV)

Relationship with God today in so many directions, and over such a wide range, is not a living relationship. There is an acknowledgment of God, there is a form of worship of God, there are rites connected with God; yes, there is a recognition in a greater or lesser measure of a kind of devotion to God, worship of God, acknowledgment of God, perhaps desire for God, but all short of a living relationship with God. Yet that He is the living God means that those who are related to Him should live. He would say, “Because I live ye shall live also.” A living relationship with God is possible....

It is not a relationship with some dead order of things, but with a living Person. But I must ask, Have you that living relationship? Are you following a system, an order, or are you in living fellowship with a living God? The Lord desires that such a relationship with Him shall be living all the way along. It is a great thing to know that you have access to the living God. You do not know whether a thing is right or wrong? Well, you have the living God, ask Him; He is open, He is accessible, He is alive; you can have dealings with Him. Just to enjoy a living relationship with a living God is how He wills it to be. The desire of His heart is that you should treat Him as being a living God. “He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” We must believe, when we come, that He is; not feeling out into the universe, the vacant, empty universe. No, we are coming to a living Person; we believe that He is! There is nothing vague about that.

From: The Living God
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002994.html

January 13

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:2)

We speak about natural laws. What are natural laws? Take the law of nourishment. Provided that law is complied with, honored; and at the right time the body is given what it needs, not more, not less; the law of nourishment deals with that and quite spontaneously works out in development, growth, to express itself in various ways. It is the working of a natural law spontaneously. You do not sit down with the law, and watch it, and worry about it. What you do is to feed yourself, and leave all the rest to the law. If you violate the law you know all about it, but acting rightly in relation to the law you will not be fretting all day long about the law of nourishment, you will simply be taking your meals and getting on with

your work. The result is that you are able to work, able to go on; you are nourished.

The law of the Spirit of Life in Christ is like that. It is a law of Life, and it works out in a practical way when respected and honored. It works out spontaneously in certain directions. It has its own results quite naturally. The law of the Spirit of Life in Christ is that law by which we become aware. That is the simplest way of putting things. The Lord Jesus knew that at a certain time He could not act, could not speak; He had no movement of the Spirit in quickening, no Life to do so at that time; in His spirit there was no movement of Life; the law was not active in the positive way. But when the Father, Who knew what was required in speech or action, saw that the time had come, He did not bend down and speak with an audible voice into His ear, and say, "Now is the time! Say this! Do that!" He simply quickened Him inwardly. The law of Life became active in that direction, and He knew by an inward quickening what the mind of God was. That is what Paul means when he says, "The mind of the Spirit is Life."

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002221.html

January 14

*I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.
(Philippians 4:13 NLT)*

Christ's spirituality was not that He was remote from what was practical in everyday life. It was that He was bringing heavenly forces and resources to bear upon the practical matters of everyday life. You can wash doors, or clothes, or floors, or do any of these ordinary domestic things, in spirituality. People seem to think that spiritual work and ordinary work, household work for example, are two different things. They talk about the spiritual work and the other work. Now, you can bring heavenly resources in to do anything that is legitimate, and the doing of those things may be a testimony.

The majority of people have no occasion to draw upon heavenly resources for a platform ministry. For the most part their work is of some regular, daily kind, and very often they feel utterly unable for it, and they are tempted to think that if they had some spiritual ministry to fulfill, if they had to go and take a meeting, or speak to some souls about spiritual matters, they could make a claim upon the Lord for help and He would carry them through. For the trivial round and common task such a thought is all too often wholly absent from the mind. Now, exactly the same resources have to come into the ordinary work as into what we call spiritual work. It has all to be done on a spiritual basis, and therefore to be

a testimony. To get through an ordinary day's work often requires something more than ordinary human resources. Spirituality consists in our doing everything as out from heaven. Let us be careful how we draw a line, lest we make a distinction between the spiritual and "the rest."

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 10

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002225.html

January 15

What the flesh wants is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit wants is opposed to the flesh. They are opposed to each other.
(Galatians 5:17 ISV)

These two are in age-long conflict, in antagonism. It is ever so. When you have a fresh experience of the Holy Spirit, the next thing you find is that you are in a new conflict against the old flesh-life in yourself. This rising up of the flesh within is provoked by the devil because he sees the inheritance in view, for when the Spirit comes, the inheritance comes into view. He has come to bring to the inheritance. So do not be surprised if after an experience of the Spirit the next thing you have to face is this conflict with the assertion of the flesh across the path to hinder your going into possession. It is only when you have received the Holy Spirit that you know the conflict of the flesh and what is the withstanding of the flesh. Those who have not the Spirit have no such conflict of flesh and Spirit; they are not in that realm, but wholly in the flesh realm. The Holy Spirit has come in relation to the end, and the end is the inheritance in Christ, and flesh moved by Satan rises up to frustrate that end, and to rob you of the inheritance. The peril is that having begun in the Spirit, you might turn aside to make some compromise with Amalek, because of the hardness of the way, the greatness of the cost, by reason of the conflict and forgetting God's word – "utterly destroy Amalek" (1 Samuel 15:3). "Walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4).

From: Our Inheritance in Christ

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002915.html

January 16

To him who overcomes I will give the privilege of sitting down with Me on My throne, as I also have overcome and have sat down with My Father on His throne. (Revelation 3:21 WNT)

We all have resurrection Life if we are joined to Christ as Resurrection, but there is something more than that; there is resurrection

power, which carries us eventually (if it has its full outworking) to the Throne, and not all will come to the Throne. It is “*to him that overcomes.*” Caleb, like Paul, and Paul, like Caleb, stood against the more general course of things amongst the Lord’s people. The majority were content with going so far as to the inheritance, possessing so much, and there staying and settling down. An unfinished course, a curtailed spiritual advance, an accepting of something less than what God had appointed and intended. The majority took that course, but Caleb was never content and he stood against the majority just as he had always stood against a majority that did not represent God’s full mind....

Spiritual leadership always involves loneliness. That is the cost of it. The overcomers will always be, so far as the larger Christian world is concerned, a lonely company, having to go on, with few able to follow. Caleb could not accept the popular voice, his heart was too set upon the Lord. He wholly followed the Lord, not the popular and general standard of Christian life. We may say that Caleb was the very embodiment of all that God meant the whole people to be. When you see Caleb you see what God wished all Israel to be, but all Israel did not come to the standard of Caleb. But the Lord gets in a Caleb the satisfaction of His heart. The Lord realizes His full thought in a Caleb, in the same way as He does in a Paul.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 14

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002870.html

January 17

Three things will last forever – faith, hope, and love – and the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13 NLT)

You can have all the gifts and be very immature. Spiritual increase is not by knowing all these things, the way of growth is not by faith's power externally manifested, but more by inward endurance. Do you want to know the way of the increase of God? It is by *love*. What the Lord needs is an open, pure spirit towards *Himself*, and love toward *all* saints; the Lord will bring into His greater fullness where there is a genuine love one to the other – *in Him*.... The Ephesian letter in which there is the fullest unveiling of heavenly truth in the deepest teaching concerning the Church, the Body of Christ, there is from start to finish the golden thread of *love* running all through; this is significant when you consider what the letter contains. 1 Corinthians 13 is the great chapter on love, and is put over beside all the “gifts.” Love is the real spirituality *that is spirituality*. Love is the most difficult and the greatest of all gifts. “Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own affections” (2 Cor. 6:12 ASV). You are so narrow, so limited, like a closed hedge, pent up, cramped! “Our heart is enlarged, ye are not straitened in us.”

The measure of our spiritual life is no greater than our heart; the knowledge that is in the head is not the measure of spirituality, the way for your release, emancipation, increase, abundance is the way of the heart. Spirituality is not mental agreement on things stated in the Word, it is the melting of one heart to another – to all saints. The devil has locked up a number of the Lord’s children as in a padded room of their own limitations; frozen their love by something between them and other children of God. The way out is by increase of love; and we shall remain locked up until we are there.... True spirituality is the measure of love of God shed abroad in the heart, all the spirituals rest upon and have their rise out of *love*. Not power, or knowledge, or different gifts, these are not the first things, the first thing is love. *That* leads to the increase of God.

From: The Increase of God
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002964.html

January 18

Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. (John 17:5)

I think it is quite clear that the Lord Jesus carried in His heart a great longing and a prayer for the glory that He once had. This is where I think John touches this matter very closely. In the seventeenth chapter of his gospel, he records that great prayer of the Lord Jesus: “Father, glorify Thou Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (vs. 5). That opens a window and lets us see that the Lord Jesus had a consciousness of His eternal glory past. He carried it with Him; He knew about it – marvelous thought! – and that the consciousness of that former glory was ever prompting Him to pray toward, long toward, the day when He would return to it and it would return to Him. “Father, glorify Thou Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” The Mount of Transfiguration had become an answer to His heart’s prayer and cry and longing – at least a touch of it. A fleeting touch, but for Him it was one of those things which perhaps you know a little about in your Christian life. The Lord just does something – it passes, but you know by it that you have been heard; you know that there is sympathy in the Father’s heart for your need and situation. It may only last for a day, or a night, for an hour, or for a little while, and then pass, because the end of the road is not yet; the eternal glory has not yet come; but the touch by the way is something that carries us on. We know the Lord has heard; we know the Lord has taken account of that inner cry and longing, and has given us a token of His sympathy. It was like that with the Lord Jesus – the answer to His own cry.

From: Men Whose Eyes Have Seen the King - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000932.html

January 19

By Myself I can do nothing. (John 5:30 NIV)

One of the most difficult lessons that the Lord's children have to learn is how to let go to God. Even in a matter that is right and in the purpose of God, there has to be the lessons which Abraham had to learn through Isaac. It is not in our personal clinging to a God-given *thing*, whether it be a promise or a possession, but faith's restful and fear-free holding on to the Lord Himself. If we had a thing from the Lord Himself we can rest assured that what He gives He will not take again without some larger purpose in view; and on the other hand, none can take from us what He has determined for us. But there are many dangers which arise from our own will in relation to a Divine gift or purpose.

The first is of making that thing ours instead of holding it in and for the Lord. This leads to fierceness and personal uprisings. Then jealousy will not be long in showing its ugly head, and jealousy with its twin – suspicion – soon destroy fellowship and spontaneity of communion. Does not jealousy declare most loudly the fact of personal possession, personal interest? If we realized how privileged we are to have even a very small part in the things of God, and how it is all of His Grace, surely we should be very grateful that we could just have the remotest connection with Him. Then further, when we hold things received or as promised or believed to be for us as only unto the Lord, in restful trust, we make it possible for the Lord to save us from being mistaken in the matter. It is not an unusual thing for a child of God to come to see that a thing which he or she most strongly believed to be God's will or way for them was not so, and it had to be surrendered. If there was any personal element of will in it the experience has proved terrible, and has left works of bitterness and mistrust. Yet once again, a strong personal mind and will in relation to things of God too often makes us a law unto ourselves. That is, we get into an attitude which implies that we *only* know the will of God in the matter. We do not trust that others also may be led of the Lord in this thing, and so the corporateness of guidance so necessary to the house of God is destroyed or paralyzed.

From: "The Flame of a Sword"
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002919.html

January 20

You died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:3 NLT)

It is a tremendous thing to live in this dispensation when the Lord, though having acquired the rights of the universe, of the whole creation, by

His Cross, is specifically concentrated upon the treasure now, to get it out of the creation. “The kingdom of heaven (it should be in the plural, the kingdom of the heavens) is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid....”

The Lord is doing a secret work in relation to the Church. It is always a dangerous thing to bring what we conceive to be the Church out into a conspicuous place, and make a public thing of it. The real Church is a secret, hidden company, and a hidden and secret work is going on in it. That is its safety. When you and I launch out into great public movements, displaying and advertising, we expose the work of God, and open it to infinite perils. Our safety is in keeping where God has put us, in the hidden, secret place with Himself.... All the way through this life we have to learn the change from what is, after all, ourselves in relation to God, to what is God Himself in us. There is a great deal that is of ourselves in relation to God, and I expect there will be in some measure right to the end. There is still something of our minds at work on God’s things. We may be thinking that they are God’s thoughts, God’s mentality, but there is still much that is of our human mind, the mental make-up of ourselves in relation to the things of God, and we shall always find that God’s mind is other than that, and we have to give place to new conceptions of the Lord.

From: All Things In Christ - Chapter 9

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002775.html

January 21

The time is coming, yes, and has already come, when true worshippers will worship in spirit and in reality. Indeed, the Father looks for men who will worship Him like that. (John 4:23 Phillips)

Jesus said to the woman, “the hour cometh, and now is.” Then He dismissed the whole system that had existed up to that time. It was the whole system of Judaism according to the Old Testament. In one sentence, He dismissed the whole dispensation. And He introduced an altogether new order of things. What did He mean? Because when He said the hour cometh, and now is, He did not mean literally just an hour and so many minutes. He meant that it was the first hour of the new day. With this hour an altogether new day has come. What is the new day? If you would have asked Jesus to put it into a short sentence, He would have said, “Well, I am here.” The hour is not just a matter of time but a matter of PERSON. The new dispensation is the dispensation of Jesus Christ. Christ is the new dispensation. “I am here,” He said. You go through that Gospel of John. He is centering everything in Himself. “I am the Way; I am the Truth; I am the Life; I am the Shepherd; I am the Vine; I am the Resurrection.” *It is a Person.* It is that which lies behind everything. Christianity is Christ. Christ is Christianity. That is where it all begins and it never departs from HIM.

The development of the Christian life is only the development of Jesus Christ in the life.

From: "That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One" - Meeting 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001074.html

January 22

Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; they will see the land that is very far off. (Isaiah 33:17 NKJV)

There is a phrase in the Word: "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land of far distances," and that two-fold statement can quite truly, and rightly, be applied to Him. He is the King in His beauty; and He is also the Land of Far Distances. Now, to come into a living relationship with the Lord Jesus is to come, sooner or later, to the impasse of the incomprehensible, and we just have to say: "Lord, You are beyond me! Lord, I cannot comprehend; You are too much for me!"

That, of course, on the one side, means difficulties, for it puts us into a difficult position in that we cannot trace Him, follow Him, and understand Him. But, on the other side, we would not have it otherwise; we would not have a "little" Christ whom we could comprehend and altogether understand with our little minds. No, He is beyond us altogether, and what you and I, as His people, are destined to come to if we go on with Him, is just this: that He is ever reaching farther and farther beyond us, and drawing us out beyond ourselves, beyond our resources of mind and will, yet drawing us on, and making us know that we have got to go on. We just cannot stand still; we have to go on.

From: Divine Order – In Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002835.html

January 23

*I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.
(John 10:10 ISV)*

Remember – "In Him was life" (John 1:4). Is He different in nature from other men? Everyone can see that He is different from other men in His very nature, and the difference is made by this Life that is in Him. This Life brings with it a new and different consciousness. Look at the Lord Jesus! What was His real consciousness? This was a thing about which He was always speaking, and it was so very evident in His case. He said: "*I and the Father are one*" (John 10:30); "*I do always the things that are*

pleasing to Him" (the Father) (John 8:29); "*The works that I do in My Father's name*" (John 10:25). Oh, this word "Father" in John's Gospel!

The consciousness of Jesus Christ every day was of His union with His Father, the oneness that existed between them: "*As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee*" (John 17:21). The consciousness of the Lord Jesus was of the very closest union with God as His Father, and that was because the very life of God was in Him. His life was a God-conscious life; but God-consciousness in the sense of perfect oneness. And that is what it means to have this Life. Man never had that. Jesus came to bring it in His own person: not to talk about union with God, but to live out a life of union with God and to bring His disciples into the same union. "*I came that they might have life*" – in other words: "I am come that they may have the same consciousness of God as Father that I have and that they may have the same Divine nature in them as I have."

From: Discipleship In The School Of Christ - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001449.html

January 24

By dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. (Romans 7:6 NIV)

Service begins with separation from the world, emancipation from the kingdom of this world, but it is a very thoroughgoing thing. Oh, that the church would recognize this, that God's last word about this matter of emancipation and separation is "*there shall not a hoof be left behind*" (Ex. 10:26). You see, Moses' service was a very thoroughgoing service, and it went that far, that not a hoof was left behind, and that is service to God. "See that the people are utterly out, and there is no link remaining...."

Do remember that service is always governed by this: a deep inward separation. It is not enough for us to come out from the world and become parts of the people of God. Something more than that is necessary. The whole self-life in us has got to be definitely dealt with, and a great separation has to take place there. The impulsive, hot, fiery Moses has to become the quiet, patient, meek Moses... learning, perhaps above all things, meekness and patience. What a discipline of those forty years of self-emptying. Presently when he really enters upon his life's work, his life service, one of the things that he will need most will be patience, and there is nothing more calculated to produce patience than the discipline of inaction.

We do not learn patience when we can keep busy, when we can gratify all our impulses by doing something. But when we are not allowed to do anything, when we are cut off from ministry and work and service,

and shut up to the discipline of inaction and the discipline of delay, God is preparing for better service than we would ever have fulfilled otherwise.

From: The Cross and the Way of Life - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002851.html

January 25

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. (Colossians 3:1 NLT)

You never have to say to one whose heart is wholly set upon God: “You must give up this and give up that.” Leave such a one with the Lord, and you will find those things go. It is a very blessed thing to see a heart set upon the Lord. You need have no worries in that direction. All the anxiety lies in the realm where the heart is not wholly for the Lord. The apostle’s two letters to the Thessalonians are full of joy. He thanked the Lord on every remembrance of them. He could not speak too highly of them or in terms too glowing, simply because they turned from the world unto God, “*to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven,*” and he had no anxiety about them. When you turn to the Corinthians... there is a good deal of trouble. It is the wilderness situation again – a divided heart.

A resurrection basis gives God a chance that is right out to the Lord from the world. All that that means we have to learn. We shall come to things we never expected if we are going on with the Lord. Things on which we were so clearly settled as things being of God, and never for one moment expected to have a question about, become challenged. Not that they were not of God, but they were only of God up to a point, and now there is something more beyond them. And unless we go on to the something more, the good becomes the enemy of the best. And so, because of comparative values, we have to leave what is good for the better; and then later the better for the best. It can only come about as we are really going on with the Lord. But that requires, first of all, that we have made a clean cut and have said: “I am out on resurrection ground. I am out with the Lord utterly.”

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002858.html

January 26

To me, to live is Christ. (Philippians 1:21 NIV)

In the wilderness the whole of our natural life is brought out, and we come to know our weakness and emptiness; that we have nothing. Thus it is that we now find everything in Christ and so can go over and possess. What is the secret of possession, of coming into our inheritance? It is that we have come to the place where all things are “in Christ” and *He* is everything – our very Life and being. Our flesh is cut off and we know as the deepest thing in our being, that unless God does everything in us by His Spirit, all is of no value. *We must come to an end of our own working in order to come into His fullness.* It is so easy to sit down in our weakness and nurse ourselves, but the Lord says at that point, “Arise and possess.” Your inheritance is not here on earth, it is in Christ in the heavenlies; not in yourselves, your fullness is in Him. It is ever *His Fullness* over against your emptiness; *His Strength* over against your weakness; your inheritance is *all He is*, as typified to Israel by the land flowing with milk and honey.

Paul says of Timothy, “he worketh the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. 16:10). There is to be an end of our works so far as we are concerned, nothing of *us*, as out from ourselves; but God says, in effect: “with your nothingness I will possess the heavens and the earth.” Oh, to be such a people, chastened and emptied of self, for the Holy Spirit by His energies to display the moral glories of the Lord Jesus *in us* and so through us. “To the intent that *now* unto principalities and powers might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:10,11). “That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace... for we are His workmanship” (Eph. 2:7,10).

From: Our Inheritance in Christ - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002916.html

January 27

One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see. (John 9:25)

What is the beginning of the Christian life? It is a seeing. It must be a seeing. The very logic of things demands that it shall be a seeing; for this reason – that the whole of the Christian life is to be a progressive movement along one line, to one end. That line and that end is Christ. That was the issue with the man born blind in John 9.

You will remember how, after they cast him out, Jesus found him, and said to him, “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” and the man answered and said, “And who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him?” Jesus said unto him, “Thou hast both seen Him and He it is That speaketh

with thee." And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him. The issue of spiritual sight is the recognition of the Lord Jesus, and it is going to be that all the way through from start to finish.

We may say that our salvation was a matter of seeing ourselves as sinners. But had it been left there it would have been a poor lookout for us. No, the whole matter is summed up into seeing Jesus; and when you really see Jesus, what happens? What happened to Saul of Tarsus? Well, a whole lot of things happened, and mighty things which nothing else would have accomplished. You would never have argued Saul of Tarsus into Christianity; you would never have frightened him into Christianity; you would never have either reasoned or emotionalized him into being a Christian. To get that man out of Judaism needed something more than could have been found on this earth. But he saw Jesus of Nazareth, and that did it. He is out, he is an emancipated man, he has seen.

From: Spiritual Sight - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001060.html

January 28

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you. (Ephesians 1:18 NIV)

The Holy Spirit's illumination concerning the church is a thing so difficult to explain to any who may not have experienced it. But to those who have seen it, it needs no explanation. It makes such a difference on all these matters. You will be able to preach Ephesians, Colossians, Romans; preach all about the church as the Body of Christ; you may read it all in books, and still there may be no real expression of it. Then one day it was as though the heavens opened and the thing broke upon your spirit, and you *saw* it; and all kinds of adjustments became necessary in life. You can say, "I saw that the church was no denominational or national thing; I believed in the oneness of all believers..." yes, you can say all that! And yet there is something more. That something can only come by revelation. You can have the other, and it will just take you so far. But get that something more, and it will take you a long way ahead. It brings you into the realm of the conflict and cost, but you are out in an altogether new realm. It is necessary to God's end.

It is one thing to say these things and point them out and emphasize them; you say: "How do you get it? We see what you mean, it is all quite clear, but we have not got it!" Well, if you really are of the undivided heart, if your heart is wholly set upon the Lord and you see as far as you can see these things, and have very definite dealings with the Lord about it; it may not be in a day, it may be slowly, steadily, quietly you begin to move into a new realm of understanding. And you find that your point of view changes;

your standard of values changes; your insight changes. It may take months, but at the end of the time you say: "I am changed! Something has happened to me. I can no longer accept what I used to accept!" It may be like that, or it may come in a flash. How it comes does not matter very much, the fact is the importance of this thing – spiritual illumination. The apostle prayed that these to whom he wrote might have it. Let us pray that we might have it, and that all the Lord's people might come into that.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002858.html

January 29

*God... was pleased to reveal His Son in me.
(Galatians 1:15,16 NIV)*

Spiritual discernment, perception, understanding and intelligence are all too rare. The causes are many. The engrossment with the work and its multifarious concerns; the rush and hurry of life; the restless spirit of the age; these, with an exhaustive provision of external religious facilities, all tend to render the inner place of Divine speaking inoperative or impossible of functioning. Perhaps we have forgotten that the Bible is not only a revelation, but also contains a revelation, and that that deeper spiritual content is only possible of recognition and realization by such as have had their eyes and ears opened; in other words – who have been awakened.

Some of the Lord's most faithful servants are still only occupied with the letter of the Word, the contents of books, topics, themes, subjects, outlines, analyses, etc., and in the deepest sense are not in "revelation." (This is not meant as a criticism). The difference too often is that of a ministry to the mind or head, and not one to the heart or spirit. The former will sooner or later tire and weary both the minister and those ministered to. The latter is a ministry of Life to both, and is inexhaustible in freshness. Whether it comes at the beginning or later, it is the greatest day in our history of which we can say: "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me." "I received it, not from men but by revelation." That is the beginning of an inwardness of things which may have many crisis issues. One of these is the one of which we are particularly thinking now, namely, the awakening to see what is the thought and desire of God at given and specific times. Such a revelation – through the Scriptures – is nothing less than revolutionary, though usually costly.

From: The Candlestick All of Gold
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001541.html

January 30

Looking to Jesus.... (Hebrews 12:2 ESV)

There is a real touch of Paul in this Letter to the Hebrews – “Looking off unto Jesus.” Whoever actually wrote this Letter, the shadow of Paul is over it. His influence is everywhere. And certainly he was called upon to look off unto Jesus. Now that is a very vital lesson for us to learn. We have to do that again and again in our Christian life. If we get our eyes upon anything but the Lord Jesus we just go to pieces. Have all respect for God’s saints. I am not saying that you have to eye every servant of God with suspicion and be saying all the time: “Well, of course, he is not perfect, you know.” Give honor to whom honor is due, but never build your faith upon any man, however good he may be.

And as for ourselves – well, I think perhaps we are more tempted to look at ourselves than anything else! This is one of our real Christian exercises. We have continually to remove our eyes from ourselves and everything to do with ourselves. There is nothing more discouraging than this self of ours, and nothing more misleading. Our own judgments are all wrong, and so are our thoughts and ideas. They are not God’s thoughts. We must take our eyes off ourselves, but not look out into space and be vacant.

“*Look off unto Jesus,*” and you know how that sentence is finished – “*Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.*” Did you start this thing? Are you a Christian because you decided to be a Christian? Well, the Lord help you if that is so! No, He started this thing. Are you not glad that you can say: “It was the Lord who found me. It was the Lord who put His hand on me.” What He said is very true: “*Ye did not choose Me, but I chose you*” (John 15:16). He was the author of our faith, and it says that He is the finisher – He will finish it.

From: The On-High Calling Volume 1 - Chapter 9
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000974.html

January 31

I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe Him. (Ephesians 1:19 NLT)

Let us point out that after His resurrection our Lord was, because of the peculiar nature of His resurrection state, no longer subject to natural limitations. Time and space now had no control of Him. This principle abides, and it applies now. When there is a living in the values and energy of resurrection Life we are children of eternity and of the universe. Prayer touches the ends of the earth, and the significance of our being and doing is of universal and eternal dimensions: there are no limitations. So then,

beloved of God, the natural life is no longer a criterion; whether it be strong or weak matters not. Its strength does not mean effectiveness in spiritual things, whether that strength be intellectual, moral, social or physical. Its weakness does not carry a handicap.

We are called to live and serve only in His Life, which is the only efficient and sure one. What is true of the Head must be true of the members. What is true of the Vine must be true of the branches. What is true of the last Adam must be true of every member of His race. “Planted together in the likeness of his resurrection” said the apostle (Romans 6:5), and he prayed that it might be more and more experiential – “that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection” (Philippians 3:10). That should be the prayer of every true Spirit-led servant of Christ.

From: In The Likeness of His Resurrection
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000437.html

February 1

For God loved the world so much.... (John 3:16 NLT)

There is a great weight made to rest upon that little word “for” – “*For God so loved the world.*” We say that John 3:16 is the heart of the gospel: but it is much more than that, it is the heart of the universe. There is back of all things in this created universe a heart; not just a mind or a will, a design, a reason, a power, a fiat, but a heart. We are familiar with the attempts to prove there is a design in creation, that there is a mind behind the universe, and that a will brought it into being. That is all quite good and right; but we are not so often asked to consider that behind it all there is a heart – and more heart than anything else. The reason, the will, the design, come from the heart. Everything takes its rise in the heart of God.

We have said much about the thoughts of God, the counsels of God. The nearer we get to the very center of things, the more we shall become affected by this fact, that right there in the center is a heart. It is a heart that we shall come to eventually; not an explanation to satisfy our reason, not a demonstration of power, but just a heart – but a mighty heart: and when we use that word rightly, we simply mean love. We speak of people being heartless. That means that they are without all that love means. Love is not the governing thing in their thoughts, actions, and motives; they are strangers to love. Heart then, for us, means love, and when we say that back of all things and at the center of all things there is a heart, we mean there is love.

From: His Great Love - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001268.html

February 2

To you who believe, He is precious. (1 Peter 2:7)

If you or I claim to have more light, more revelation – *God forbid* that we should ever make claims like that! – but if we should think that it is so, the proof and the value is – do people see more of Christ in us than others? For God never moves beyond His Son, He never moves to theories or teachings or doctrines or things that we call revelations. He only keeps within the compass of His living Son in manifestation....

Let us ask the Lord to create in us a passionate ambition to express the Lord Jesus more than anything else. Not to preach great truths, or to be preachers, teachers, anything like that as such, but to express the Lord Jesus, that out of Himself, His own presence, His own measure, His own nature, our opportunities for preaching, if we are going to preach at all, will come, not because we can talk, but because it is known that we have something of the Lord. Do not let us live too much in the upper stories of the house of God. The house of God is one, and it has a basement and it has a kitchen. We do not want to always live up on the top flat, so heavenly, so spiritual, so abstract, so high up in truth that the practical things of the kitchen are left unattended to.

What would you say if you went into a house and were taken upstairs and shown a very glorious, wonderfully adorned upper flat, and then somehow you managed to get down to the kitchen and found the most awful filthy mess, out of all consistency with what you found upstairs? You'd say, "There is something wrong here, this does not tally." There is the kitchen aspect of the spiritual life: all those practical, everyday, humdrum things where the beauty of the Lord must be seen, just as much as up there in the heavenlies in Christ. Do not let us live exclusively up there. We must live down here. That is what the Word of God does. That is what Paul did in his Ephesian letter. He wrote half of it about the heavenlies, then, without breaking it into chapters, he went straight on with his letter: "I... beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called," and then – husbands, wives, children, parents, masters, mistresses, servants – that is coming down to the kitchen, bringing the glory of heaven with you. It is a very important side of things. Preciousness must be found down here. "As in heaven, so on earth."

From: Features Of Zion - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002135.html

February 3

*If another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path.
(Galatians 6:1 NLT)*

If really we have come to any kind of spiritual appreciation of the greatness of the thing the Lord has done for us in the Cross – brought us into His own fullness and subdued all our enemies – we cannot be a mean people, we cannot be small and petty, we must be generous because of the greatness of our position in Christ. It simply works out in this way: the larger our apprehension of what the Lord has done for us in His Cross, the more generous we ought to be to others – the more longsuffering and forbearing, the less ready to quickly return evil for evil, more ready to bear and to suffer wrong. It must be a very limited apprehension of Calvary when we very swiftly snap at one another for things that we feel are wrong. There has to be a very great deal of overlooking, a great deal of generosity, grace has got to triumph by reason of the exalted spiritual place: the elevation of our position in the heavenlies. These cities must rule, grace must predominate in the heavenlies. There is provision made for mistakes, even when you get to the heavenlies in Christ. It does not look like sinless perfection. It does not look as though all the faults and the mistakes and the blunders and the injuries have ended, even when you come into the heavenlies. It looks as though grace will still be necessary to bear with things that go wrong. There must be some wrong, then, even when we get spiritually to that position. The Lord says that there is grace for that.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 13
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002869.html

February 4

*Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great.
(1 Timothy 3:16 NIV)*

Very often it may seem but poor comfort to us in times of suffering, times of trial, times of adversity, times when Satan is pressing hard, to be told that, while we can see nothing of the meaning of all this, God is instructing angels, and that principalities and powers are deriving the benefit of it all. We do not draw a great deal of comfort from that, but if we understood I think we would realize that, while we may not at such times be fulfilling a very big ministry on the earth, there is a big ministry going on towards principalities and powers through our instrumentality. Do not think that running about taking meetings, and doing work for the Lord, is the only kind of ministry that members of the Church can fulfill. Ministry may be equally being fulfilled when these things have been brought to a

standstill, and all earthly activities for the Lord stopped, and we are in one of these painful periods of inaction. Do not conclude that because of such inaction no ministry is being rendered, or that everything of that kind is cut off at such a time. Here is the word: "...that *now* unto the principalities and the powers in heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God" – not in the coming age, but now. They are learning from the Lord, by reason of those very difficult and trying experiences through which the Lord is taking us, what He is doing in the Church.

From: The Battle for Life - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000705.html

February 5

All things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28 ESV)

The Lord Jesus derived much strength from this knowledge of purpose with which His life was bound up. There is no doubt that we too shall get strength from that sense of purpose, that consciousness of a Divine vocation which is ours. That is why the enemy always tries to discourage us. He seeks to raise questions and doubts in our hearts as to the reaching of the goal, telling us that our labor is in vain. If he succeeds to rob us of that sense of purpose in our life, to make us doubt with regard to our testimony, our work, or the value of the suffering we have to go through, we shall lose our strength and the enemy will get the upper hand. Jesus Christ was maintained in God's strength all the way through, because He was dominated by the sense of His mission, because He kept firm His purpose. If we hold fast the purpose of our life, if we keep in view our heavenly calling, we too shall be maintained in strength. But if we try to fulfill some ambition of our own, if we carry out our own programs, if we keep some movement going, there will be no Divine resources available for us. In order to be maintained in strength it is essential that we know that we are in the purpose of God. Our service must always be the result of a Divine purpose. It is of the greatest importance for us to realize that we have a place in God's plan. We have to deny ourselves. In God's purpose there is no room for personal interests. "*To them that love God,*" to them whose heart is taken up with God and the fulfillment of His purpose, "*all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose.*" That is a definite statement showing believers are called into a Divine purpose. We have got to know as definitely as the Lord Jesus knew, that we are in God's purpose.

From: Christ Our All - Chapter 10
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002942.html

February 6

They knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath. (Acts 13:27 ASV)

We would remind our readers that these messages are constituted by a principle which governs so much of the Bible. It is that, deeper than the words of Scripture, there is a voice; that it was – and is – possible to hear the words and miss the voice. The words are the statements; the voice is the meaning. We have proved this to be the case by such a statement as that in Isaiah 6:9: “Hear ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed (margin: ‘continually’) but perceive not.” This is the condition lying behind our basic quotation in Acts 13:27.

It is sometimes positively amazing and staggering what even Christians – and Christian leaders – can do and say because of this deaf ear to the Spirit. They can take up and pass on most pernicious reports which are sheer lies and do untold harm to others and the Lord's interests because they do not so walk in the Spirit as to have Him say within: ‘That is not true.’ It is one thing to include belief in the Holy Spirit as a tenet of Christian doctrine, and it may be quite another thing to know when “the Spirit of truth” witnesses within the heart to the truth or the falsehood. It is significant that both the Remnant and the Overcomer are marked by this ‘hearing the voice’. Jesus placed the ultimate issue of Life or death upon this ‘hearing the voice (not just the words) of the Son of Man’. “Every Sabbath” they heard the words, but not the voice.... Let us pray for the ear of Samuel –

“Oh, give me Samuel's ear –
An open ear, O Lord!
Alive and quick to hear
Each whisper of Thy word!”

From: The Voices of the Prophets - Chapter 10
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001775.html

February 7

My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. (Matthew 11:30)

Dear friends, if any truth has the effect of turning you in upon yourself, making you introspective, self-occupied in a spiritual way, that truth has been wrongly apprehended. You may assume the position of the most spiritual, but you are all wrong in your apprehension. This great work which Christ did in His Cross was never intended to make anybody miserable. Of course, that goes without saying; yet there are multitudes who are miserable after trusting the Lord, miserable over the sin question

in their lives; and the number, I am afraid, is increasing. Always keep a very distinct and broad line between fuller revelation, deeper truth (whatever you may term it – all that going-on-to-full-growth realm of things) and this whole matter of introspection.

Some people seem to think that to become more spiritual we must become more intense and tied-up and occupied with this whole matter of the spiritual life, and really they are the most unbearable people, the joy has gone out of them. I am certain of this, that nothing will ever come to you, however deep, however mighty, however tremendous, *by revelation of the Holy Spirit*, that will make you miserable. The revelation of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit – and there is no other revelation – will never make a soul miserable.

There is something wrong if a Christian is miserable on spiritual matters, and it is either failure to apprehend the one great, absolute reality that the victory was God's and that He won it in Christ, fully and finally, and we are not called to share at all in that battle; or the truth which has come subsequently has been misapprehended and has become something that is a burden grievous to be borne. The Lord Jesus said, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matt. 11:30).

From: The Battle Which is Not Yours
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002099.html

February 8

When you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted. (John 21:18 ESV)

The "eyes which are as a flame of fire" are looking for reality. They pierce through many things. In the first place, they pierce through traditional and formal religion or "Christianity." Their interrogation is – Is your religion a matter of attachment or adherence to a system, a historical tradition, a family inheritance; and so on? Or is it born – is it a birth *in you*; is it something that has happened to you; is it your very life, your very being? Secondly – and I concentrate more especially upon this for the moment – they pierce through temperament and disposition. They demand to know whether the reason why you are where you are, are concerned for what you are concerned for, are connected with what you are connected with, and are disposed as you are, is because your particular temperament leans that way. You are artistic and mystical in your tastes and constitution: therefore you choose or make your religion after your own image. Your temperament is melancholic, and so the more abstract, profound, serious, intense, introspective, and speculative, appeals to you and finds a *natural* response in you. You make God, Christianity, Christ, the Bible, after *your* image.

Or again, you are of the practical temperament. To you everything is only of value as it is “practical.” You have no patience with these contemplative people. You are irritated by the “Mary’s” for “many dishes” are your concern. To you, how the end is reached is of much less importance than the end itself. You are not bothered much with imagination, and you would put all the value on things done – how much there is actually to show for your day. *Your God and your Christianity* are entirely, or almost entirely, of the practical kind, after *your own image*. And so we could go on with all the other temperaments. But this will not do, for Christ is not any one of these; He is different. He may combine the good in all, but that does not wholly mean Divine nature. He is *different*. All this is the human soul, but the essential nature of Christ and true Christianity is of the Divine Spirit – it is heavenly! If new birth means anything, it means this, that another nature and disposition is born into the believer, so that he or she is “carried whither they (naturally) would not.”

From: The Only Reality
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002048.html

February 9

*God sent out the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying,
“Abba, Father!” (Galatians 4:6 YLT)*

“I am the Alpha.” The very first syllable of the knowledge of God is the knowledge of Jesus Christ. It begins with “A”; it is the first lisp of a babe. “God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:6). The first syllable of the Christian life begins with “A” – “Father.” We do not know the Father until we know Jesus Christ: He it is Who has revealed the Father. The beginning of all knowledge of God as Father comes to us through Jesus Christ. What He said in His prayer was indeed true: “I have manifested unto them Thy name” (John 17:6) – and that name was “Father.”

Do you want to know God? Do you want to know Him as Father? Do you want to know what He has to say to you, to make known to you? Do you want to know all or any of the vast wealth God would reveal to you? You can only know it in Jesus Christ; you can only know it in Him Who is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega. There is no knowledge without words made up of letters (except perhaps for our Chinese friends!), and all the letters are between these two. There is no knowledge that is knowledge indeed, knowledge that is Life eternal, except in Jesus Christ. “This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him Whom Thou didst send... Jesus Christ” (John 17:3). There is no knowledge outside of Jesus Christ. And there is no communication from God outside of Jesus Christ. Set Jesus Christ aside, and God is silent – He has nothing to say to you. If you fail to give His Son

His place, God is just mute; He will communicate nothing. The more you honor the Son, the more the Father will come out to you and communicate with you.

From: The Alpha and the Omega
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000659.html

February 10

*The anointing you received from Christ lives in you.
(1 John 2:27 GW)*

When will the Lord's people, who have the Scriptures and who know the Scriptures so well in the letter, when will they come to realize and to recognize that if truly they have been crucified with Christ, if they have died in His death and have been raised together with Him and have received the Spirit, they have Light in their dwelling? "The anointing which ye received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that anyone teach you, but... His anointing teacheth you concerning all things" (1 John 2:27). When will believers, when will Christians, come to realize that? Why must Christians who have the knowledge of the Scriptures in the letter, run about here and there to seek advice from others on matters which vitally affect their own spiritual knowledge? I do not mean that it is wrong to get counsel, wrong to know what other children of God of experience think or feel about matters. But if we are going to build our position upon their conclusions, we are in great danger. The final authority and arbiter in all matters is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the anointing. We may get help from one another, but I do hope that you are not going to build your position upon what I say now because I say it. Do not do that. I do not want you to do it. I do not ask you to do it. What I say is: listen, take note; and then go to your final authority Who is in you if you are a child of God, and ask Him to corroborate the truth or to show otherwise. That is your right, your birthright, the birthright of every child of God: to be in the light of the indwelling Spirit of Light, the Spirit of God.

From: The Anointing: Light Within Our Dwellings
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000660.html

February 11

The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. (Galatians 3:24,25 NIV)

Sometimes revelation will bring to us the fact that things have been but tentative, provisional.... As Paul puts it: "a schoolmaster," to bring us

to Christ, to lead us to Christ. The test for Saul of Tarsus is as to whether he will adjust to the light of the fact that, while he has been right, up to a point, that was only intended to lead him to something else. The Lord, in His sovereignty, allows us to come into something which is only tentative, but not in His final and full thought. That should lead us to a certain point, and at that given point something else is coming in. At that point a revelation will be given us which will make us say, "Well, that has served its purpose, but it has come to an end now, unto the greater fullness." It depends upon whether we cling to the thing that we say the Lord led us to and make it the final thing, when the Lord only meant that to lead us to another thing.

So often in looking back upon a thing that has been used of God, and perhaps blessed of God, people say: "Well, if that is the case then we should cling to that way, should stay with that, or in that." Not necessarily. For Paul the challenge was whether now, with the fuller revelation in the light of which he saw that this first thing while not wrong was only provisional, he was prepared to leave that and come on into the fullness and adjust to the fuller revelation. In all these connections you see that it is a matter of obedience to the heavenly vision, because this obedience to the heavenly vision is marked by cost. There is a price attached. In every case mentioned we see there was a cost. It meant that a price had to be paid, or, in other words, it meant that difficulties had to be faced. There would be a great deal of misunderstanding, a great deal of having to go on alone. Others who had not seen would not be able to follow on. There would be loneliness, misunderstanding, and in many other ways difficulties would arise in relation to obedience to the heavenly vision.

From: That Which Was From The Beginning - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002955.html

February 12

That which is born of the flesh is flesh.... (John 3:6)

It is possible for a man to be marked by an analytical mind, so that he wants to argue out everything, reason out everything and subject everything to the microscope of his own brain, his own reason, and just see the whole thing right through in that way – not accept it until he can understand it like that. And so he becomes very analytical, very investigating in his mind over the thing, and until he can have the very best answer to all his questions from every side, he is not going to accept it. That man will make very slow progress. The same will apply to one who thinks that by getting a mighty wave of religious emotion he is going to enter into the things of God. That is one of the great snares of the devil today. Religious emotion is no criterion; it is no ground of true spirituality. Our knowledge of the Lord, the very remotest bit of it and the very first ray

of it, depends upon our spirit being awakened and illumined by the Holy Spirit. Progress in the things of God is simply the growth of our inner man and not the acknowledgment of our intellectual capacity to grasp truth. We may have an increasing capacity, by reason of association and familiarity with truth, for grasping ideas and grasping truth and teaching. And that capacity may expand and expand until there is very little that is available to be grasped, and yet with such there may be the very smallest measure of real spirituality.... The child of God is one whose spirit has been renewed and who has, at the center of their being, a union and a communion with God which is not the possession of any man by nature, and which cannot come in any other realm but in the renewed spirit.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 9

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002865.html

February 13

*The fire will test what sort of work each one has done.
(1 Corinthians 3:13 ESV)*

There are many things to which the name of the Lord is being affixed which are being constructed, and which appear fine and great and *like* “the Church,” but the twofold reality is neither in the builders or the buildings. They are destined to collapse when God’s hurricane and fire test every man’s work. Good works: philanthropy, hospitality, reform, education, religion, relief, etc. may be the products, or by-products, of what is called “Christian civilization,” and things for which to be profoundly grateful, but let us not confuse these with “a new creation,” regeneration, a being “born from above.” The Church is nothing which man can build by any resource in himself personally or collectively.

The Church is an organism, not an organization. “Behold, I show you a mystery, we are members of His flesh and of His bones.” Build that, if you can! Launch that; organize that; “run” that! It cannot be done. It is the spontaneous outworking of spiritual forces released, in the acceptance by faith of tremendous facts concerning Christ; which facts are proclaimed out of experience in the power of the Holy Ghost. Not the theological Christ; not the doctrinal Christ; not the Christ of the letter, much less the Jesus of history; but the Christ of eternity in all the meaning of His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into the Throne of God *revealed in the heart by the Holy Spirit*. This alone is authority to preach, to serve, to occupy position, to “build” in relation to the house of God. It is folly to spend time and strength otherwise. It is wisdom to labor on this foundation.

From: “The Servant of the Lord” - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003686.html

February 14

I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for His Body.
(Colossians 1:24 NLT)

Paul knew something of that “suffering for His Body’s sake”; “filling up that which was lacking of the sufferings of Christ.” We must face that! The thing that is going to count for God is the sharing in His travail.

There is all the romance of Christian work, but that is mere glamour; all the enthusiasm and interest of organized Christian activity; but it is not what we are before men in this matter that counts, but what we are before God in the secret place, having heart concern for the Lord’s testimony. Have you a burden, a passion? Is the breakdown in the Lord’s testimony in the earth among those upon whom His Name is called a heartbreak to you? We shall never get anywhere till, in measure, His travail is entered into by us. Ministry, in its real, abiding, eternal value, will depend upon the measure in which the travail is entered into by us. This is a day for travail: whether it be a travail for the unsaved or for the Lord’s people; every true spiritual activity is born out of travail, and those who have been most used of God in every time have been men and women who had this travail in their soul, in their secret life with God. Have you got it? Perhaps you say no. Then ask the Lord to bring you into His concern; stretch yourself out before God to be brought into His burden for the time in which you live.

From: The Time in Which We Live
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000531.html

February 15

Some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. (Galatians 1:7 NIV)

It does not require a great deal of intelligence in order to recognize that, throughout the history of God’s work, the master-stroke of the great perverter has been confusion. God is not the God of confusion, but of order. Satan is the god of confusion. To get order out of chaos, God said: “Let there be light.” To get chaos out of order, Satan says “Let there be confusion.” His it is to confuse issues and elements. To do this, he must – as the word suggests – fuse (or try to fuse) elements which are constitutionally different and do not belong to each other. Thus there is a constitutional contradiction and inconsistency. It is only when his master-method runs amok that we have utter and unmitigated wickedness. His main work is deception by mixture.

It is just here that the place, meaning, and sovereignty of the Holy Spirit in the life of the child of God has its meaning and importance. He is “The Spirit of Truth.” He alone knows where truth ends and falsehood begins. Only as we truly “walk in the Spirit” shall we know the truth and be made free from error. A walk in the Spirit demands a “circumcised heart,” a heart in which the severance has been made between flesh and spirit, Christ and self. There has never been a heresy that has not had in it sufficient truth to deceive very good people. Likewise, there has never been anything wholly of God but the strategy of the Evil One has been to fasten on to it some implication, insinuation, interpretation, or suggestion that would make it questionable or “dangerous.” He even did this with the Lord Jesus Himself. He did it with Paul all through his life.... A good thing can be made its own enemy, by being either confused, or taken out of its true meaning.

From: The Danger of Coming Short
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002966.html

February 16

I have come that they may have life.... (John 10:10 ISV)

If, on the one hand, eternal Life operates to cut us off from our natural life as the basis of our relationship with God, on the other hand, it is perfectly wonderful what is done. It is “the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes.” The Lord even comes in as our physical life to the doing of more than would have been possible to us at our best, and certainly far beyond the present possibility, because He has made us know that as men we are nothing, even at our best. Life does that. Life forces off one system and brings on another, making room for it as it goes.

That, I believe is what the Lord meant when He said, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it *more abundantly*” (John 10:10). We have thought that just to mean that we are to have abundance of exuberance. We are always asking for life more abundant that we might feel wonderfully elated and overflowing and energetic. The Lord is preeminently practical, and more abundant Life means that, having Life, you will find the need of more to lead you a little further, and you will need it abundantly as you go on, because that Life alone can bring you into the fullness. And it is His will that there should be the full provision of Life unto the full end, because the purpose is such an abundant purpose. The Life is commensurate with the purpose.

From: All Things In Christ - Chapter 9
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002775.html

February 17

We are His household.... (Hebrews 3:6 ISV)

With all that the Lord needs and desires to do in the recovery of His first thought, His original idea for His people, not the least is the recovery of the spiritual family. Any fresh movement of God which relates to His original thought will most certainly reintroduce the spiritual family, and all that that means. That may mean the breakdown of a lot; it may mean that a good deal of misconception will have to be set aside; it may be that a whole traditional system will have to be discarded.

There is a tremendous value connected with the spiritual family life and with the training in the family. There is no training better than the training in the family. You cannot find an adequate substitute in the institution. Really, the Lord's responsible and useful men and women are not trained in the institution; they are trained in the family. It is because of the lack of that family background of training that so often those who go out into the Lord's work break down in the matter of relationships. The tragedy of so much of the work of God is the tragedy of broken relationships between workers who are put together in an organized way, and they have never gone through the discipline of family life to know how to live triumphantly with difficult people. There is an immense value in the training of the spiritual family and that necessitates very close relationships.

We have heard Christian people (church-going people) say that they do not want to come into too close an association with their fellow Christians and church members; they would rather not know too much. That is defeat, and that means the loss of a very great deal for the Lord. The Lord's way is to bring His people together in the closest relationship and not to eliminate the most difficult ones. He has a very peculiar family, made up of all sorts, and some of the sorts are very funny sorts; and that all provides the basis of a wonderful training.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002862.html

February 18

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. (Ephesians 1:3 NLT)

Some people seem to think that spirituality is a kind of mystical or mythical "something" – that spirituality is something remote from reality, a kind of frame of mind. Well, spirituality is certainly not a frame of mind in the first place. We speak of a calm and heavenly frame... and there may be

something of this kind as a fruit of it... but spirituality is not a nebulous, mythical, or abstract thing. Spirituality is the most practical thing.

When men or women are called by God into some piece of Divine ministry and, in the face of the demand, are conscious to the last degree that they have no ability, no resource, no power to fulfill that ministry, that in themselves the thing is utterly impossible, that for them to essay to do it would be the utmost folly and absurdity – when in such circumstances they recognize that they have a living Christ in whom are resources more than enough to meet that demand... and by faith lay hold of Him and go forward into the ministry with that consciousness... that is spirituality; and that is practical, tremendously practical. The issues prove that it is practical. It is in that way heavenly things are done.

From: Boundless Heavenly Resources
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001521.html

February 19

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:3 NIV)

The new creation is a company, it is a Body indwelt by the Holy Spirit, actuated by the Holy Spirit, actually made one by the Holy Spirit. “*In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body*” (1 Cor. 12:13). The oneness is the oneness of the Holy Spirit. “*Giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit*” (Eph. 4:3), not to *make* it, but to *keep* it. A new creation.

Well now, of course that is just the key that opens the door to everything when you see what new creation Life means. And with that you introduce the whole matter of the proper order, the proper regulated order of heavenly Life. Heavenly Life is according to heavenly law. It is not lawless. Each member of this body is not a law unto himself or herself. We are bound by this integrating, regulating law, that we are not allowed to be independent. Here the Holy Spirit forbids it. We are not allowed to take the law into our own hands. We are not allowed to act as individuals; the Holy Spirit will not allow it. There is a regulating order with this Life.

This Life expresses itself according to its own laws, as life does in every part of the organic creation. It follows its own lines. That part of the creation follows the laws of the life which it possesses, and this is the Life of the Spirit, and you have not to organize or systematize this. Immediately you begin to do it, you bring death in. It is as fatal to try and make a New Testament church after the New Testament pattern as it is to have no pattern at all! It can be deathly to do that. The thing happens if the Life has its way. We have learned this, yet, much as we know about the truth, we are still so much governed by our own natural life, even in our spiritual activities. There is disorder and running before the Spirit. However, we are

all in the school, and we are just stating the laws, the principles and the truth that here you have no need to go and organize something on a New Testament basis. It will come about if the Holy Spirit is really having His way in terms of Life.

From: The Testimony of the Christ - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002986.html

February 20

To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God....

(2 Corinthians 2:16,17)

The Lord has not called upon us to form churches. That is not our business. Would to God men had recognized the fact! A very different situation would obtain today from what exists, if that had been recognized. It is the Lord Who expands His Church, Who governs its growth. What we have to do is to live in the place of His appointment in the power of His resurrection. If, in the midst of others, the Lord can get but two of His children, in whom His Life is full and free, to live on the basis of that Life, and not to seek to gather others to themselves or to get them to congregate together on the basis of their acceptance of certain truths or teaching, but simply to witness to what Christ means and is to them, then He has an open way....

The Church is not increased by your going and taking a building and trying to get people to come to it, and to your meetings, and then forming them, by a church roll, into a local church. That is not the way. Growth is by Life, and this, to begin with, may be by the entering into Life of but one soul, and then after a long waiting time of another; or it may be more rapid. But the point is that it is increase because of Life. That is the growth of the Church.

For the growth of His Church, the Lord must have Life channels, Life centers. I believe that, given a Life center, sooner or later one of two things will happen, that it will be abundantly manifest that Christ is fully and finally rejected there, or else there will be an adding, a growth. There is tremendous power in Life, and the Life of the Lord either kills or quickens. It depends on the attitude taken toward it. He is a savor of Life unto Life, or of death unto death. Things can never remain neutral.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 11
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002226.html

February 21

In Him we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:28)

This whole Bible is about bringing man back to God, bringing him into God, and restoring him to his environment. “In Him we live and move and have our being” is the fundamental truth of the spiritual life. There is one thing I suggest to you, or hint at, which, if you grasp it, would be such a tremendous help to you. When the Lord says anything, it may look on the face of it something very simple and not at all profound and wonderful; but anything that comes from the Lord, though it be apparently very simple, contains all the vast knowledge and understanding that the Lord has, and not to take account of that “simple” thing may bring you into a vast amount of trouble. When the Lord Jesus says: “Abide in Me” it sounds so simple and so ordinary, but it contains all this history, and this great principle and truth: “If you get out of your environment you are exposed to all the poisons and all that creates spiritual disease. Abide in Me for your health’s sake! For your life’s sake! For the sake of everything! Abide in Me, and I in you!” Have you got that? You look again at any seemingly “little” thing that the Lord says, and if you could see you would find that you have a universe of meaning in it.

From: Divine Order – In Christ - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002837.html

February 22

We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead. (2 Corinthians 1:9)

You know that those who are not the Lord’s people are not alive to the fact that they are dead. Death is not the great reality to them until they come to their body dying. But in their ordinary life when things are going on and there is health and provision, death is no reality to them. But death is brought home to the child of God. Immediately we get into God’s hands this thing begins to be brought home to us – that we are not much good, we cannot stand up to things, we cannot go through. Our natural life and resources do not count here. The course of a true Christian life in the hands of God is that of being more and more brought to the experience of helplessness. Is that not true? Yes, of helplessness, of the impossibility of everything. Do not think things have gone wrong if that is becoming your consciousness. You may take it that you are in an immature spiritual stage if you have not come to that realization that in the realm into which you have been introduced in your relationship with God, you have no resource. You are as a dead man. The death fact is brought home to you, is made real.

Ah, but on the other side, resurrection is taking a certain form over against that. With that background and with that basis, more and more the child of God is being brought to the position where he or she has to say: “That was the Lord, it is the Lord; I cannot account for that, I am not the one who accounts for that, it is all of God,” and you know quite well that resurrection is all of God. You can go a long way in many clever things and inventions, but you have not got as far as raising the dead yet. That is God’s prerogative. That is only God.

And so in the hands of God the child of God is being brought progressively more and more, and still more, to the place where they have to say, “It is of God, it is all of God” and that is the testimony coming out. The Lord did that, the Lord is doing this. Is that not in Israel’s history in the wilderness? See how again and again they were brought to an end, which did seem to be an end... nothing beyond this, and then they had to come out with a new song – “The Lord did it!” It is victory over death, it is the power of resurrection Life.

From: The Testimony of the Christ - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002985.html

February 23

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
(Galatians 3:28)*

When we are really “in Christ,” to use Paul’s phrase, we are always regarded as being together, though we may be thousands of miles apart. The Lord Jesus does not look upon us as being in this country, in that country and in another country. He Himself is the only Country in this universe, and so we leave our country and our own nationality when we come into Christ.... The Jews were exclusive and said: “We are the only people and our country is the only country.” Jesus went outside those frontiers and touched the world outside....

In the Lord Jesus every earthly division is removed. There are no British, Swiss, German, French or Indian in Christ. He is only one Nationality and that is a heavenly one. He is only one Language and that is a spiritual one. He is the heavenly Country. No matter what we are here, in Him we are all together as one Man in Christ. All the earthly distinctions of place and time disappear in Him. It may take us a long time to travel about this world, though men think it is a very wonderful thing to travel at so many hundred or thousand miles a minute and get to the moon in no very great time! But, dear friends, in this very moment in Christ we can touch our brethren six or seven thousand miles away. That is a miracle.... This

Life is eternal Life; it is timeless; it knows no space; everything is present when Jesus is present.

From: Discipleship In The School Of Christ - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001451.html

February 24

I can guarantee this truth: No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. (John 3:5 GW)

No one has ever yet been “volitionalized” into the kingdom of God; that is, so appealed to in their wills to make a decision, and to determine to be in the kingdom of God, as by the strength of that decision and that determination to have got through. It cannot be done. A great deal of mistake has been made in that connection, and an entirely false position has been brought about for multitudes of people because the effort has been made along those lines, and they have been appealed to along those lines to exercise their own reason, and their own feelings, and their own wills, as though that would regenerate them. Thus interest and activity in Christianity is one thing, but being in the kingdom is quite another. Multitudes of good-meaning people are interested in Christianity, and are active in Christianity. They see the value of the Christian standard of life, and Christian teaching, and have thought if only it could be applied, how different the world would be. So they have become busy in Christianity, and have thought they were in the kingdom of God. Not at all! You can have all the interest in Christianity without being in the kingdom. This is what the Lord Jesus said, in effect, and in other and more concise words, to Nicodemus. The only way in is by our receiving Divine Life as a gift through faith in Jesus Christ, and that becomes the new basis of the new creation, the basis upon which everything begins and is carried through, the basis of Divine Life. That Life has in it all the qualities and energies of the new creation. It constitutes our being in what is called the Kingdom of God.

From: The Meaning of Divine Life - Chapter 1

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002996.html

February 25

*Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.
(Hebrews 12:26 ESV)*

Everything is going to be shaken in earth and in heaven, with a view to finding out just how much there is of Christ living in it. These Jewish believers were going to see the temple and the whole temple system wrecked, and then they would discover just how much they had got of

Christ, or how much of their life was bound up with earthly things. They would see what was left when that was all gone. God is not only going to shake Judaism, but this heavenly thing. He will shake heaven and earth, and we shall find out by that shaking what we have left when the earthly system passes, when even the representation of heavenly things in Christianity is tested (for Christianity has developed a representation of heavenly things, just as Judaism has). Men have made an earthly representation of the New Testament revelation of the church, and ministry, and priesthood. It is all going to be tested. For many it is now in the melting pot. The issue is the shaking of heaven and earth. What have we got left? The issue is Christ. Whether you like all that we have said, or agree with it or not, does not worry me; but I am concerned that we have come to Christ, to show that Christ in heaven is our Life, Christ in heaven is our All, and appointed to be so by God, and nothing here can take the place of Christ. God will bring everything to an end that takes the place of Christ. He has determined from eternity that in all things Christ should have the preeminence, and have the fullness, and that nothing shall glory before Him or take His place. The Lord bring us into a larger measure of Christ, and a larger measure of Christ into us.

From: That Which Was From The Beginning - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002954.html

February 26

There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5)

God's answer to everything, God's explanation of everything, and God's means of realizing everything is a Man, "the man Christ Jesus." When this world has run its evil course, this inhabited earth will be judged in a Man. Men will be judged by what their inward relationship is to that Man. The question at the judgment will never be of how much good or bad, right or wrong, more or less, is in a man; it will turn upon this one point, "Are you in Christ?" If not, more or less makes no difference. God's intention, God's proclamation is that all things are in His Son. Are you in Him? Why not? The basis of judgment is very simple. It is all gathered up in a Man, and what is in that Man of God for us. That is the basis of judgment. It all comes back to the very simple, and yet comprehensive and blessed truth, that it is what Christ is that satisfies God, reaches God's end, and meets all our need. It is all summed up in a Man, "the man Christ Jesus." The Lord continue to open our eyes to His glorious and Heavenly Man, Who is also the Divine Servant.

From: All Things in Christ - Chapter 15
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002781.html

February 27

The Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine to carry My name....” (Acts 9:15 ESV)

The Lord must have an instrument, a Daniel instrument, whether personal or collective, that moves out towards God for His testimony. He must have a Nehemiah with a heartache over the people because of the breakdown of the testimony. He must have an Ezra who is not for a moment compromising with anything contrary to the mind of God. He must have the Esther instrument who flings fear to the winds, and goes, taking life in hand, to besiege the throne for the life of her people, for the deliverance of the people of God from the threat of the enemy. Oh! What those prayers wrought! And, beloved, the burden of the Lord *must* come on our heart in like manner if we are to be effective instruments for the Lord in His end-time activities; we must be exercised in a very deep way with the interests of God. We must hold back nothing that will count for the Lord and His interests. You would be surprised how the Lord would come through if you gave Him a chance.

The whole thing begins with a recognition of the need, and the burden of these things upon our hearts. When we are really in it by the urge of the Holy Spirit, the common features found in these Old Testament instruments will be found *inwrought* in us; and we shall be found an abandoned people unto this ONE THING – the Lord’s burden and heart concern for His testimony in His people.

From: The Time in Which We Live
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000531.html

February 28

He shall see [the fruit] of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. (Isaiah 53:11 AMP)

Well, we know more than the Prophet Isaiah knew about that! We have been with Him in Gethsemane in the time of the travail of His soul, and we are with Him, on the other side of the travail. How many are the seed of Christ since then! Dear friends, if ever you are tempted to think that Christians are few, and that we are only a very small people in the millions of this world – open the windows! Look into the book of the Revelation: “A great multitude, which no man could number... ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” The number cannot be expressed in human language – and they have been gathered since the travail of the Lord Jesus. He is indeed seeing His seed! Gethsemane has been the most fruitful garden in all history – and you and I are of His seed! We are born out of His travail and are in the covenant made with the new Israel.

But do remember that the meaning and the value of the covenant depend upon our devotion to the Lord! This is a thing which is so evident: the greatest fruitfulness has always come from the lives most devoted to the Lord, the people of the undivided heart. This covenant has two sides.... The New Testament takes many warnings from the history of Israel, and we may fail of all that that covenant means if our hearts are divided and we try to live life in two worlds. We never lose anything when the Lord has everything, and that is what it means to have a circumcised heart. May that be true of everyone!

From: God's New Israel - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003614.html

February 29

If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in Me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers. (John 15:5,6)

Take a bunch of flowers, a bunch of roses or any other particular kind of flower. They are of the same species, and they have the same life in them. That is a congregation, not a body! The difference between a bunch of flowers which are all alike, all sharing the same life, and the root and the plant, is a very big one. Give me the rose, root and plant or bush, and what shall I have? Well, I shall have this difference that, whereas the bunch of flowers has the life, it just goes so far. That is all and there it ends. It will never go beyond that. Give me the plant or bush, and it will grow. It may pass through a paroxysm of death for a season, but next year it will come back again and there will be more; and then another experience of dying and resurrection, and again there will be more, all in the same plant. That is a body, that is an organism, not a bunch. And that is the difference between a congregation, so many Christians, units coming together as units, and a spiritual organism, a local expression of the Body of Christ: and it is the Body which is God's thought, not a congregation, not the bunch of flowers. But oh, the Lord's people are so much like the bunch of flowers! It is true they are all of the same species: they are Christians, they are children of God, they are all sharing the same Life, but oh, they are not there as one organism in one place growing with the increase of God, passing through corporate convulsions of death and resurrection and making spiritual increase in that way....

Yes, they belong to the Lord, and they have the same Life, they are all the Lord's children; but they just come to a certain point and they never go beyond that. That is true. I have had enough experience to make me sure it is true. Alas, many of them do not want to go any further, and many of them resent the suggestion that it is necessary to go any further. However, that is not God's thought about it. God's thought is of the root

and the plant as a whole, a living organism here and there as representing and expressing Christ Himself. The plant grows and makes increase. The bunch simply goes so far and then it stops.

From: God's Spiritual House - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000922.html

March 1

I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! (Malachi 3:10 NLT)

There is very much prayer being made, and appeal being pressed for revival.... If the Spirit of God either ignores or transcends so much that marks the Christian system, and makes it as though it counts so little, (and the Holy Spirit never compromises on what is vital and really of God), does it not mean that He calls for a reconsideration of very much that obtains? The days of the Church's greatest spiritual power and impact were days when ecclesiastical forms, architecture and ritual were nil, and the Lord Himself was everything.... To get away from the lesser things we need a mighty visitation of the Spirit of God; this, and this only, will do it. Most people agree to this, and we have heard very much said along this line. What has always perplexed us is that, while things of this kind have been so repeatedly and strongly stated, the implication seems never to have registered itself with sufficient strength as to result in practical adjustments. So, on the other hand, if we seriously faced the things which the Spirit of God has again and again ruled out when He has had His way, would not the way be opened for a more permanent high level of spiritual life, fullness, and effectiveness?

Is not reformation an essential part of revival? Does not the Lord call for certain drastic adjustments before He can "open the windows of heaven"? (Mal. 3:10). Whenever and wherever, by a new revealing of Himself, His purpose and method, the Lord has secured those who have moved out on to the ground of Christ only and in fullness, they have always had to meet a great and painful cost. Usually it has been their own brethren in Christ who have exacted it.... How difficult it is for organized Christianity to believe that anything very much of real value can go on without machinery, publicity, and all the framework of organized work! May it not be well to pause and consider whether God's mightiest and most fruitful works in nature and in grace are not done hiddenly, quietly, unobtrusively, and – in many cases – done before anyone knows about it? What of the resurrection of nature every Spring-time? The law of God's highest work is the biological, the law of Life; it is organic.

From: The Release of the Lord - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002113.html

March 2

*God... Who saved us and called us to a holy calling,
not because of our works but because of His own
purpose and grace. (2 Timothy 1:9 ESV)*

The Lord Jesus did not come in just as a rescuer of man and of man's lot. We should almost be led to believe by certain emphases that redemption is the greatest thing in the universe, and that all God's interest is in redemption, and that we should be occupied solely with redemption. Redemption is a great thing. We can never, never exaggerate, and I doubt whether we shall ever know what a great thing redemption is; and yet, great as redemption is in its scope, in its depth, in its cost, redemption is only incidental to the eternal purpose. Christ came into time to rescue His own inheritance. In that, of course, man is rescued, but it is something very much bigger than that. It relates to the Son primarily, and until the Lord's people get the right attitude, the right point of view, that is, that all things in God's full and final concern are centered in God's Son, they have not come into line with all God's resource. While the direction is toward ourselves – redemption, sanctification, glorification, and so on – or toward anything less than the Son Himself, we have not got God's dynamic for accomplishing His work, and therefore it becomes necessary, as the sufficient, the adequate basis of the Holy Spirit's operation, that there should be a revelation of Jesus Christ in the heart, for it is in relation to Him and what God has purposed concerning Him that all the energies of God are released and made active.

From: The Kingdom That Cannot Be Shaken - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002069.html

March 3

I came to send fire on the earth... (Luke 12:49)

Fire always finds things out. As it creeps and encroaches and overtakes, it makes one discrimination between things that it can devour and things over which it has no power. It puts them into those categories; the finding out, the classifying, the deciding. Look at the context, Luke 12:51 – “*Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.*” He goes on – “*There shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. They shall be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother in law against her daughter in law, and daughter in law against her mother in law...*” – discriminating, setting things in the category to which they belong.

One category is that which can go on and abide and endure because it is of God. The other will be licked up by the fire, and simply pass out of existence. “*The fire shall try every man’s work,*” said Paul (1 Cor. 3:13). The fire of unavoidable and unerring discrimination. That has ever been the effect of a work of the Holy Spirit; to put us into the place to which we belong. It is a kind of dividing thing all the time. Are you for, or are you against? Are you with, or are you not with the Lord? Are you going on with the Lord, or are you not going on with the Lord? The Holy Spirit is pursuing that course all the time to find us out and to just classify us like this, so that when the Holy Spirit has worked we are in definite categories. Division has come, and it is unavoidable.

From: The Cross and Way of Life - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002845.html

March 4

*His eyes were opened, his sight was restored,
and he saw everything clearly. (Mark 8:25)*

You and I, dear friends, individually, and if we belong to a company of the Lord’s people, that company, will only make progress toward that full, ultimate end of God in Christ if we have a spiritual vision of Jesus Christ. Vision is essential to progress. Is it necessary for me to stay with the word “vision”? I am not thinking about something objective that you see with your eyes of flesh. It is something that has happened inside of you, and your inner spiritual eyes have been opened. You can say, “I have SEEN, and that has revolutionized my life. That has put me on my feet. That has set me on a course. That has become a dynamic in my life which, *in spite of myself*, keeps me going.” Yes, thank God, it works like that.

I know the aspect, the factor, of our responsibility, but God help you and me if it is all going to be left to our responsibility and what we do! I tell you – and this may have been your experience, or it may interpret your present experience – many, many times I would have given up the race. That is an awful confession! Indeed many times I have given it up in my heart. It became so difficult that I could go no further, so I gave up. It was not, therefore, my persistence that enabled me to go on, but what the Apostle calls “the power that worketh in us.” What is that? The Holy Spirit has put a dynamic in us and we have seen. We cannot un-see! We cannot go back. The seeing may fade, and it may even be eclipsed by days of darkness and trouble. We may know what Paul meant when he said: “We were pressed out of measure, beyond our strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life” (2 Corinthians 1:8). That was a terrible thing for the greatest of all apostles to say! What happened? Did Paul give up and say: “Well, I cannot go on!”? No, not at all! “The power that worketh in us” got him on his feet again and again. Let Elijah seek out his juniper tree and say:

“Take away my life!” but the Lord does not agree. He has given Elijah a part in His great, eternal purpose, and so he will come up again.

From: The Will Of God In Relation To His People - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001131.html

March 5

I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:12 ESV)

Those of us who have tasted of this world's springs have recognized the kinship between what is there and what is in religion so far as that soul-nature is concerned. It is only a matter of difference of realm, not of nature. What the music and drama of the world produce in one way – the soul-stirring, rousing, craving: the pathos, tears, contempt, hatred, anger, melancholy, pleasure, etc. – are all the same, only under different auspices and in a different setting, and the fact is that it passes and we are really no further on. A little better music, a change of preacher, a less familiar place, a few more thrills, will perhaps stimulate our souls, but where are we, after all? How Satan must laugh behind his mask! Oh, for reality, the reality of the eternal! Oh, that men might see that, while a highly cultured soul with a keen sense of the beautiful and sublime is immeasurably preferable to a sordid one *so far as this world is concerned*, it is not necessarily a criterion that such has a personal living knowledge of God – of God as a Person – and has really been born anew! When we pray for “Revival” let us be careful as to what we are after and as to what means we use to promote it, or carry it on.... The Apostle Paul makes it very clear that the secret of everything in his life and service was the fact that he received his gospel “by revelation.” We may even know the Bible most perfectly as a book, and yet be spiritually dead and ineffective. When the Scriptures say so much about the knowledge of God and of the truth as the basis of eternal life, resulting in being set free, doing exploits, etc., they also affirm that man cannot by searching find out God, and they make it abundantly clear that it is knowledge in the spirit, not in the natural mind. Thus, a rich knowledge of the Scriptures, an accurate technical grasp of Christian doctrine, a doing of Christian work by all the resources of men's natural wisdom or ability, a clever manipulation and interesting presentation of Bible content and themes, may get not one whit beyond the natural life of men, and still remain within the realm of spiritual death. Men cannot be argued, reasoned, fascinated, interested, “emotioned,” willed, enthused, impassioned, into the kingdom of the heavens; they can only be born; and that is by spiritual quickening.

From: All Things in Christ – Chapter 10
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002776.html

March 6

Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law. (Galatians 5:1 NLT)

Legalism always crucifies Christ afresh because legalism cuts out the greatest word in Christianity. The word over the door into true Christianity is the word: “*Grace*.” Legalism always wipes out “*Grace*,” and puts in its place “*Law*.” Grace is the chief word in the vocabulary of the Christian. Do you notice that where legalism reaches its fullest expression, it always puts the crucifix in the place of the empty tomb? The badge of the Christian is the empty tomb. That is “Life from the dead.” The badge of legalism is a crucifix, “a dead Christ.” Legalism always brings death, and the chief thing about Christ is resurrection. It is Life from the dead. This was something that Paul came to see when it pleased God to reveal His Son in him. And he said, “Let me get out of all this legalistic system. Jesus of Nazareth Whom we crucified is alive. He has been revealed alive in my heart.”

If we really see the Lord Jesus, we shall be emancipated. Some of us have had that experience. We were in legal systems; our horizon was that system. Then the day came when the Lord opened our eyes to really see the significance of Christ. And that whole system fell away as being all nonsense. No, it is not our business to say, “Come out of this and that, and come into this other.” The word “must” or “thou shall” does not belong to this realm. That belongs to the old legal realm. The “must” becomes a spiritual thing, not a legal thing. We could say of Paul, there was a mighty “must” in his spirit. “I have seen the Lord, and I am seeing more and more of what the Lord is, and this is creating in me this great imperative. ‘This one thing I do, leaving the things which are behind, I press on toward the mark of the prize of the on-high calling.’” So we do not say, “Change your system.” But we do say, “Ask the Lord to reveal His Son in you.” Then the great work of emancipation will begin.

From: “That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One” - Meeting 29
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001098.html

March 7

In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. (Colossians 2:9,10 NIV)

If you and I, dear friends, are going to make anything like the progress that Paul made as a young convert and as a growing Christian, and if we are going to have anything of the weight that he has had in spiritual impress and impact, and if we are going to count in any degree as he counted in the work of the Lord; one thing is absolutely essential and do

get hold of this. The youngest Christian get hold of this and everybody else; that if we take our salvation, our conversion or anything that has to do with it as something in itself, there's going to be limitation. We have got to see everything in the light of the *Person*, Jesus Christ! That is, we have not to take this as a gift – salvation as a gift – or anything else of the Christian life as a gift in itself; we have got to look at that and say: "What does that signify as to the Giver? What does *that* signify as to Christ? What does that mean as to the Source of my salvation?" You may not grasp the point but it is of infinite importance because all progress in the Christian life and all power in Christian service comes from *not* the grasping, the apprehending, and the enjoyment of salvation as such, but *seeing Jesus!* Because, you see, Jesus is the sum total of *ALL* Divine fullness.

From: Revelation of Jesus Christ - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001028.html

March 8

You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. (John 5:39 NIV)

Ministry is the expression of Life, and not the taking on of a uniform and a title. Once I thought that to be in the ministry was to go into a certain kind of work, to come out of business, and, well, be a minister! So one got into the thing. Many, many are laboring and toiling in it, breaking their hearts, afraid to leave that order of things, lest they should be violating what they conceived to be a Divine call. Many others cannot get out of it because it is a means of livelihood, and they too are breaking their hearts. It is all false. Ministry is not a system like that.

Ministry is the expression of Life, and that is but saying in other words that it is the outworking of the indwelling of Christ. Disaster lies before the man or woman who ministers on any other ground than that. When the Lord gets a chance in us, and we really will trust Him on that ground, and take our position there, He will show us that there is ministry enough for us; we shall not have to go round looking for it. The real labor so often is to get us down to that ground, the delivering of us from this present evil age even in its conception of the ministry, unto the heavenly ministry. The Lord Jesus is our pattern. You see the spontaneous ministry, the restful ministry of that Heavenly Man. I covet that! It does not mean that we shall become careless, but it does deliver us from so much unnecessary strain. That is how it should be. May the Lord bring us to it; the heavenly Man with the heavenly Life as the full heavenly Resource.

From: All Things in Christ - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002773.html

March 9

That you... may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:18,19)

The mark of a life governed by the Holy Spirit is that such a life is continually and ever more and more occupied with Christ, that Christ is becoming greater and greater as time goes on. The effect of the Holy Spirit's work in us is to bring us to the shore of a mighty ocean which reaches far, far beyond our range, and concerning which we feel – Oh, the depths, the fullness, of Christ! If we live as long as ever man lived, we shall still be only on the fringe of this vast fullness that Christ is.

Now, that at once becomes a challenge to us before we go any further. These are not just words. This is not just rhetoric; this is truth. Let us ask our hearts at once, Is this true in our case? Is this the kind of life that we know? Are we coming to despair on this matter? That is to say, that we are glimpsing so much as signified by Christ that we know we are beaten, that we are out of our depth, and will never range all this. It is beyond us, far beyond us, and yet we are drawn on and ever on. Is that true in your experience? That is the mark of a life governed by the Holy Spirit. Christ becomes greater and greater as we go on. If that is true, well, that is the way of Life. If ever you and I should come to a place where we think we know, we have it all, we have attained, and from that point things become static, we may take it that the Holy Spirit has ceased operations and that life has become stultified.

From: The School of Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001033.html

March 10

Whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst. (John 6:35 ESV)

“I am the bread of life” (John 6:35). “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12). “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:14). “I am the true vine” (John 15:1). “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). Here is the great I AM saying what He is. And then you notice how frequently He links with that a “shall.” The “shall”s of the “I am’s” in John’s Gospel are tremendously impressive – not always using the exact word, but in the context you will find the same conclusion. But here are some of the “shall.”s. “I am the bread of life... he that eats this bread shall live forever” (John 6:58). “I am the light of the world; he that follows Me shall not walk in darkness” (John 8:12). The link between what He is and ourselves is this,

“he that believeth on Me.” What I AM shall become true of him. “He that believeth on Me shall never die” (John 11:26), “...shall not hunger” (John 6:35), shall never wander like sheep without a shepherd, he shall have a governing, controlling reality like a shepherd in his life. “Shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” What I AM shall become true. “I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever lives and believes on Me shall never die.” What I AM is made good when you believe.

Now it is not what we are. I am dead; He is alive. I can never be other than dead, but He as the Life can become Life in me in my death, if only I believe. I am hungry, spiritually starved; He is Bread, and I need never hunger; although I shall always hunger in myself, yet He will become the Bread to supply me. Think of it! I need never hunger, I am down there in the country, isolated, getting no fellowship, no food; I am away in some place where there is no spiritual bread, and He says, “*He that eats Me shall never hunger.*” Is that dependent upon where I am, what my situation and circumstances are as to available spiritual meat? No, it is Himself, not a place; it is Himself, not circumstances. But how can it be? – “*He that believes.*”

From: Features Of Zion - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002135.html

March 11

*That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You.
(John 17:21)*

What, then, is union with Christ? It is union with Him as the new creation, as the new creation Man; union with Him in the Life which is the life of the new creation by the Spirit of Life.... What is the meaning of that union? It is that only by such union can God's works be done. What governed Him in relation to the Father, governs us. Nothing can be done except on the ground of this union. It is not a matter of action, or of undertaking for God, however well intentioned.

What we see as seeming necessary to be done for the Lord's glory is not the criterion of service. Many things are embarked upon by the mere simple, though honest and sincere, judgment of the heart, when confronted by what is judged as something to be done for God, something needing to be done. A tragic situation, for example, calls for action; we have the means to meet that situation, and so we embark upon it for the Lord. A vast variety of undertakings have been embarked upon in that way, from that basis, and the Lord Jesus in this chapter says, “No! Not so!” He is not governed by the apparent demand of a situation. He is not governed by the impact of things upon Himself, as calling for an undertaking. With Him it

is a question of what God is doing, and doing just at the particular time. With one object, God does different things at different times, and has a different emphasis from time to time, and those who are really in union with Christ have to be governed by that which Christ at that particular time is Himself undertaking, is giving Himself to: "...what things soever He doeth these the Son also doeth in like manner." It is a matter of what God is doing, and life-union with Him in Christ for the accomplishment of that.

From: The Meaning of Divine Life - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002997.html

March 12

*All glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.
(Ephesians 3:20 NLT)*

Any power that can survive what we sometimes have to go through in the realm of our own souls is a very great power indeed; and, believe me, this power that works in the Church is going to survive all the accumulated sensations of all the members of the Body of Christ. Now, bring all your misery together, bring all your despair together, all your sensations, all the helplessness of the outlook, and, if you are a child of God, there is a power that works within which is more than sufficient to meet and counter and triumph over all that. That is the means by which God reaches His end in us, and if His end in us is conformity to the image of His Son, then the power that worketh in us is more than enough to meet and overcome all that which is contrary to His Son in us.

Do you believe that? Not always! If we really believed that in a thoroughgoing way we should never be found occupied with ourselves, we should never be depressed because of our imperfection, there would be no room for any question as to our standing. Oh, if we did but believe this, what triumphant people we should be; for is it not true that the greater proportion of our trouble, of our despair, of our unhappiness, is due to the consciousness of our own imperfection – all that we are that we would not be and should not be, and all that we are not that we feel we ought to be. His eternal purpose and His exceeding great power are linked together. Do not forget that. We are the object of both, and His exceeding great power is at work within us to effect the purpose.

From: The Power That Worketh In Us
www.austin-sparks.net/english/003273.html

March 13

We, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. (Romans 12:5)

We are a part of a Body. Many of our sufferings are not on our own account at all. Many of the sufferings of the children of God have nothing whatever to do with their own faults or their own failing. They are suffering in a related way, they are suffering for the Body's sake, they are entering into the battle; the conflict of this one great testimony. Sometimes it is almost uncanny when the Lord has something in view in relation to His testimony of Life, how for no reason whatever, on no account at all, we discover that we are involved and ours is not an isolated experience.

All sorts of people all over the place are having the same kind of experience – a terrific sense of pressure, upset, annoyance, anything to frustrate – it is happening all round, testifying that in the spiritual realm, in the realm of the Spirit, there is a fine, sensitive oneness which matters to the Lord, and therefore matters to the enemy. Do not always take your sufferings as some controversy that the Lord has with you. That is the twist the enemy often gives. Be open to the Lord to be checked up on anything, but do not always take it that the things which are happening to you and causing you trouble and suffering are due to your own failure or wrong. You are involved in something very much more than that.

From: The Testimony of the Christ - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002986.html

March 14

*The Father loves the Son and shows Him everything He is doing.
(John 5:20 NLT)*

Only those who are absolutely one with God can take responsibilities for Him. Whatever we may call ourselves, however great may be our activity for the Lord, God does not take account of that. It is no use coming to Him and saying: "Now Lord, You know that I am engaged in this work, and therefore I want You to help me in this." That is no reason why He should help us. God stands by His children and only works with them on the basis of an inward relationship. Some person who is not in an "official" position may be far more useful to the Lord than many who have an official ministry and position. What matters is not our spiritual knowledge or official ministry, but our secret relationship with God. God fits us spiritually for His service and upholds our sonship, not our office. He will see to our position if we see to our relationship with Him.

God called Israel His firstborn. He stood by His people on the basis of that sonship. Therefore Israel could take an important and significant position among the nations. It was the chosen vessel of God's testimony in the earth. But the day came when it ceased to go on with God as His firstborn. Its inward relationship to God became merely an outward form and God had to withdraw from His people and send them into captivity. It would have been useless if Israel had turned to the Lord with this complaint, "Why are You dealing with us in such a way? Are we not Your representatives among the nations?" God's answer would have been, "The official position is nothing to Me. I cannot help you as long as your relationship to Me is not right, as long as you are not in that which your sonship means and demands." You see our position and vocation is in relation to sonship. For that very reason the Lord Jesus put the emphasis upon sonship. He never said that the Father loved the ministry He had come to fulfill on this earth. But He said: "*The Father loves the Son.*"

From: Christ Our All - Chapter 9

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002941.html

March 15

*God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him.
(Colossians 1:19 NIV)*

The next thing I am going to say may be difficult to accept, just as it is difficult to say, and yet faithfulness demands that things like this should be said. There is going to be a tremendous surprise one day over this matter. There is a tremendous amount of energy, and activity, and machinery, and zeal and devotion in the work of the Lord, in the service of the Lord, which seems to be producing something quite big, and carrying on something quite extensive. It is not for us to judge, but it is for us to lay down laws and recognize those laws, or, rather, recognize laws that are laid down by God. When eventually all work, all service, all activity, is weighed in the balances, which will determine what abides forever or passes away forever, all that which was merely human energy for God will go; all that which was merely man's enterprise for the Lord will go; all that which was in any way out from man himself, even though in devotion to God, will go. Only that which was the energy of Christ, the wisdom of Christ, the power of Christ, will remain. God is not using your energies and my energies. He is calling upon us to use the energies of Christ. God cannot set His seal upon anything that is of man.

God's seal only rests upon that which is of His Son, and we must not say that because a thing is big, extensive, and *seems* to be a great work for God, that it necessarily is such. What we have got to be quite sure about is that that thing is not being carried on by the momentum of man, or the momentum of organization, the momentum of machinery, the momentum

of human zeal and energy for God, nor by the momentum of a program, but that it is being energized by the Holy Ghost, that it is Christ Himself who is the Life and the power of that thing. In so far as human personalities, energies and all that kind of thing are the mainspring, we may be sure that in the end there is going to be a good deal that goes. That can be seen as you look back over the history of things which claimed to represent God. The object of saying this is not for one moment to cast a cloud of suspicion or doubt over anything, but it is to emphasize this truth, this basic truth. It is along the line of jealousy for Christ. Nothing will remain in this universe eventually but what is Christ, and we must recognize that everything for God's ultimate purpose is bound up with and in Christ, and it *IS* Christ.

From: Christ in You

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001617.html

March 16

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. (Colossians 3:9,10 NIV)

Christ Himself, when He was here, never failed to let people know that when they entered that door, or that straight and narrow way, they were in for trouble. Now that may sound like a very terrible thing to say, especially to you young Christians who are not far inside the door, but be perfectly clear about it; the Lord Jesus never deceived anybody about this, never at all. He let people know that to "follow Him," as He put it at that time, involved them in difficulty and suffering and persecution and trial and a lifelong thing. There is a cost here, a great cost. And we shall discover that while there are the compensations, for there are undoubtedly the compensations in this life and the mighty compensations for eternity, this is a way which is not easy for the natural man by any means. This work of the Holy Spirit is drastic, exacting, and very trying to the flesh. Make no mistake about it; it will take all the energy that the Holy Spirit Himself has to accomplish this work. It really will. So the Lord Jesus has not left us in any doubt about this. But note, and I am glad the Apostle Paul puts it like this, because it is so true to experience, "The new man who is *being* renewed." Notice, first there was a precise and definite transaction, "Ye put off" and "Ye put on," but now the work that is going on is not a single act of a single moment and a single day, but it is something that is going on in us.

From: God's Supreme Interest in Man - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002928.html

March 17

If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. (Romans 6:5 KJV)

May I remind you that the nature of this planting is just that with which we are so familiar. “Planted together in the likeness of His death.” That is the word of the Apostle, “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” The enemy is the instrument so often, of planting us more deeply into the death of Christ. His assaults, his attacks, his accusations, everything – yes. The Lord is not the source of evil, but the Lord allows it. So often our hearts cry out: “Why did the Lord ever allow that in our lives?” That thing which has meant such a deep, dark passage. Why did the Lord allow it? He could have prevented it. Well, we were planted by it into the death of the Lord Jesus. We were brought more than ever to an end of ourselves. Yes, and therefore, to know the Lord in a larger measure than we have ever known Him, and to be brought to a place where it will not be so easy for the devil to shake us next time. That is the sovereign way of God in deeper death experiences. “Planted together in the likeness of His death.” Have you been planted there initially? Have you been planted in Christ crucified? Or are you one of those attachments to something? Are you planted? And when a deeper planting comes, remember it is the roots being driven downwards, and the issue is going to be most surely endurance, stability, and ability to stand; but, oh, there is going to be greater fruitfulness.

From: Rooted and Grounded
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002932.html

March 18

Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations. (Haggai 2:6,7)

It seems a terrible thing, even to think, but as we have touched so very much of what is called “Christianity” we are bound to believe that, because vast numbers who call themselves Christian are in an utterly false position, and the system itself has become so largely an earthly, traditional, formal, and unspiritual thing, this worldwide shaking is quite necessary and will be eventually justified. If we were writing a treatise, we could show that what is called “Christianity” is really the greatest enemy of Christ.

It will be seen that it is not a matter of substituting another and better system for an old and poor or bad one. Some people seem to think that it is

all, or largely, a matter of the order, technique, and form, and if we returned to the “New Testament” form or order of churches, all would be well. The fact is that, while certain things characterized the New Testament churches, the New Testament *does not* give us a complete pattern according to which churches are to be set up or formed! There is no blueprint for churches in the New Testament, and to try to form New Testament churches is only to create another system which may be as legal, sectarian and dead as others. Churches, like the Church, are organisms which spring out of Life, which Life itself springs out of the *Cross of Christ wrought into the very being of believers*. Unless believers are crucified people, there can be no true expression of the Church.

From: Things Which Will Be Shaken
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002090.html

March 19

I counsel you to buy from Me... salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. (Revelation 3:18 ESV)

We have to test everything we think we see and know by its effect in our lives. You and I may have an enormous amount of what we think to be spiritual knowledge; we have all the doctrines, all the truths. We can box the compass of evangelical doctrine; and what is the effect? It is not seeing, beloved, in a true spiritual sense, if we are not changed. Yes, seeing is to be changed, and it is not seeing if it does not bring that about. It would be far better for us to be stripped of all that and to be brought right down to the point where we really do see just a little that makes a difference. We must be very honest with God about this.

Oh, would we not sooner have just a very little indeed that was a hundred percent effective, than a whole mountain of knowledge, ninety percent of which counted for nothing? We must ask the Lord to save us from advancing beyond spiritual Life, advancing, I mean, with knowledge, a kind of knowledge, presuming to know. You know what I mean. Real seeing, Paul says, is being changed, and being changed is a matter of seeing as by the Lord the Spirit. So we will pray to see....

It is never too late to get spiritual sight, however blind we may have been, and for however long, if we really mean business with the Lord. But do not forget that this is a matter of being honest with God. The Lord Jesus said a wonderful thing to Nathanael. Nathanael was perilously near that double blindness. At the moment when he allowed himself to give expression to a popular prejudice, he was very near the danger zone. He said, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” That is a popular prejudice. A popular prejudice has robbed many a man and woman of knowing God’s fuller thoughts. Prejudices may take many forms. Let us be

careful.... If you are in danger through your prejudice, beware; forsake your prejudice, be open-hearted. Be an Israelite in whom there is no Jacob, no guile, open-hearted to the Lord, and you will see.

From: Spiritual Sight - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001060.html

March 20

Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what He is saying. (Revelation 3:22 NLT)

A striking feature of our time is that so few of the voices have a distinctive message. There is a painful lack of a clear word of authority for the times.... Why is it so? May it not be that so many who might have this ministry have become so much a part of a system? A system which puts preachers so much upon a professional basis, the effect of which is to make preaching a matter of demand and supply; of providing for the established religious order and program? Not only in the matter of preaching, but in the whole organization and activity of "Christianity" as we have it in the systematized form today. There is not the freedom and detachment for speaking ONLY when "the burden of the word of the Lord" is upon the prophet, or when he could say, "The hand of the Lord was upon me." The present order requires a man to speak every so often; hence he *must* get something, and this necessity means either that God must be offered our program and asked to meet it (which He will not do) or the preacher must *make* something for the constantly recurring occasion. This is a pernicious system and it opens the door to any number of dangerous and baneful intrusions of what is of man and not of God. The most serious aspect of this way of things is that it results in voices, voices, voices, a *confusion* of voices, but not the specific voice with the specific utterance of God for the time....

Here we have the necessity for an awakening to what God has to say. In the Revelation this is "He that hath an ear, let him hear," and in the case of Laodicea – which represents the end – it is "I counsel thee to buy of Me eyesalve that thou mayest see." "And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me," said John. God is speaking, He has something to say, but there must be "a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your heart being enlightened."

From: The Candlestick All of Gold

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001541.html

March 21

Since the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. (Hebrews 4:1 NIV)

For those who, like the New Testament writers, have a real burden and sense of responsibility for the spiritual life of God's people, one of the most heart-breaking things is the way in which so many who gave promise of going right on with the Lord are caught in some side-track and turn to something other or less than He meant for them. Not necessarily to sin or to the world, but to something which, while it brings them a great deal of gratification for a time, eventually proves to be a diversion resulting in arrested spiritual growth, and they are found in a backwater, a cul-de-sac, occupied with an alternative to "the whole counsel of God." Their "new discovery," or "light," or "guidance," as they speak of it, by reason of the let-up of some tension, solution to some problems, promise of release into self-realization, and escape from pressure, when the novelty and glamour have worn off is found to have been "deceitful waters," producing Jericho's fruits which fall before they are ripe....

The peril or snare will be cunningly and ingeniously adapted to the "prey." What would capture some would make no appeal to others. The most spiritual will be presented with what *appears to be* most spiritual. Our particular temperament will be our peculiar danger. We shall have to, ever and always, be governed by principle, and not by feelings, preferences, arguments, or natural appeal. Intellectual palliatives, emotional ecstasies, activity-gratifications must be suspected or challenged. The one question must be paramount – Where does this lead? Does it essentially and intrinsically relate to the one supreme purpose of God?

From: The Danger of Coming Short
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002966.html

March 22

Come to Me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28 NLT)

What did He mean? The burden of the law was upon the people, indeed, it was a heavy burden for them. The Pharisees gave more than two thousand interpretations to the law of Moses, and said: "The law of Moses does not mean that you have only to keep ten commandments; it means that you have to keep two thousand." There was not a point in all their human life where this law was not applied and made their lives difficult. And all this was gathered up into the Sabbath: "You must not make your bed on the Sabbath! You must not carry your bed on the Sabbath! You must not poke your fire on the Sabbath! You must do nothing on the

Sabbath – you may not even walk more than three miles.” Two thousand regulations for their lives! The one thing that they were meeting every day, and especially on the Sabbath, was “You may not.”

“Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). What has happened? Jesus has appropriated the Sabbath to Himself. It is no longer a day of the week – it is a Divine Person. (If the Seventh Day Adventists saw that, the whole of their system would go in five minutes!) No, Jesus is God’s Sabbath. He is the end of God’s works, and in Him God has entered into His rest. This is the “rest which remaineth for the children of God” – not a day of the week or on the calendar, but a Divine Person, the Son of God. In Him we come to rest, and that which was our bondage is now our servant. In Him, that against which we were always struggling is now our victory. Oh yes, Jesus is the Sabbath, and if we live in Him we shall not spoil the Sabbath. Every day should be a day of rest to our souls. Oh, this is a mighty thing that the Lord Jesus has done!

From: Discipleship In The School Of Christ - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001452.html

March 23

Christ is all, and in all. (Colossians 3:11)

Beloved, the Cross was intended only to make the Lord Jesus all, and in all, for us; and is it not true that, because of the way that the Lord has dealt with us, the way in which He has applied the Cross, planting us into that death and burial, we know Him in a way in which we never knew Him before? Is it not by that way that He has become what He is to us, ever more and more dear to our hearts? The increase of the Lord Jesus in and to us is by the way of the Cross. We know quite well that our chief enemy is ourselves, our flesh. This flesh gives us no rest, no peace, no satisfaction; we have no joy in it. It obsesses, engrosses, and constantly struts across our path to rob us of the very joy of living. What is to be done with it? Well, in and by the Cross we are delivered from ourselves; not only from our sins, but from ourselves; and being delivered from ourselves we are delivered into Christ, and Christ becomes far more than we. It is a painful process, but it is a blessed issue; and those amongst us who may have had the greatest agony along this line would, I believe, testify that what it has brought to us of the knowledge and riches of the Lord Jesus has made all the suffering worthwhile. So the work of the Lord for us and the work of the Lord in us, by the Cross, is only intended in the Divine thought to make room for the Lord Jesus.

From: Christ – All, and In All
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000617.html

March 24

*Walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him
and established in the faith. (Colossians 2:6,7)*

Abraham in the land... yet the very promises given him of God seeming to be denied. Was Abraham mistaken? Are we not sometimes bewildered with the Lord, and are not His ways past finding out? It all looks such a muddle, but as faith holds on, one day we shall praise Him, as we see the reason for it all afterwards; “the path of the just... shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” – Prov. 4:18. Note “PATH” not things! These mysteries of the way contain some secret mystery of God; and are they not another opportunity to show forth His wisdom and power? When all seems gone, the conflict so great, the experience so strange and there is no key to the situation; we are tempted to question whether the promises were even of God; everything is so contrary to what we expected, we begin to wonder if we are all wrong! *Just then*, is the time for us to stand fast in the Lord and maintain that stand in faith. After all, our experiences are very much alike. There is perplexity, there is apparent contradiction, there is conflict; the forms of experience may vary, but it comes to all of us in some way or another – still “He abideth faithful.” How does this establish us? By the very helplessness of the situation, and ourselves, which causes us to cast ourselves upon Him, and it is then we prove Him. You are coming to the place where you know the mystery of God, and it is a glorious opportunity for Him to show His wisdom and so you are established. It is all a matter of endurance.

From: The Cross and the City of God - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002923.html

March 25

Without Me, you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

The Cross simply says that an order, though it be religious, well-motivated, or good-intentioned, but nevertheless proceeding from man in his natural state (not necessarily in defiance of God or in conscious rebellion against Him, but just the expression of man’s natural state as he is), the Cross says that this entire order is set aside. God has judicially judged it and put a ban upon it. In the Cross of the Lord Jesus God has said finally: “You in your natural state cannot serve Me, and cannot bear any fruit to My glory! It is possible to go out and work, labor, and die of the strain of trying to serve Me and yet it still remains true that you cannot, out from yourself, by any natural resources whatever, bear fruit unto Me.” The only thing that can ever get through to God’s end, and that can be in Life –

eternal, Divine, heavenly Life – is that which proceeds from the Holy Spirit.

How sweeping that is! How that analyzes and dissects everything! Of the things we say, for example, it continually presents the interrogation: “Was that spoken in the Holy Spirit?” It is not enough to ask ourselves: “Did I mean it well? Did I intend it for the Lord?” but: “Was it said, was it done, in the Holy Spirit, or did I do it?” It is not a question of motive or of intention, but of the source from which we did it. We have daily to recognize that our lives must be subject to the Holy Spirit, and when we are aware that there has been something of our own will, we have to be faithful before God about it.

From: The Battle For Life - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000704.html

March 26

I am the true vine. (John 15:1)

The *true* vine is that which fulfills the one and only purpose of its existence. So Jesus brings this illustration over to Himself and His Church, and it is perfectly clear what is the nature of the Lord Jesus. He is reaching out to all men, embracing the whole world. He asks ALL the nations into His heart. ALL men are His concern and not any one nation. He said to His disciples: “Go ye therefore, and make disciples of ALL THE NATIONS” (Matthew 28:19). It is the very nature of Jesus to do that. It is quite foreign to Him to be exclusive, small and narrow and self-occupied.... But it is all very well to think of this objectively. It has to come down to every one of us. What is the proof that Christ is in you and in me? How can it be known that Christ is in us? Only in one way – that others are receiving Life through us, that we minister the Life of Christ to others, that when hungry and needy people come into touch with us they feel the touch of Life. They may express it in different ways, but it amounts to this: “That man, that woman, has something that I have not got and it is something that I need. There is something about them that I feel, and it is what I really need.” That should be true of every Christian because Christ is in us, expanding Himself through us and ministering His Life through us.

Oh, do pray, dear friends, every day as you get up: “Lord, make me a channel of Life to someone today. Lord, minister Your own Life through me to someone today. May I bring Life wherever I am.” The Lord has no other purpose for you and for me. We may try to do a lot of things, but if we belong to the Vine we are no good for anything but to bear fruit; and that is to bring Life to others.

From: The On-High Calling - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000984.html

March 27

*If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.
(Galatians 5:25 ESV)*

That which is called Christianity is essentially a spiritual thing, and not an earthly order or system, and every fragment of it has to be entered into in a spiritual way, by way of Life and Revelation. There is all the difference between imitation and Life. Oh, what a difference there is between seeing a thing in an objective way and coming into it in Life! It is just there that the wonder, the glory, the vitality, the energy, the power of things is found.

You have perhaps talked for years about things in the Word of God, as in the Word of God, and you believed them and gave them out as truth, and after doing that for years suddenly you saw what they meant, and the whole thing came in another way. All your talking, and preaching, and believing before was quite true, quite right, correct as to doctrine, but what effect had it on you? Now that it has broken like this it is transfiguring, and has brought real joy and delight, life and ecstasy. That is what we mean by entering into things by Life and by Revelation. In other words, it is coming into things by the Spirit and seeing....

If we become spiritual in this sense, if the Holy Spirit is the commanding reality in our life, and we are walking by the Spirit, we are bound inevitably to come into all God's thought. The Lord wants a people to come into His full thought. That is only possible as they cease to be governed by some outward order of things, and learn what it is to move with God in the Holy Spirit.

From: Life in the Spirit - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003083.html

March 28

It pleased God... to reveal His Son in me. (Galatians 1:15,16)

If Christ, the Son of God's love, is central and supreme in the heart of the believer so much else goes down, it must go down. Controversies with God will divide, but those artificial things, those things resultant from man's activity and his projecting of himself, insinuating of himself into the interests of God, those things cannot abide where there is an adequate inward revelation of the Lord Jesus; they cannot be. These two things are before us: one, because of the revelation of Jesus Christ in our hearts we have a passion for Him; on the other hand, because of the absence of a sufficient revelation of Christ in our hearts we are out for other things which we would say are in His interests, and for Him, but which can never,

never satisfy God's heart. It is the satisfaction of the heart of the Father, which is in view.

Beloved I am speaking about the individual. I am not justified, and you are not justified, in claiming to be Christians except in the measure in which Christ is manifested in me, in you; and all the force and weight and ingenuity of hell is out against that. Believers have far more to provoke them to un-Christ-likeness than anyone else in the world. Believers have far more assaults to churn them up and to make them betray Christ than anyone else. Hell is dead set against the revelation of Jesus Christ. Everything begins with this, the revelation of Jesus Christ within.

From: The Centrality and Supremacy of Christ
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000420.html

March 29

You have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire. (Hebrews 12:18)

How vast is this movement from that old economy to the bringing in of the New Economy. There is one thing only in your New Testament, introduced by Christ in the Gospels and followed out by the apostles; and in this letter to the Hebrews, the solid object of the whole letter is the transition from one economy to Another. Oh, read it again and glory in it. Read that letter again to the Hebrews. Glory in this: "My, what a thing we have been brought into." Tabernacle? Yes, says the writer, there was a tabernacle on this earth, and for the time being... until the time. That is all gone, he says, and now we have come into the True Tabernacle not made with hands, which God has made, a Heavenly Tabernacle. See how wonderful the transition is! – the passing over from one economy to Another.

I must pause to ask, is this where Christendom has gone astray?

Is it still holding on to the old economy?

Is it still in the grave clothes?

Is it still that old Mosaic economy with its forms and ways?

Is it not emancipated into the Heavenlies?

That is what the Lord wants to do with us here.

Things have gone away, gone wrong, got out of God's way, and God is returning to where they went wrong. God usually does that with us. And so what is God's beginning? It is His Son before the foundation of the world. Right back in the eternal counsels His Son was made the beginning, God's starting place. Men have all gone astray, because of history, "all of us like sheep have gone astray." *God gets back to His beginning, His Son.*

Christendom has gone astray, and the only way of saving Christendom is to get back to God's beginning, a true and right apprehension of His Son.

From: The Great Transition From One Humanity To Another - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001481.html

March 30

The Son can do nothing by Himself. (John 5:19 NLT)

That is the principle of the Cross. He accepted that position of being able to do nothing out from Himself. It must all come out from God. There is no way through otherwise.... There was a revolution in my life thirty years ago when that principle of the Cross came flat up against ministry – ministry that for years I had been producing – against all my study, reading and late nights, to get up the stuff for ministry, till the whole thing became an intolerable burden in myself. Others perhaps thought it to be pretty good, but the crisis when – listen to me, men and women who are in ministry, or contemplating it – the whole turn came upon the recognition of this principle, this principle of the Cross when, with the door closed, I said to the Lord “I am finished in all ministry, I am never going to preach again unless You do something now. I have been doing it all these years; I have been producing this, now I am finished. You have got to do it.” But I saw that principle, you see, as the principle of the Cross and I meant it.

Forgive me speaking of myself, but I must bring this home in some way. The next week would have seen my resignation in with my church officers, and I would have gone out from ministry if the Lord had not done it. But the Lord was true to His own principle. It was an utter end of anything that I could produce for ministry, and I meant it to be like that, because I recognized that God meant that. That was the principle of the Cross – nothing out from ourselves. No fruit that labor and study of the mind and heart could produce has a way through in the work and service of God. God was true to His own principle – He always is. From that day to this, there has been no trouble about ministry. It is easy to let ministry go, and much more easy than to accept it. This clamoring for ministry – it is uncrucified flesh. Well, there has been an open heaven since then. Again I beg your forgiveness for making this personal reference, but this is a true thing. It is a principle which covers all the ground.

From: The Cross and the Way of Life - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002846.html

March 31

*Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.
(1 Timothy 6:12 ESV)*

Resurrection is *the* supreme proof of the power of God. You do not need that I say much about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. When He was on that cross everything was done to make sure that He was dead. After they had nailed Him, hands and feet, on to the cross, to make sure that He was dead they thrust the spear into His heart. When He was taken down from the cross and put into the tomb, the high priest said: “Take a guard and make sure,” so that great stone was rolled against the tomb and the official seal was put on the stone. Then they mounted a guard of soldiers. What more could be done to make sure that He was dead? Well, everything that men and devils could do – and then, over all that, it says: “*This Jesus did God raise up*” (Acts 2:32).

What an immense thing resurrection is! And all the potentialities of the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus are given to the child of God. We can go right on to the end because we have His Life. Until the Lord says: “It is enough: come up higher!” there is no need for any child of God to die. Death and life are in the hands of God. How many wonderful experiences we may have of this Divine Life! We may make a lot of other manifestations of the power of God and they may all be quite wonderful – we will never take anything from what is of the Holy Spirit – but when we have said all, the supreme thing is “*the power of His resurrection.*” That is the birthright of the child of God and something that you and I may be knowing now and all the days of our life. “*Lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called.*”

From: Into The Heart of God - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001646.html

April 1

God... has shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6)

The Letter to the Galatians really can be summed up in this way: a Christian is not one who does this and that and another thing which is prescribed to be done; a Christian is not one who refrains from doing this and that and another thing because they are forbidden; a Christian is not one at all who is governed by the externalities of a way of life, an order, a legalistic system which says, “You must,” and “You must not,” a Christian is comprehended in this saying, “It pleased God to reveal His Son in me” (Gal. 1:15-16). That is only another way of saying, “He opened my eyes to see Jesus,” for the two things are the same. The Damascus road is the place.

“Who art Thou, Lord?” “I am Jesus of Nazareth.” “It pleased God to reveal His Son in me.” That is one and the same thing.

Seeing in an inward way: that makes a Christian. “God... hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 4:6). “In our hearts”: Christ, so imparted and revealed within, is what makes a Christian, and a Christian will do or not do certain things, not at the dictates of any Christian law, any more than Jewish, but as led by the Spirit inwardly, by Christ in the heart. It is that that makes a Christian, and in that the foundation is laid for all the rest, right on to the consummation, because it is just going to be that growingly. So the foundation must be according to the superstructure; they are all of a piece. It is seeing, and it is seeing Christ.

From: Spiritual Sight - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001060.html

April 2

*Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.
(Hebrews 12:2)*

The passion of the Cross is the way of our release, and if you consider your own spiritual experience, those of you who have any experience of a walk with God, you know quite well that it has been through times of deep and acute suffering that you have found fresh releases; fresh releases in your spiritual life. Is it not true? Yes, we pass into a time of excruciating spiritual and soul suffering. We do not know what the Lord is doing, what He means by this, what He is after, but we know the features of our experience and know what it is that we are suffering, and it goes on. We, of course, ask the Lord to stop it, to bring it to a quick end, to deliver us from it. He takes no notice of us, and it is only those people who get out the other end who say, “Thank God, He did not take any notice.” In the meantime, we think He is anything but kind and good and doing the right thing, but as we get on under His hand, we begin to see and to sense that He is dealing with something. Maybe He is dealing with our pride, our independence, or our irresponsibility, for example. That is the issue that comes up, and we are faced all the time with something about ourselves that is almost devastating. We would not have believed that that was so strong in us. Oh, of course we were always ready to believe that that is in mankind and in us as a part of mankind in a general way. Yes, we would never have resented being told that there was pride or something like that about us, but we would never have believed how deeply rooted and terribly strong that thing is until it was put to a fiery test and everything was held up, and we saw that everything in our life and work for God was held up on that point.... And we know quite well that what the Lord was after was

not the pulverizing of us, as we thought, the winding up of us, but to bring about enlargement, to bring about release, and release always lies along the line of the Cross, the passion. Enlargement always lies in that direction.

From: The Cross and the Way of Life - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002845.html

April 3

I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. (Leviticus 26:4)

You do not get the fruit until the blossom has gone. It is the Summer, not the Winter, that follows the blowing away of the blossom. Of course, we all like to see the blossom in its time, but we should have some strange feelings if we saw the blossom there all through the Summer. We should say: "There is something wrong here, it is time that blossom went." We look closer, and we see something in its place, full of promise, and of much more value. This early blossom may be a sign of life, but it is not the life itself. A sign of early life belongs to the early Spring, showing that the Winter is past and resurrection is at work. It is a sign, but it is not the thing itself, and it passes with spiritual infancy. These early enthusiasms are not the real basis of our union with God, but are signs of something that has happened in us. They are of ourselves, they are not of God. He is something other than that. He is not going to blow away. The Life is working and will show itself in stronger and deeper forms.... But if, on the one hand, eternal Life operates to cut us off from our natural life as the basis of our relationship with God, on the other hand, it is perfectly wonderful what is done. It is "the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." The Lord even comes in as our physical life to the doing of more than would have been possible to us at our best, and certainly far beyond the present possibility, because He has made us know that as men we are nothing, even at our best. Life does that. Life forces off one system and brings on another, making room for it as it goes.

From: All Things in Christ - Chapter 9
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002775.html

April 4

*I want to know Christ – yes, to know the power of His resurrection and participation in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death.
(Philippians 3:10 NIV)*

Do recognize that the Cross is the end of the risen life, and not only the beginning. If you forget everything else, remember that. The Cross is

the end of the risen life, as well as the beginning: “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, *becoming conformed unto His death.*” People have been to me with Philippians 3 and have asked: “Why did Paul put death at the end? Surely it ought to be right the other way round – ‘That I may be conformed to His death, and know Him in the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.’” No, there is no mistake. The order is of the Holy Spirit. The power of His resurrection presupposes that there has been a death, but the very resurrection-life leads to the Cross. The Holy Spirit in the power of the risen life is always leading you back to the Cross, to conformity to His death. It is the very property of Life to rule out all that belongs to death. It is the very power of resurrection to bring us back to the place where death is constantly overcome.

That place is none other than the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ where the natural life is put aside. So Paul says: “...becoming conformed unto His death,” which means: to have the ground of death continuously and progressively removed; and that, again, as we have said, is the fruit of living union with Him. It would be a poor look-out for you and for me were we to be conformed to His death in entirety apart from the power of resurrection in us, apart from our already knowing the Life of the Lord. Where would be our hope? What is it that is the power of our survival when the Cross is made more real in our experience? There would be no survival were it not that His risen Life is in us. So Paul prays: “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection...” and that means conformity to His death without utter destruction. The end of the risen life is the Cross. The Holy Spirit is always working in relation to the Cross, in order that the power of His resurrection may be increasingly manifested in us.

From: The Battle For Life - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000704.html

April 5

*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.
(Zechariah 4:6)*

Does it not strike you as significant, and very impressive, that when the veil was rent Israel was set aside? Israel had been called in to maintain a testimony in types. Christ had come and fulfilled all the types, and being the center of all the types, the veil, all that kept God shut off from man, was now dealt with, and the way was open. There was no need for types now. So the custodian of the types departs with the types. This is not the dispensation of the types: this is the dispensation of the reality, the dispensation of a heavenly union with a risen Lord, and of all that that means.

Our danger is of bringing back types. The types have gone and that is the whole message of this letter to the Hebrews. Christ is everything. The outward order of the Old Testament is set aside, and now all that obtains is Christ Himself. He is the Priest; you no longer have priests on earth in the Old Testament sense. He is the Sacrifice; there is no need for any other sacrifices. He is the Tabernacle; He is the Temple; He is the Church. What is the Church? It is Christ in living union with His own, that wheresoever two or three are gathered together in His name there He is in the midst. That is the Church. You do not build special buildings and call them “the Church.” You do not have special organizations, religious institutions, which you call “the Church.” Believers in living union with the risen Lord constitute the Church. This is the reality, not the figure. That is to say, His flesh, human limitation, is done away. Now in union with Christ risen all human limitations are transcended.

This is one of the wonders of Christ risen as a living reality. We are brought into a realm of capacities which are more than human capacities, where, because of Christ in us, we can do what we never could do naturally. Our relationships are new relationships; they are with heaven. Our resources are new resources: they are in heaven. That is why the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians and said that God hath chosen the weak things, the foolish things. The things which are despised, and the *things which are not*, that He by them might bring to naught the wise, the mighty, *the things which are*. Why did God appoint it so? Because it is not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit; and to show that there are powers, energies, abilities for His own which transcend all the greatest powers and abilities of this world.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002219.html

April 6

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.
(Galatians 5:1 NIV)*

There is another word, which just means that which has escaped from slavery and is breathing free air. That is a fine picture, a fine portrait for Overcomers – that which has escaped from slavery and is breathing free air. I dare not stay to interpret that. Some of us, even in our Christian lives and histories, know what it is to escape from slavery. Oh, the old bondage of the Christian system and order, expectation and demand, all the old rota and legality! – to be free of it all! Not only to be raised with Christ, but to have the grave clothes taken off and to be breathing the free air of the spiritually emancipated! That is what this word calls a “remnant,” and that

is not something extra to Christianity. It is exactly what you find at the beginning with the Church.

The Lord had cried in the midst of a burdened, tyrannized, religious nation – “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30) What is the old yoke, the old burden, which has harassed and worn these people so that they are weary to death, drawing out His compassionate appeal – “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest”? It is the old yoke and burden of legalistic religion, “thou shalt” and “thou shalt not,” “you must” and “you must not” – the whole system built up like that; a great burden. “They bind heavy burdens,” He said, “and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with their finger” (Matt. 23:4). And this word for “remnant” means such as have escaped slavery and are breathing the free air. You find them in the beginning of the book of the Acts. Overcomers are those who go back to the beginning in experience. They do not take up something further which is deeper teaching or fuller light. It is the primal freshness and fullness of Christ that Overcomers represent – unfortunately, in contrast to the general situation.

From: Overcomer Testimony - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001948.html

April 7

I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:12 ESV)

The certainty and the assurance that was right at the root of his (Paul’s) Christian life and service came because of this one thing: he’d seen everything in Jesus. Everything... in Jesus. What liberation that brought to him! What emancipation! We have often said here that there was no power in this world that could have turned that rabid, fanatical Jew, Saul of Tarsus, into a Christian and a lover of Jesus of Nazareth. No power in this world that could have done that, but just *seeing* Jesus Himself in this way and that did it, that did it! He was emancipated, he was free!

No wonder of all his writings the fiercest, the fieriest is his letter to the Galatians, the letter of our *liberty* in Christ and it begins with this “God revealed His Son in me and that set me free from all other things.” No use telling people that this and that, and the other thing are a limitation and that they should seek enlargement by getting out of it. That is an unfruitful, unprofitable, indeed that’s a dangerous line to take with anybody. But again, if only we can bring *Christ*... with all His Divine significance and meaning and comprehensiveness to them and the Holy Spirit can reveal

Him in their hearts... oh, that will do it! That will do it; they will never again be content with anything that limits them to the grave clothes of religion.

It delivered Paul from Judaism as nothing else would have done. The way of an escape, the way of enlargement, the way of endurance is to see Jesus. It is not by learning, that is, it is not by the schools. Paul had all of the schools, he did, of religion. He didn't get it through the schools and we'll never get it through the schools; along that line of the technical instruction of things Christian or religious. This is not a merely mental or academic or intellectual thing at all. It is a work of the Holy Spirit.

From: Revelation of Jesus Christ - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001028.html

April 8

*We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory.
(2 Corinthians 3:18)*

The word “beholding” is a strong word; it is not just taking a look, it is “fixing our gaze.” That is what the New Testament means by beholding, behold. We all, fixing our gaze upon Christ, as He mirrors in His own Person the glory of God, the satisfaction of God, the mind of God in perfection. The point is that you and I must contemplate the Lord Jesus in spirit, and be much occupied with Him. We must have our Holy of Holies where we retire with Him. We must have a secret place where we spend time with Him. And not only in certain special seasons, but we must seek, as we move about, ever to keep Him before us. Looking at the Lord Jesus, contemplating Him, we shall be changed into the same image. The Holy Spirit will operate upon our occupation.

You become like that which obsesses you, which occupies you. Is that not true? You see what people are occupied with, and you can see their character changing by their obsessions. They are becoming like the thing which is obsessing them; they are changing; they are becoming different. Something has got a grip on them; they can never think about anything else, talk about anything else; and it is changing their character. Now Paul said, “For me to live is Christ – being occupied with Him.” It is the wrong word to use, but nevertheless it would be a good thing if He became our “obsession,” our continuous occupation. As we steadfastly fix our gaze upon Him, the Spirit changes us into the same image.

From: Men Whose Eyes Have Seen The King - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000935.html

April 9

But the natural (soulical) man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

When you look at 1 Corinthians what a lot of soulicalism there is: this wisdom of words, this wisdom of the world, these likes and these dislikes and preferences and partialities and antipathies, and then their jealousies. That is no good on this foundation. Do not bring your own soul-life into relationship with Christ; it will not tally and it will not go through, it will go up in smoke. Are you trying to make your Christianity a matter of how you feel? You will have a composite kind of Christianity of so many varieties, nothing consistent at all, a perfect patchwork. When you think you have arrived at a very good logical conclusion about a matter, something will come along and upset the whole thing....

You never get through that way. Your soul in the realm of its mental exercises and conflicts will never tally with Christ. And as for our own soul-will, strength to do, we may feel very strong, we are never going again to be caught like that, never going down that street again! It is not long before we are there. Oh, how ashamed our souls make us! How ashamed we have been because of the instability of our feelings or our wills or our thoughts. Ashamed! Ashamed! Ashamed! Our souls are making fools of us all the time. "*He that believes on Him shall not be put to shame.*" Paul says that this soul-life business must not come on Christ. It is a contradiction. It is not what you are, it is what Christ is. When you cannot see and understand and work it out mentally, when you cannot feel anything, no feelings at all, or when they are very bad feelings – that is one realm, that is just what we are. Christ is not that, and we have at such times to say, "Lord, this is my infirmity, this is how I am, but You are Other; I transfer my faith to You from myself and from these things." Christ is the foundation, and all that we build on the foundation has to be Christ Himself. He is not only the foundation, but He is the whole building in every part.

From: Features of Zion - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002135.html

April 10

We were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. (2 Corinthians 1:8 ESV)

The Lord Jesus said "I am the true Vine," and it was prophesied of Him that He would tread the winepress alone. The Cross was His winepress. How He was pressed in the Cross! He was crushed and broken, but out of that breaking has come the Life which you and I have, and

which so many in all the nations have received. That is true, in a measure, of His Church. It was out of the breaking and crushing of the Church that the Life came to the world. And that is true of every member, every branch of the vine. If we are to fulfill this true, living ministry, it will only be through suffering, through the winepress, through pressure and through breaking. Paul said: "*We were pressed out of measure, above strength*" (2 Corinthians 1:8 – A.V.) – but what Life has come out of that man's pressure! It is like that. We are not talking about preaching and Bible teaching, but about this great ministry of Christ giving His Life through us. It may be passed on to others through preaching, or through teaching, or through living, but if it is His Life it will come out of experiences of suffering. A preacher or a teacher who has never suffered will never minister Life. Well, this may not seem a very pleasant outlook, but it is true. The best doctors and nurses are those who know something about suffering themselves. Some are just professional, treating you as a case – you are just case number blank. But, ah! there are others who treat you as a person, a human being, who care for you. If you ask why, you may find that they have a background of suffering themselves. They know just a little of what you are going through. We have read in the Letter to the Hebrews: "*We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are... He is able to succor them that are tempted*" (Hebrews 4:15, 2:18). He has been the way of the winepress and we have received the benefit.

From: The On-High Calling - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000984.html

April 11

*The fire will test the quality of each person's work.
(1 Corinthians 3:13 NIV)*

I have no doubt that you love the Lord. I am not raising any question about that. But, I do say again, we are involved in a great system which is a very complicated thing, and a great deal of it is not of the Lord. It is something that man has brought in. Man has put his hand upon the things of the Lord, and man has made things according to his own mind, and therefore a great deal has come in which is of man and not of the Lord. And when we say that, we are not only thinking of Christianity in general, we are thinking of ourselves. This is true of ourselves. We have all come into something called Christianity, and we have all taken on something of Christianity, and there may be a great deal that we have to get rid of, and come back to the simple fundamental reality. And the fundamental reality of all realities is *the presence of the Lord*. We have got to know that the Lord is with us, and that the Lord is with us in all that we do, that this did not originate in our mind. It did not originate in our will, it did not

originate in our emotion. It did not come from our soul, this thing has come from the Lord in every detail, like the tabernacle. Just like Jesus Christ, in every detail it has to come to us from God.

That ought to send us back to our knees – to go through all our work. It may be necessary for us, from time to time, to stand back and ask the Lord about all that we are doing. “Is this out from God, or is it something out from ourselves? Is this way of doing things the mind of God, or is it our mind? Is the Lord in this, or have we come into it?” You see, that is a great deciding matter. Make no mistake about it! Everything that is only of man is going to perish. Sooner or later it will be shaken. Every man’s work shall be tried in the fire, says the Word of God.

From: “That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One” - Meeting 15
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001082.html

April 12

When He... was pleased to reveal His Son to me... I did not immediately consult with anyone. (Galatians 1:15,16 ESV)

I do not know what the apostles might have said if Paul had gone to see them, but seeing that they had not had the revelation that he had had and they had not the call that he had (theirs was not an apostleship to the Gentiles), they might have counseled moderation and cautiousness. They might have told Paul to consider whether he had been deceived or misled, because nothing like this had happened before....

Now, while fellowship is always a good thing, and experience should always be used as far as available, when it is a matter of the Lord speaking to our hearts and making it perfectly clear what His way is for us, we must be very careful that we do not submit that to influences that would in any way limit our response and interfere with our obedience. There must be a detachment from all rule that would injure a heavenly revelation. If others are really under the government of the Spirit they will help, but we must be careful that consultation with flesh is not made in the presence of a heavenly vision. We may consult with tradition and ask what the common acceptance is.

Common acceptance will hold you back. The Lord is against mere freelancers in every way, His order is fellowship in the Body; nevertheless if we submit to any kind of natural influence concerning what the Lord has been saying to us, and take counsel or take our direction from governing elements of man or things, we shall come under arrest and probably be disobedient to the heavenly vision. We know of lives that have been marred in this way. If there is fellowship in the things of the Lord, let us use it, but let us be quite sure that we do not take things outside and submit them to those influences which are not in the Light, not in the Life, and not

in the good of heavenly things, and take our direction from something less than that which is wholly under the government of the Holy Spirit.

From: That Which Was From The Beginning - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002955.html

April 13

The Lord disciplines the one He loves, and He chastens everyone He accepts as His son. (Hebrews 12:6 NIV)

What is the purpose of sonship? It is to bring us into a place of spiritual responsibility. God never puts responsibilities upon “official people,” but upon sons. Therefore He has to train us as children in order to develop sonship in us, to bring us there where we can take responsibilities for God. He seeks to bring us to a state of spiritual maturity, to full growth. This cannot be done in some Bible school, or by putting people “into the ministry.” God never works on an official side. Oh yes, God does take us into His school. He can also take us into His school in some training institute. And it is a blessed thing if He does it.

But God’s school is something very different from mere scholarly activity. His Word says: “My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art reproved of Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.” Note this word “whom He receives.” The exact meaning in the Greek is not “receives,” but “whom He positions” or places. It is a matter of position. God is seeking to develop a state in us where He can trust us. When God is dealing with us, there is behind it a wonderful assurance that He is going to put His trust in us. He is bringing us into a position of trust. We do not just want to be servants, bits of a machine, but sons who have become one with the Father, and in whose hands He can put spiritual responsibilities. When we truly recognize this, we begin to understand why God is dealing with us as He does. But because God is in it we know that the end is sure. He will bring His children through.

From: Christ Our All - Chapter 9

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002941.html

April 14

My God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19 ESV)

God has assumed the responsibility of a Father, and has taken up those responsibilities to meet them in and through His Son. The

enlarge of that in Christian utterance is found in Philippians 4:19. This means Christ recognized, Christ known, God in Christ, and that on the ground of our utter separation unto Him. But note: it is God's gift. He says that it was not Moses that gave the manna in the wilderness, but His Father. Then it is not the result of man's labors, it is the issue of God's grace. Are you laboring for spiritual growth? How we have striven and strained to increase our spiritual measure and our spiritual stature. What a burden we have taken upon us in relation to the maintenance of our own spiritual life! We have almost assumed the whole responsibility for our spiritual life, and made it as though it depended upon our labors in prayer, our labors in the Word of God, our labors in the Lord's service, our effort, our stress.

No one will think that we have made little of prayer or the Word. No one will think that we have said you must have no care whatever for your spiritual life, but there is such a difference between assuming responsibility for ourselves and recognizing that God has assumed that responsibility. And because God has assumed the responsibility we should co-operate with God. There is all the difference between trying to work for our justification, and working because we are justified; between trying to work for our perfection, and working because our perfection is secured in Christ. The difference is not merely technical, it is practical, and of immense value.

Sometimes it is necessary for the Lord to say to us: "Look here, you are making far too much of your own praying, far too much of your own business in the Scriptures, you are unconsciously coming to think that everything depends upon how much and how fervently you pray." And then you go out and talk to other people about your prayer life as a kind of setting up against their own. You do not mean it, but the implication is that this is what accounts for your growth, and it is going to count for other people's growth. That must not be a cause but a *result*. "The cause, the secret, the spring of everything is Myself, and sometimes you will just have to cease straining, and rest back in Me, in loving trust. Learn to do that a little more, and then you will pray better, and I shall be able to do something more!"

From: Knowing God in Christ - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003118.html

April 15

Our sufficiency is from God. (2 Corinthians 3:5)

We go through times of trial and test under the hand of God, and it is so easy to get into that frame of mind which says in effect, "The Lord does not want us, He need not have us!" We let everything go, we do not care about anything; we have gone down under our trials and we are rendered useless. I do not believe the Lord ever comes to a person like that to take

them up. Elijah, dispirited, fled to the wilderness, and to a cave in the mountains; but he had to get somewhere else before the Lord could do anything with him. “What doest thou *here*, Elijah?” (1 Kings 19:9). The Lord never comes to a man and recommissions him when he is in despair. “God shall forgive thee all but thy despair” (F. W. H. Myers, “*St. Paul*”) – because despair is lost faith in God, and God can never do anything with one who has lost faith.... A great deal is made of the natural side of many of the Lord’s servants, and usually with tragic results. A lot is made of Paul. “What a great man Paul was naturally, what intellect he had, what training, what tremendous abilities!” That may all be true, but ask Paul what value it was to him when he was right up against a spiritual situation. He will cry, “Who is sufficient for these things?” “Our sufficiency is from God” (2 Cor. 2:16; 3:5). Paul was taken through experiences where he, like Moses, despaired of life. He said, “We... had the sentence of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead” (2 Cor. 1:9).

From: Prophetic Ministry - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001004.html

April 16

The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing.
(John 6:63 NLT)

It is one thing to have a conception or apprehension of the purpose of God, and to be given up to it, but it is an extra thing to know how God would realize His purpose. It is still another thing to know the means He would employ. There are many who have a true conception of what God’s purpose is, but the means which they employ are not God’s means, the way in which they go to work is not His way, and therefore they find that the Lord does not support them. They may be in a true direction, but being out of fellowship with the method or means they are compelled to take responsibility for the work themselves, and to find the resources. Thus they find themselves oftentimes exhausted, brought to a standstill, and having to resort to all kinds of methods and means to raise the resource to carry on God’s work, because they are not in the real enjoyment of His Own support. The work of God becomes a burden upon *their* shoulders, and the Lord cannot order it otherwise because there is not the fullest fellowship and sympathy between them and His ways, His methods, His means, His times, and the details of His purpose.

Now, in the case of the Lord Jesus it was quite the contrary. In the details He was in secret fellowship with the Father. With Him this represented a detailed obedience unto one comprehensive purpose. The only explanation needed by Him in any given matter was simply that of knowing that the Father willed it, and without any further word He did it.

That was the basis of His relationship. Never do we trace in Him a sign of waiting to question why a thing should be done in a certain way, or at a certain time and not another, or why certain means should be employed and not others. It was enough that the Father willed it. The explanation came in the justification and vindication that followed. The doing of the will of God was a matter of that obedience which never moves out from self but always out from the Father. As that held good in His case the spiritual resources of sustenance, maintenance, strength, and energy were supplied.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002222.html

April 17

*He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.
(Luke 24:45 NIV)*

As we contemplate the state of things in the world today, we are very deeply impressed and oppressed with the prevailing malady of spiritual blindness. It is the root malady of the time. We should not be far wrong if we said that most, if not all, of the troubles from which the world is suffering, are traceable to that root, namely, blindness. The masses are blind; there is no doubt about that. In a day which is supposed to be a day of unequaled enlightenment, the masses are blind.... The leaders are blind, blind leaders of the blind. But in a very large measure, the same is true of the Lord's people. Speaking quite generally, Christians are today very blind. Every bit of new seeing is a work from heaven. It is not something done fully once for all.

It is possible for us to go on seeing and seeing, and yet more fully seeing, but with every fresh fragment of truth, this work, which is not in our power to do, has to be done. Spiritual Life is not only a miracle in its inception; it is a continuous miracle in this matter right on to the last.... We do not seek for new revelation, and we do not say or suggest or hint that you may have anything extra to the Word of God, but we do claim that there is a vast amount in the Word of God that we have never seen, which we may see. Surely everybody agrees with that: and it is just that – to see, and the more you see, really see, the more overwhelmed you feel about the whole thing, because you know that you have come to the borders of the land of far distances, lying far beyond a short lifetime's power of experience. *The Lord make us all to be of those who have eyes opened.*

From: Spiritual Sight - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001059.html

April 18

*Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons.
(Hebrews 12:7 NIV)*

The Lord may get you off activities and shut you up to inactivity, and you go through an awful time and say the Lord has forsaken you, all has gone wrong. What really is it? Why, it is growing pains! Has it not proved to be growing pains? In the long run it was not all wrong, it was all right. You came to know the Lord whereas before your whole life was taken up with *things*. You have been shut up and you came to know the Lord inwardly and you have come to a state of spiritual efficiency which is so much greater than you can now meet the external situation. He has been misunderstood, but He was working unto your efficiency, exercising us unto efficiency. These, the growing pains, are terrible. You cannot help anyone who is suffering from growing pains, and you must stand aside and see them going through.

So through numerous and various directions this growth takes place by the painful exercise produced by the way the Lord is dealing with you. Chastening – a poor English word. It is child-training or discipline. Take the word disciple; one who comes into association with someone in order to learn, and the Disciples were chosen that they might be with Him in order to learn. That is discipline, learning. We do learn through suffering. Even the Lord Jesus was made “full grown” in this sense, complete, through suffering. We take the same way unto full growth. It is child training, discipline, learning by way of experience. That is chastening. Making us sons out of children, full grown men out of infants. I feel that we want to have more faith in the dealings of God with us along this line.

From: Maturity – The Lord's Desire For His People
www.austin-sparks.net/english/003680.html

April 19

*After starting your Christian lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?
(Galatians 3:3 NLT)*

You know all that the Letter to the Galatians is about, and you know the two prominent words – Liberty – “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Galatians 4:1 – A.V.) – and sonship. Not servanthood, nor slavery, but sonship; the liberty of sons. They are the two great words of that Letter, but what are the grave bands there in Galatia? They are the grave bands of tradition, of legalism, and all such things. You know, dear friends, it is very easy to get tied up with these grave clothes! The

persistent peril through the ages of Christianity is to crystallize itself into something set, something fixed. You have some light, some revelation, something of the immensity of truth, just a fragment of it, and it is not long before you begin to form that into a set system and make it the limit, saying that this is what people must believe, they must come within this horizon, and they must behave like this. It becomes a system again: "You must... you must not!" and there is no difference between that and the Old Testament "Thou shalt... thou shalt not!"

Christianity has fallen into that peril, and is continually doing it, circumscribing the great revelation, making Christ smaller than He is, crystallizing truth into something fixed and set: "This is how..." and the meaning of that is: "This is the ultimate." Now you notice that when the Spirit did come, as we have the record in the Book of the Acts, the one thing that these old Jewish disciples experienced was a marvelous emancipation from that bondage of Judaism; and how the Holy Spirit was working all along against any fixed barriers!

From: "Loose Him, and Let Him Go"
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000522.html

April 20

*I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you cannot have eternal life within you.
(John 6:53 NLT)*

Let us remember that this way is a way that is a constant offence to the flesh, to the natural man. The Jews strove with one another, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" But not only did Jews, the religious people in their religious self-satisfaction, strive together, but it is also written, "Many therefore of His disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?"

Even disciples could not go on sometimes. When they came face to face with the implications of such a saying, they were no longer willing to be associated with Him on a basis of that kind. The flesh loves to have it in itself to be doing, to be laying the plans, arranging the programs, organizing the work, superintending it, and getting it going. The flesh revels in that, and when you come and say to that whole order of things, "The way of God is the way of utter dependence and faith, with the Holy Spirit in entire charge, and you must keep your hands off and be willing to do only what the Lord tells you and no more," (that which is meant by the declaration, "I can do nothing out from Myself") it is an offence to the natural man, even in religious matters.

We come up against that constantly, do we not? It is the difference between meeting together as they did at Antioch to pray things out and get

the Lord's witness as to His will, and having a committee meeting to discuss a proposal and make plans. If the natural man is not doing the whole thing, and arranging it, and ordering it, and running it all, he cannot think that progress can be made at all. Unless you come out with your plans, and announce your programs, and declare what you are doing, and present your statistics, the naturally minded Christian thinks that nothing is being done. It is possible to have wonderful things done without any of that kind of activity.

We cite such a thing purely as an illustration. Application can be extended in many directions, but this is just to help out the thought. The whole accomplishment of God in Christ is on the basis of Divine Life mediated through faith. That is another way of saying that Christ has to be the basis of everything in a spiritual way. This is an offence to the flesh, but a satisfaction to the Spirit.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002222.html

April 21

You desire truth in the inner being. (Psalm 51:6)

In the course of our spiritual history God deals with us in ever-deepening ways. Down, down, down, He goes, until He touches bottom to have things true at our very depth. He undercuts all our professions, doctrines, assumptions, pretensions, illusions, and customs.... There is no mere formalism about this; no mere Jewish ritual in this; no mere outward observance of rites and ceremonies in this! No! This has got to go right into the inmost being, in the *inward* parts. God works toward that. God is ever working toward the most inward parts. Do you recognize that? Do you understand what He is doing with us? Oh, He will meet us with blessing on a certain level, as we walk before Him, like the man in Psalm 1.

He will meet us with His gracious provision when we transgress and trespass and fail, and do wrong – He will meet us there in grace. But God is going to pursue this matter to the most inward place of our being, and register there His work of grace and redemption. The Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are characterized by this one feature – truth! And God desires and has set His heart upon having people who are partakers of the Divine nature, and so He is working ever more deeply toward this end: what is true of Himself shall be true of His children – those begotten of Him – that they should be *true* sons of God in this sense.

From: Truth In the Inward Parts
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000496.html

April 22

Blessed is the one who is not offended by Me. (Matthew 11:6 ESV)

The Word of God does take account of the possibility of our being offended with Him. It does not say anywhere that that possibility should never arise and will never arise. The Lord has nowhere said that we shall never have any occasion for being offended with Him. He HAS indicated that there will be PLENTY of opportunity for so stumbling at Him, falling over Him, coming down because of Him – if you like: crashing because of Him. There will be plenty of occasion or opportunity for so doing. He has never said that it will never be so. It is as well for us to recognize that.

The Lord sent no word of rebuke to poor John the Baptist in the prison when he was perilously near to being offended with the Lord because of his situation. The Lord was not hard on John because of his question. He might, had He been another, have said, “But John, did you not point Me out as the Lamb of God? Did you not proclaim Me as the One, the Messiah? Haven’t you preached about Me to multitudes? Have you not made the strongest declarations and affirmations as to what you believed about Me? And here you’re asking a fundamental question about Me. John, what’s gone wrong with you?” No, nothing like that. The Lord knows our frame, that we are dust. And the Lord, I’m saying, takes account of this ever present possibility, in our weakness, of being offended with Him. But he does attach to this matter a particular blessedness if we don’t crash over the Stumbling Block of His ways with us, “*AND blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me.*”

From: Blessedness of the Unoffended
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001230.html

April 23

Although He was weak when He was nailed to the cross, He now lives by the power of God. We are weak, just as Christ was. But you will see that we will live by the power of God, just as Christ does.

(2 Corinthians 13:4 CEV)

One of the most damaging things in the realm of God’s work, a thing which eventually leads to shame and confusion and much sorrow, is Natural Soul Force projected by strong-willed, determined, aggressive Christians who have not come to a spiritual state where they are able to discriminate between stubborn indomitableness, personal determination and resolution, and that which is altogether another thing: spiritual grace in endurance, perseverance, and Divine in-strengthening. The Lord has often to break the former to make place for the latter. Do not talk about Paul’s

wonderful will to go through. Let Paul talk to you about the Lord's wonderful grace to continue.

Whenever a man or a woman really recognizing the truth that Calvary means the end of "I" commits himself or herself to the Lord to work it out, the flame of the sword will come round to the point where that "flesh" would seek to enter into the realm where the first Adam no longer has any standing. The features of a personal strength of will are hardness, coldness, death, resentment of interference, suspicion of rivals, intolerance of obstructors, detachment, independence, secretiveness, heat, etc. While spiritual strength is always marked by love, warmth, life, fellowship, openness, confidence, and trust in the Lord.... At the end, in the Revelation, the dragon, the whole power of Satan is overthrown by the Lamb. The Lamb is the synonym for weakness and yieldingness. Paul says of Christ that "He was crucified through weakness," and, he adds, "we also are weak with Him." Yes, but he also says, "by the Cross He triumphed." Triumphed through weakness!

From: "The Flame of a Sword"
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002919.html

April 24

*I don't have any silver or gold for you. But I'll give you what I have.
In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!
(Acts 3:6 NLT)*

The members of the new heavenly Israel are people who have been delivered from self-interest into God's interest, who have been put on their spiritual feet by Jesus Christ and are walking in strength in the way of the Lord. Do you not think it is a very significant thing that the first miracle after the Day of Pentecost was the raising of an impotent man at the gate of the temple in Jerusalem? These are not just pretty stories put together to make an interesting book. God knows what He is doing, and when He makes the first miracle of the Christian era the raising of an impotent cripple, He is saying that the people of this new Israel are people who have been delivered from this impotence and put on their feet spiritually. There are a lot of Christian cripples about! They cannot get on their own feet, nor can other people put them there. You try to pick them up! They may take a step or two, and then down they go again. There are many like that, and you can spend your life trying to get them up on their feet. What is it that is eating the very life out of them? What is it that is making them such helpless cripples that they cannot walk? It is self-centeredness. Make no mistake about it, it is self in some form. It is self that wants to be taken notice of. It is self in the form of pride. This poor man was delivered because he knew his own helplessness and he believed what Jesus said. He believed on to Jesus Christ, which means that he believed out of himself.

Yes, that is the secret – that we shall turn from our miserable selves and cease to be occupied with them, saying once and for all: “I am done with you, wretched self. I throw myself on to Jesus Christ. I take the one great step of committal.” Jesus never lets such a person down.

From: The On-High Calling - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000980.html

April 25

We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know Him. (1 John 5:20 ESV)

It is of the greatest importance for the Lord's children to recognize fully that, above all other things, His object is that they should know Him. This is the all-governing end of all His dealings with us. This is the greatest of all our needs.... Our minds are so often occupied with service and work; we think that doing things for the Lord is the chief object of life. We are concerned about our lifework, our ministry. We think of equipment for it in terms of study and knowledge of *things*. Soul-winning, or teaching believers, or setting people to work, are so much in the foreground. Bible study and knowledge of the Scriptures, with efficiency in the matter of leading in Christian service as the end in view, are matters of pressing importance with all. All well and good, for these are important matters; but, back of everything the Lord is more concerned about our knowing Him than about anything else. It is very possible to have a wonderful grasp of the Scriptures, a comprehensive and intimate familiarity with doctrine; to stand for cardinal verities of the faith; to be an unceasing worker in Christian service; to have a great devotion to the salvation of men, and yet, alas, to have a very inadequate and limited personal knowledge of God within. So often the Lord has to take away our work that we may discover Him. The ultimate value of everything is not the information which we give, not the soundness of our doctrine, not the amount of work that we do, not the measure of truth that we possess, but just the fact that we know the Lord in a deep and mighty way.

From: On Knowing The Lord
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000415.html

April 26

There still exists, therefore, a full and complete rest for the people of God. (Hebrews 4:9 Phillips)

I am sure it will sound to many of you like going a long way back and going out into a very broad realm when I say that we Christians are being

constantly confronted with and challenged by our Christianity. Many of us have not really entered into Christianity yet. What do I mean? Well, for one thing, the very door into true Christianity is the door of rest, the rest of faith. The very simple way in which the Lord put it in His appeal was – “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). That was to a multitude, and those words are usually employed in Gospel messages to the unsaved. The meaning of the Lord in using those words is given to us here in the letter to the Hebrews, a very much deeper and fuller meaning than is generally recognized in the usage of the simple invitation “Come unto Me... and I will give you rest.” There is something that we have to hear, to detect, in the statement – “There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God” (Heb. 4:9; A.S.V.).

You will not think me too elementary, for you know in your heart, as well as I do in mine, that this matter of heart rest, the rest of faith, is a live question continually, it is coming up all the time. One of the things which is lacking in so many of us is this rest, or, to put it the other way, the things which characterize us so much are fret, anxiety, uncertainty, and all those things which are just the opposite of calm assurance, quiet confidence, the spirit and attitude and atmosphere which says all the time, “Don’t worry, don’t fret, it is all right.” One thing our great enemy is always trying to do is to disturb that, destroy that, rob us of that, churn us up, fret us, drive us, harass us, anything to rob us of our rest or to prevent us from entering into rest. It is the rest *of faith*, not just the rest of passivity, indifference, and carelessness. There is all the difference between carelessness and carefreeness. There remaineth, there is still to be had, there still obtains, there still exists, there is still preserved a rest for the people of God – for *the people of God*.

From: The Rest and the Courage of Faith
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000451.html

April 27

I have refined you, but not like silver. I have tested you in the furnace of suffering. (Isaiah 48:10 GW)

The furnace of affliction is for those who by faith are in Christ. What happens in the furnace of affliction? What is it that is dealt with in the fire? Is it you, and is it I, that are refined in the fire? Are *you* refined in the fire? Am *I* refined in the furnace of affliction? I say, No! emphatically NO!! If we say, “Yes!” well, let us look at the furnace of affliction, the fire with the metal in the crucible. What are you doing with that metal? Well, you say, you heat the fire intensely and all the uncleanness, the corruption, comes to the surface; this is skimmed off, and when that process has been carried through to its end, there is left pure gold! Then if you say that is you or that

is me you will have to abandon your doctrine of total depravity, and you will have to come back to the place where you say there is good in us, after all! You will have to say there is good and bad in us, and the furnace of affliction is to get the badness out of us and leave the goodness! Is that true doctrine? No!

The furnace of affliction is not for the removal of the bad out of us so as to leave the good that is in us, and secure it! Then what is its purpose? Is it to refine Christ in us? We need not discuss that! Christ needs no refining! What is it for? It is to divide between what is us in fallen nature, and what is Christ, and to get rid of the one in order to give full place to the other! The furnace of affliction is the application of the Cross to the getting rid of you and me, in order to leave the whole place for Christ. It is the measure of Christ that God is after, not to cut in between the good and bad in us, but to cut in between what is Christ, and what is ourselves. That is what the Lord is doing. He is after increasing Christ, and in order to do that He has to displace self, the old creation. It is all the measure of Christ in this realm. The realm of God is not going to be refined self, reformed self, or any kind of patching up of self. It is going to be *none* of self, and *all* of Christ.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002210.html

April 28

*The people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.
(Daniel 11:32 ESV)*

How much do you depend upon conferences and teachers to keep you going? Must you attend meetings just because you feel that the last lot you got has been used up and you must get a fresh supply? Or have you been emancipated from all human props and put into a place of glorious independence, because you KNOW YOUR GOD? It doesn't matter if you are plunged into the middle of the Sahara, you *know your God* and can stand independently of all natural helps – this thing has become YOU! That is the kind of knowledge that means power. That is the kind of experience which overcomes the world. That is the kind of thing that makes all the other systems go down, and you rise triumphantly above them. That was the secret of the apostolic church. Let kings do what they like, let the people rage – it goes on, and it is the Roman Empire that goes to pieces before this thing, and not this thing that goes down before the Roman Empire. It is an independent personal knowledge of God, resultant from an inward birth, that lives. Not only an objective truth, but a subjective power, and it is a great day when the slightest fragment of known truth becomes a vital personal experience in its working ability. That is what we want. First-hand knowledge, not second-hand truth. May God work this into our very beings until it becomes us. Take it in

fragments if you like, and ask the Lord to work it out in you and make it live in you.

From: The People That Do Exploits

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001535.html

April 29

There is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. (1 Corinthians 8:6 NIV)

Salvation is not just to get a soul saved, but to start that soul on the way to the fullness of Christ. Every ministry in the Word and in the Spirit is governed by that end. And to be just saved and stay there is to fail of the purpose of the Word and to fall short of the energy of the Holy Spirit. To go to any part of this world in what we call "*the work of the Lord*" must mean that we are governed by this thing: that in that place there shall be nothing less than the fullness of Christ; as far as it is possible, that Christ shall be everything and in all there. That is final, utter, and ultimate. There can be no division and no sharing with Christ. It must be Christ as everything and in all. When we recognize that that is the aim and object of the Holy Spirit, we have life and ministry defined. It applies to all.

If you are the Lord's, your life should be governed by the Word of the Lord and by the Holy Spirit. If it is not, there is something wrong with your relationship to the Lord. Whatever your work is – it may be in the home as a parent, it may be in household duties, it may be in business – if you are there in relation to the Lord, so far as you personally are concerned, your life has got to represent Christ; and that is the ministry. If we carried that into every sphere of life, things would be very different. That must challenge every motive, that must govern every consideration, that must settle every quarrel, every conflict, everything that arises which causes us disturbance, annoyance, and throws us into the vortex of some battle. The thing has to be tested on this point only – Christ as everything and Christ in all.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002859.html

April 30

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
(Philippians 4:13)*

What is abiding? Abiding in Christ, as we have often said, is the opposite of abiding in ourselves. To abide in ourselves is simply to try to

do this living, and this working for the Lord, of ourselves; asking the Lord to help us to do it, instead of recognizing that a Life wholly pleasing to God has been lived and that faith appropriates that accomplishment in Christ. Abiding in Christ is simply doing everything, meeting everything as out from Christ. It is a sure ground. There is no need for question and reasoning: "Can it be done? Can I do it?" Or, "I am not sure about it." It is done. The Lord Jesus has met everything that you or I will meet, and in all things has done what is needful. That is available to faith, and faith says, "Well, in myself the thing would be absurd, and to attempt the thing would be ridiculous; as to myself it would be folly to contemplate it. But it can be done, because it is done; I can meet this demand, and I can stand up to that one; I can go through with this, and I can do that – 'I can do all things ("all" is a big word) through Christ, which strengtheneth me.'" It is what Christ is as our secret source of strength, of sustenance, of nourishment. This is a school, and we learn this lesson in a progressive way....

We have to learn how to come back to His fullness and we learn progressively, step by step, like little children, first of all learning to walk and to talk. Like them we are confronted with things which we have never done or even attempted before, things which are all new and strange; a new world, sometimes a very terrible world. The contemplation of taking his first step to a little child is a most terrifying proposition. You and I are brought into this realm of faith, wherein the simplest thing at the beginning, the taking of a first step, is sometimes fraught with horror for us. But there are arms stretched out, and those arms now represent for us the accomplishment of what is required of us, the thing is done. The strength is there, available for the matter in hand, a strength which has been proved. Recognizing those arms and trusting, taking the step, we learn to walk by Christ, to live by Christ; and the next time we shall be able to go a bit further. Each time capacity is being enlarged and we are coming to a fuller measure of maturity.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002222.html

May 1

*When a farmer plows for planting, does he plow continually?
Does he keep on breaking up and working the soil? (Is. 28:24 NIV)*

Well, the answer of common sense is no, of course he doesn't. He would be a madman if he ploughed and then went ploughing all through the year, and did nothing else, kept ploughing or harrowing his ploughed ground. Doth he do that *continually*? No, it's a job that has got to be done - the breaking up, the turning over, the exposing to the elements, the harrowing - it's something necessary, essential, but it's not indefinite, continuous, and permanent. The Lord is speaking, saying to His faithful

people who are feeling as if they're under the plough and the harrow, that their experience is like that. Furrows are being cut deep into their souls. They're being turned up and turned over, laid bare, exposed, broken, harrowed. The Lord says, even to faithful people, "This is necessary". Bread corn is *bruised*. If it's a question of the value of bread, of food, then those who are going to be bread, food for the people of God, are going to have very drastic handling by the Lord. If you feel the Lord is handling you in that way, bruising, using the flail on you, hammering, that's a hopeful sign. The Lord is meaning something more of value in your life for *others*.

You know, friends, the idea has been very common in Christianity that it's a great and wonderful thing to be mightily used of the Lord: "Ah, it's wonderful! Oh, to be mightily used of the Lord! Oh, to be a great evangelist! Oh, to be a great teacher! Oh, to be a great Christian worker! A great thing!" Let me tell you, that's an entirely false conception! The truth is that those who serve the Lord most truly go through the deepest agonies of suffering... Balances are truly kept by God: extra suffering, extra usefulness; little suffering, little usefulness. That's how God keeps His balances. You may be having a more or less easy time, I don't want to dishearten you by saying it may not always be so, but if you really want to be of greater use to the Lord, remember it may be by a deeper discipline of the Lord. And if you're having a particularly difficult time, most likely it's because the Lord is going to meet need more fully through you.

From: Threshing: The Lord's Method
www.austin-sparks.net/english/006352.html

May 2

May your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless.... (1 Thessalonians 5:23 NLT)

You see that God never takes our will away, nor our mind, nor our heart. Some people expect God to come and do all their choosing for them, and all their desiring for them, and all their deciding for them, while they are simply to be poor things picked up by God and put into things which He desires and wills. God never does that. He is developing a humanity. Were we spirits I do not know how we might act; we might act spontaneously. But we are not. God has created a kind of being with a rational mind. The three-fold element of spirit, soul and body is still to be found, yet not now in Adam, but in Christ. God is developing the Christ mind; how He thinks, judges, understands, and when we see the Lord's mind we see how very different it is from our own natural mind; and our own natural mind is beside the mark altogether, and we must repudiate it. This is spiritual understanding, the mind of the Spirit. The same thing applies to our feelings and our desires. They may lead us all astray. There is a new outfit in Christ for our hearts, but there is always the necessity for

our standing with the Lord in what is of Himself. Passivity may be a most ruinous thing. In all the values of Christ risen there has to be a taking of that risen Life for the equivalent need of mind, heart, will; of spirit, soul, and body.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002218.html

May 3

God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5)

Light is transparency; light is clearness; light is absolute purity; light is honesty; light is openness of character. Light hides nothing; its whole action and nature is contrary to hiding anything. It has nothing to hide; it shows everything; it shows all: in other words, it is not deceitful. It does not want to cover anything, or to pretend or make believe that something is other than what it is. Light is single; it is not double; there is no duplicity about light. And light is just – light! There is “no darkness at all” where there is light.... How many shades and aspects of darkness there are! – a whole vocabulary of words. The Spirit has come to bring all that to an end by applying the Cross, in which it was all brought to an end in the Person of the Lord Jesus; to work out the meaning of the Cross in our lives, so that everything that belongs to that kingdom of darkness is removed: so that in the end, with us too, there is no darkness at all. Is that really what we think of, when we think of having, receiving, and being filled with the Holy Spirit? Here again, perhaps, a little re-shaping of our ideas is called for.

It is true that He is many other things, as well as light: He is the Spirit of Power, He is the Spirit of Wisdom; yes, He is many other things; but, with them all, He is this. And we must not make more of those “demonstration” aspects of the Spirit, in power, in gifts and capacities, in works, than we do of His character side. If He really does His work in you and in me, He will make us to be people who can bear to be “looked into” without any fear, without any drawing of the blinds. Our lives and our motives will bear looking into.

From: The Holy Spirit, the Church, and the Nations - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001585.html

May 4

Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)

We feel the importance of saying a word with regard to Christ in heaven and Christ within the believer, that is, what is objective and what is

subjective. It is tremendously important that we should keep a proper balance of truth. A very great deal of our trouble is because of there being an unbalanced emphasis upon some aspect of truth. It is good to know the truth, and it is good to rejoice in it, but it is just possible that even truth may get us into trouble. There are many perils lying in the direction of truth, even spiritual truth; and there are not a few of the Lord's people who have fallen into those perils. It is not that they suffer from want of light, but they are suffering very much because they have not got their light properly adjusted and balanced. Thus it becomes very necessary for us to get things in their right perspective and proportion. Preponderance on any one side will always lead to spiritual injury, and very often to disaster.

The history of many instrumentalities which have been raised up and used by the Lord is eventually the sad story of a loss of power and effectiveness because of striking an unbalanced emphasis, of putting some side of truth in a place out of proportion to that which is complementary to it.... If we over-emphasize the subjective we take something from the glory of Christ. If we over-emphasize the objective we take something from God's purpose. It is a *matter of the work of God in Christ, and the purpose of God in Christ*: and these two things must both have their place. May the Lord give us understanding, so that we come into a place of rest and are delivered from the perils which lurk in the vicinity of every Divine blessing.

From: Christ in Heaven and Christ Within
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000631.html

May 5

Of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. (John 1:16)

It is a grand thing and a source of tremendous strength to come to the same position as that of Christ as Man, where we know that boundless heavenly resources are available. I think we only come there progressively, and not all at once. We only come there by the way of discipline – discipline which takes the form of bringing us to an utter dependence, but which is yet not an emptying and a breaking down as an end in itself, but one which is accompanied by that grace of God – that graciousness of God – which, when we are empty, makes His fullness to abound.

There is a positive as well as a negative side. God is no believer in negatives as being the ultimate goal; but when He breaks and when He empties, He does something on the positive side which ever causes us to marvel, and we have to say every time: "Well, that was the Lord, not ourselves." We come progressively by that way of discipline to know that there are heavenly resources which far outstrip all human possibilities, and these resources are operative. This is what constitutes spirituality – this is

what makes a life or service spiritual: it is the drawing upon heavenly resources, living the life as out from heaven. That is spirituality. That constitutes a spiritual life and a spiritual walk.

The resources are not drawn from self or from the world; they are all drawn from above. The government is not that here of men or of the world, but that which is from above. Everything is so utterly from above – and so utterly not from man – that the life or work becomes spiritual as a consequence.

From: Boundless Heavenly Resources
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001521.html

May 6

“My thoughts are not your thoughts, and My ways are not your ways,” declares the Lord. “Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts are higher than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55:8,9 GW)

God's thoughts about things are very different from ours. We would often allow what God would never allow. He has an altogether different point of view about things. We judge in one way about things, and God judges in another. It is necessary for us to come to God's standpoint. “Oh,” we would say, “There is no harm in such-and-such a thing. Oh, there is no wrong in that; look at So-and-so and So-and-so,” and we take our standard, perhaps, from other people. We have known people to do that; point to some outstanding figure in the work of God, in whose life was a certain thing – that one has been taken as the model, to be copied, and so the thing has been taken on. “Oh, there is no harm in it; look at So-and-so.” And I have known lives and ministries to be ruined on that very excuse.

The question is: what does the Lord say about it? God says, “Walk before Me!” Not before any human model; not before any human standard; “There is no harm in it; So-and-so does it; it is quite a common practice.” No, no! “Walk before Me,” says the Lord. We have got to get this in the spirit, in the *inward* man. It is deeper than our best moral standards. Otherwise there is no point in it being in the Bible at all, if our moral standards can rise to God's satisfaction – why must we be so handled and reconstituted? It is deeper than our intellect, than our reason. You cannot, by reason or intellect, arrive at God's standard at all. Not at all! Oh, do not think that by any method of reasoning, you are ever going to reach God's standard. You never will. Here, it is only by revelation of the Holy Spirit. Christ has got to be revealed in our hearts by the Spirit.

There is no point in Jesus saying: “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth,” if we could get there by our own intelligence. Not at all. It must come by the revelation of Christ in our

hearts, in the *inward* parts. This is something spiritual. “God is Spirit; they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in *truth*” – spirit and truth go together. Only what is spiritual, what is of God, is *truth* – *only* that!

From: Truth in the Inward Parts

www.austin-sparks.net/english/000496.html

May 7

The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.
(Luke 18:27)

All hangs upon this one thing (as simple as it may seem) that if Christ is present (which means nothing else than that God is present) anything is possible at any moment. Are you waiting for some day when things will be better? It is not a matter of time at all, it is a matter of *Him*. He says, “I am time and eternity all in a moment, and you need not accept anything in the matter of time; you accept Me, and you may be well-nigh dead in the morning and be very much alive before the day is over. ‘*I am the resurrection and the life.*’” Martha said, “*I know that He will rise again in the last day.*” For her resurrection was a matter of time. Oh no. Resurrection was right there....

As long as it takes to break a loaf you have gone from seed-time to harvest. “*Do you not say, There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest?*” (John 4:35). I am here, and there can be harvest at any moment when I am here.” It is not a matter of time, of circumstance. We are dealing with God, and He is not bound by anything that is known to our human life at all. Eternity dwells in any moment when He is present. All things are bound up with any moment when He is present.

The centurion said, “*Just say the word and my servant will be healed.*” “You need not come. Distance does not matter, time does not matter, just speak the word and it will be done.” The Lord said, “*I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel.*” The word was uttered, and when the enquiry was made as to when it happened it was found to synchronize with the moment when He spoke. He takes everything into His hands, and says “*My hour...*” and when that comes, there is no postponement. Oh, that we should lay hold of that more, live on that, never surrender to conditions, never surrender to the inevitable from the standpoint of the human, but say, “We have Him; He is our future, He is our circumstance.” Anything can be at any moment with the Lord present.

From: Knowing God in Christ - Chapter 9

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003125.html

May 8

I am the Lord, I do not change. (Malachi 3:6)

The authority of darkness is a very real thing to us. We have experiences, and if we were to capitulate to them, that would be the end of us. He tries to bring upon us that impingement of the authority of darkness, and if we surrender to it, capitulate to it, accept it, we are beaten.

If we are the Lord's, Christ is within, and Christ is supreme and we must go on even if we have no feeling, or if we have a very bad feeling; when it seems to be the last thing we ought to be saying, we say it because it is God's fact, and when we begin to affirm God's fact we win through.

Believers know what it is for the enemy to try to make them accept the authority of darkness. Stand upon the truth of God. God does not change with our feelings. God does not alter with our consciousness. This whole life of ours is subject to variation more swift than the variation of weather, but He rules, unalterable, unchangeable. He is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." And if He is there within, He has come to stay, and victory is in faith; believing that, standing on that, holding to that; and we must carry that through to its final and full issue, that He is Lord of all, "Head of all principality and power." Satan will sometimes try to make us believe that he is in the place of ascendancy, the place of supremacy, but since Calvary he is not, we stand there.

From: The Centrality and Supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000732.html

May 9

The word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

(Hebrews 4:12 NIV)

The whole thought of God, running right through this letter, is spiritual fullness; and any religion – even Christianity – mixing and confusing soul and spirit, the sentient and the spiritual (as did the Christian-Judaism and as does organized Christianity) is doomed to the destiny of Judaism. If we draw upon the soul resources of people to build up Christianity, instead of recognizing that "all things are out from God" – that all must first come from Him and have its first point of contact with man in his spirit, which, being renewed (made anew) becomes the vessel and vehicle of all Divine things for ever after – no matter how immense may be our structure, it is going to crash when the great "shaking" comes. Christianity now is very largely a built up thing with many Jewish features

in it; i.e., outward orders, forms, vestments, titles, buildings and rigidly fixed boundaries of apprehension of truth. Viewed from a heavenly standpoint, it is all so much nonsense, child's play; albeit so seriously regarded by its children.

It is important to recognize that this letter was addressed to a people who – for a long period – had held the position nationally of a people whom God had taken out of the world unto Himself. It seeks to explain their nature and history in the light of Christ and true spiritual Christianity. It shows that even such a people may make their separation earthly and earthbound, and that for so doing they have been “overthrown,” and will – even as Christians – be overthrown again if they repeat in Christianity what their fathers did in Judaism. There is something here much more than typology interpreted and the interpretation accepted as to salvation from sin and judgment; it is the essential and indispensable heavenly relatedness and life of the Lord's people as *inwardly* detached from the natural life even in a religious sense.

From: “God Hath Spoken” - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000821.html

May 10

*You are in Him, made full and having come to fullness of life.
(Colossians 2:10 AMP)*

The Cross is a full and final principle, although it has many aspects. It is a full and final principle. We are going to see that the Cross in its fullness and finality was right there at the beginning of the Bible. As a principle, it was absolute then. It is just in so far as you and I bring our lives at this time of the day back to God's fullness in the Cross that we are going to know this progressive development and increase of Life – so far and no more.

The Cross is a great divide. It divides people into three categories. Firstly, it makes a broad division between those who never get into Life, and those who do. Whether men and women get into Life at all depends entirely upon their acceptance of the Cross. But it divides further. It divides between those who do get into Life, and those who go right through to fullness of Life, and there is quite a real division there. Whether you like the theory or not, it is a fact. There are many Christians who are in the way of Life, that is, who have entered the way of Life, but are not going right on to fullness of Life. That is really what the New Testament is about – trying to get Christians who have entered into Life to go on to fullness of Life. The Cross divides between those, because, while we come into the way of Life by the Cross, we also only come into the fullness of Life by the Cross, and that is another thing – a fuller, deeper application of the Cross.

So the Cross makes three categories, those not in Life, those in Life, and those in Life going on to fullness of Life.

From: The Cross and the Way of Life - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002846.html

May 11

*Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
(Matthew 11:29 NIV)*

The great business of Christians is to learn Christ. This is not just a subject to study. I want to ask you: What is the greatest desire in your life? I wonder if it is the same as mine! The greatest desire in my heart – and the longer I live the stronger it grows – is to understand the Lord Jesus. There is so much that I do not understand about Him. I am always coming up against problems about Him, and they are not intellectual problems at all, but spiritual ones: problems of the heart. Why did the Lord Jesus say and do certain things? Why is He dealing with me as He is? He is always too deep for me, and I want to understand Him. It is the most important thing in life to understand the Lord Jesus. Well, we are here that He may bring us to some better understanding of Himself. The material of the Word will not be new – it will be old and well-known Scripture. Perhaps we think that we know the Gospel by John very well. Well, you may, but I do not. I am discovering that this Gospel contains deeper truth and value than I know anything about....

The one business of disciples is to know Him, and to do what He called His disciples to do: “*Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me*” (Matthew 11:29). Jesus came to bring heavenly knowledge in His own person, and in His person we come into heavenly knowledge. It is not just what He says: it is what He says He *is*. Every true teacher is not one who says a lot of things, but one who, when he says things, gives something of himself.

From: Discipleship In The School Of Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001448.html

May 12

You must learn to endure everything, so that you will be completely mature and not lacking in anything. (James 1:4 CEV)

We can take one of two attitudes toward the ways of God with us; we can get bitter, sour, hard; or we can have the enlargement by exercise,

development by exercise, to develop capacity, to bring us into the large place that we may be intelligently His instrument for governing under His Headship in ages to come. Things that enter into our history we cannot always fathom, but the explanation which we *can* give is that, whatever there may be as second causes, the Lord is Sovereign and He thinks it worthwhile sometimes to allow what the world would call the most terrible thing to overtake for the time being, and it would seem that His Name and interests suffer through that thing, but through that thing He brings His people to a place of maturity and they get to know the Lord for themselves. Through these terrible things we find the Lord produces something that is very much more worthy of Himself in the life of His children. That is His justification, His vindication; if He could do it in any other way He would.

In the long run He does get spiritual maturity among His people, where they know Him. He would get us to a place where we know the Lord and we have our senses exercised to know. The Lord give us grace to accept all His dealings with us in the light of His great purpose.

From: Maturity – The Lord's Desire For His People
www.austin-sparks.net/english/003680.html

May 13

Do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and He is in heaven. (Matthew 23:9 NIV)

Perhaps one of the things which you and I and the Lord's people everywhere need to recognize more than anything else at an end time is the fact of our heavenliness. There is going to be a testing of everything which bears the Lord's name by the law of the beginning governing the end. In the beginning they were a heavenly people, with everything for them in heaven, in Christ, and being drawn from Christ in heaven. All their government, direction, resource came from Him and was in Him as in heaven. The Lord comes back again and again to test things by that beginning, and in the end the test is going to be applied very stringently. We are going to see the outward form of things, which is earthly, man-made, man-constituted, an imitation or a representation of spiritual things, breaking down, shaking at its very foundations. All the organizations of our work are going to be shattered. In the nations all that framework will be broken up. That which alone will be left will be the people themselves, and they will probably be scattered. Then the test will be as to how much of this is Christ here. If there has been dependence upon orders, churches, systems, even meetings and conferences, the many things which in themselves are looked to as the means of support of the Christian life, when they are gone, broken, the question will be, How much of Christ is here? What is the measure of Christ, the heavenly Christ?

You see how that was the crisis for the disciples. They had three years with Him, but there was an outward detachment, an outward dependence, a physical, sentient association. In those days they could say some very bold things, they could make great confessions and professions, they could declare themselves as to Him, Who He was, what they thought of Him, what they believed concerning Him, what they would do for Him. Then He was taken from them, and what was left? No Christ, no Life, nothing to live for, everything gone! When the life of senses ceased, the outward order came to an end, they had nothing left, they were in despair, and their faith was shattered. There is much of that today. We do not know how much there is until the break comes, until we are no longer able to do anything for the Lord, until we are no longer able even to pray and read the Word of God, and carry on the usual devotional exercises, until we are no longer able to meet with the Lord's people. Multitudes of the Lord's people are coming there now.

From: That Which Was From The Beginning - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002953.html

May 14

*When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son.
(Galatians 4:4 ESV)*

When the fullness of time came! It is not difficult for us to see in the case of Abraham how his faith was brought into relation to God's time. The time factor with Abraham was a very real one and was perhaps one of the keenest and most acute factors for his faith. Again and again we come upon a test of Abraham's faith along the line of the timing of God. Indeed, from one standpoint, we may summarize the whole of his life and say that it headed up at last to the triumph of faith upon that particular factor. In the full Divine sense he never received the promises in his lifetime. At the end of his life he was still looking for the fulfillment of the promise. If his faith had given way he would naturally have taken the attitude that, since the thing had not been fulfilled in so long a time and in his lifetime, it all represented perhaps a big mistake on his part, a false expectation, some misguidance, and so on. But right at the end, if the letter to the Hebrews is to be taken as revealing the actual position, he still believed. He believed, therefore, that God had His time for fulfilling His purpose... and that, although it might not come in his own lifetime, it nevertheless would come. But during his lifetime – within the compass of the whole range of Divine purpose – there were instances of testing on the time factor; and, having been tested on that factor, the promise was fulfilled.

From: Waiting God's Time
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001503.html

May 15

*Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!
(John 1:29 NIV)*

What is *the sin of the world*? It is pride. You may not think so; you may not see it: but I would ask you to consider again and see if all that is called sin cannot be traced to this, if it is not this in some form of expression. For what is the root of pride? What is pride? It is *selfhood* come to life, risen up, active – that is the root of pride; and the branches and the fruit – how many they are! – jealousy, covetousness, wrath, and all the rest. How is wrath pride? Well, wrath, if it is not holy, purified, blood-purged wrath like the wrath of the Lamb, if it is wrath which is actuated by ourselves and our interests, is the wrath of selfhood. So often our anger is our self-preservation, our reaction to some threat to our interests or our likes. Rebellion, stubbornness, prejudice, and much of our fear, are all traceable to pride. What are we afraid of? What are we fearing? If we examined our fears, why are we afraid? If we were utterly severed from the personal interest – that is, if we could hand entirely over to the Lord and get out of the picture ourselves – would not a lot of our fear go? And so we might go on: but we do not want to indulge in a wholesale analysis of human nature or of pride. We have mentioned enough to show that pride is the root and that there are countless fruits traceable to that root....

So may this be a word of interpretation as to why the Lord is dealing with us as He has and does – on the one hand, overcoming this evil thing, breaking, emptying, grinding to powder, until there is nothing of us left in the matter of self-sufficiency; on the other hand, giving Himself, increasing Himself. Now this is not a word, perhaps, of great inspiration, but I feel it to be a word of very great importance. This must be true of us individually. There must also be a corporate humility. This is the way along which the Lord will commit Himself. He will never give us anything to feed our flesh, to enlarge and strengthen our natural life. He will hold us to the way that keeps us safe where that is concerned. How wonderfully the Bible becomes alive when you look at it in this way!

From: Pride and Its Undoing
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002033.html

May 16

*The Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.
(Colossians 2:19)*

What is the believer? In God's sight the believer is one in whom Christ is implanted, and God never looks at Christ in a limited way. He

always looks at Him in an absolute way, and when Christ is implanted at the beginning of our life it is not as though God implanted Him in a fragmentary way. God's thought was that the end should be bound up with the beginning, and that Christ should be All and in all. That is why conversion is never an end in itself. It is only the first step toward the full end of God. It defines the nature of the believer in God's sight, that it is of Christ. You cannot make that. No decision cards can accomplish that. You can never make men and women Christians by inviting them to make certain decisions, to assent mentally to certain propositions of Christian doctrine, though perfectly true as to the Person and work of the Lord Jesus.

There has to be something which constitutes in that individual, right at the very center of the being, a living union with Christ, and a deposit of Christ. Anything other than that is a false conversion. It is the depositing of Christ at the very center of the being, with a view to His spreading to the very circumference, that is the nature of a believer....

You see the pathetic hopelessness of trying to propagate anything by organized means and methods which really is all of God. It simply has to grow, it simply has to be. Ah, but when it is so it is mighty, it is indestructible, it is incorruptible. Nothing can stand in the way of Christ. It is that which rouses hell and the energies of the devil. He does not mind all the other: doctrine, work, profession. That may often serve his ends as a great deception and misrepresentation; but bring Christ in, bring Christ through, realize Christ, and then you meet every force in this universe which is antagonistic to Christ.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002210.html

May 17

The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. (1 Corinthians 2:15 ESV)

We have to continually ask the question: "Is Christ everything in this matter, or am I wanting my own way? Am I allowing my own feelings, desires and likes to dominate or is Christ everything? Is Christ in all here, so far as it is within my power, in the energy of the Holy Spirit, for it to be so?" That has to be reduced to the minutia of daily life. We have to get away when we are upset, annoyed, provoked, irritated, and fight that battle out and say: "Lord, You have to be everything in this matter: it does not matter how my interests are affected." And from those details of everyday life and experience out to the wider ranges, and up to the place where we may be the Lord's responsible servant, the Word and the Spirit have to govern; and the Word and the Spirit have one object: Christ – everything

and in all. Recognizing that, we see that this further thing is necessary, that we are a truly spiritual people.

It is very often difficult to define what is meant by spirituality, or a spiritual people. It is one of those things better experienced than explained. But for the moment it can be put quite simply and quite safely and soundly in this way, that a spiritual people is a people who are governed by the Word and the Holy Spirit to this end: that in everything within and without, Christ is All and in all. That is true spirituality.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002859.html

May 18

*O Lord, You are our Father. We are the clay, and You are the potter.
We all are formed by Your hand. (Isaiah 64:8 NLT)*

We are in the Lord's hands, and being in His hands we are in the hands of a Potter Who knows what He is after... first of all, the vessel is in the potter, and then eventually the potter is in the vessel. What we mean is this, that before ever the potter starts, the vessel is in his mind, in his heart very clearly. The pattern is not something objective, the vessel is already a complete thing in him; and then he gets to work upon it and when he is finished, he is in the vessel he has wrought. What was in *Him* has come out in it.

We say of people's work: "I can see who made that, it is just like them." "That is just like So-and-so to make a thing like that." Yes, He is in His work, He is in the vessel that He makes, and that is just what He is doing. Sometimes that clay has to be pressed down to a shapeless mass, broken. It is not showing all that He intended it to show, there are defects and flaws, and so He crushes it down to shapelessness. A mass without shape. But it is to start again to get something more perfect than has been before, in which He Himself is.

May He give us grace to endure whatever the trial may be, along whatever line of metaphor, the wind, the blaze, supreme heat, or pressure of His hand, all of which is to get us into a place where we cannot be moved, where hell cannot shake us, where His power is made manifest as triumphant over all the power of the enemy.

From: Rooted and Grounded
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002932.html

May 19

That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ. (Ephesians 1:10)

There is one comprehensive and all-embodying truth which, if it really gained the complete mastery of our hearts and dominated our whole consciousness, capturing our will, our hearts, and our minds, would really revolutionize everything, just as the new covenant represents a revolution from the old covenant.

The great truth which embodies everything is this: that God has determined that nothing which is not Christ shall remain, and He is working toward that end, on the one hand to rid this universe of everything that is not Christ; on the other hand to fill this universe with that which is Christ. That means that God does not accept or recognize anything whatever that is not Christ. Then again, it means that God puts His seal upon what is Christ, and it is all a matter of the measure of Christ. It is a tremendous thing when that really does come to our hearts with the force and the power which it really does represent. It explains everything of God's dealings with us. It gives us the key to our problems. It sets us at once upon the highway of God's own purpose.

From: Christ in You

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001617.html

May 20

You are an offense to Me, because you are not thinking God's thoughts but human thoughts! (Matthew 16:23 ISV)

I think that does say to us that a position has to be taken inclusively and over many things where the will of God is concerned. We have to come very definitely and positively to such a position, and then realize that from time to time there will be, by one means or another, an effort of the enemy to change our minds, to weaken us in that course, to make other suggestions, to get us to reconsider it in the light of various issues and interests. We shall meet this offending, this stumbling, this hindering thing and have to be very ruthless with it.

The way the Lord dealt with Peter was, in a sense, ruthless. Really there was no weakness in His attitude over that. Discerning its true nature, He saw clearly that, if He yielded to this suggestion, then He would go neither to Jerusalem nor to the Cross. It is a question of whether we have settled that such and such is the way of the will of God, and then, will this or that arising mean in the long run that we never get there, never do that will? If so, it has to be handled very ruthlessly and put out of the way and

put behind us. The Cross comes to us in many connections and different terms.

Then, if we are really going to come through to the place of spiritual power as did Peter, that ground of the enemy must continually be forsaken and refused. The enemy has to be robbed of that which will destroy us and give him power to destroy us, and we have to be very ruthless with anything that arises to give him that position and defeat God's intention where we are concerned. This battle of heaven and hell, God and Satan, goes on in our souls, but there is for us this consolation, that we have a High Priest ever living to make intercession. We have a great asset in the continual intercession of the Lord Jesus for us.

From: The Battleground of the Soul
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000476.html

May 21

*My determined purpose is that I may know Him.
(Philippians 3:10 AMP)*

There are few words in his writings which reveal how committed to the Lord Jesus this man was. The whole context is one consummate outpouring of his heart to the One whom he said had "apprehended" him, and he focuses all in a brief half sentence: "That I may know Him." The impressive thing about this expressed ambition is the time at which it is made. Here is a man who has had a revelation and knowledge of Jesus Christ greater than any other man up to that time. That knowledge commenced whence as he said, "it pleased God to reveal His Son in me." That beginning devastated him, and sent him into the desert to try to grasp its implications.

Later he had been "caught up into the third heaven and shown *unspeakable* things, which (he said) were not lawful to be uttered." Between, and around those two experiences, there is evidence of an ever growing knowledge of Christ. Here, after all that, near the end of his life, he is crying passionately: "That I may know Him." The very least that we can say about this is that the Christ in view was a very great Christ indeed, who outstrips the greatest capacity and comprehension of man. This stands in such tremendous contrast to the limited Christ of our recognition and apprehension! How very much more there is in Christ than we have ever seen!

From: An Apostle's Supreme Ambition
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000688.html

May 22

*It pleased God to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him.
(Galatians 1:15,16)*

Since Paul's day so very much of Christian activity has been the furthering of a movement, the propagating of a teaching, and the furthering of the interests of an institution. It is not a movement, nor to establish a movement in the Earth and to get followers, adherents, members, support. It is not an institution, even though we might call that institution the church. The church has no existence in the thought of God apart from the revelation of Jesus Christ, and it is judged according to the measure in which Christ the Son of God's love is in evidence by its existence. It is not a testimony, if by that you mean a specific form of teaching, a systematized doctrine. No, it is not a testimony. Let us be careful what we mean when we speak about "the testimony."

We may have in our minds some arrangement of truth, and that truth couched in certain phraseology, form of words, and thus speak about "the testimony"; it is not the testimony in that sense. It is not a denomination, and it is not a "non-denomination," and it is not an "inter-denomination." It is not Christianity. It is not "the work" – oh, we are always talking about "the work": "How is the work getting on?" – we are giving ourselves to the work, we are interested in the work, we are out in the work. It is not a mission. It is Christ! "...That I might preach Him." If that had remained central and preeminent all these horrible disintegrating jealousies would never have had a chance. All the wretched mess that exists in the organization of Christianity today would never have come about. It is because something specific in itself, a movement, a mission, a teaching, a testimony, a fellowship, has taken the place of Christ. People have gone out to further that, to project that, to establish that. It would not be confessed; nevertheless it is true, that today it is not so much Christ that is our work. Now beloved, an inward revelation is the cure of all that. Am I saying too hard a thing, too sweeping a thing? The existence of all that represents the absence of an adequate inward revelation of Christ.

From: The Centrality and Supremacy of Christ
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000420.html

May 23

Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in My Name, claiming I am the Christ, and will deceive many. (Matthew 24:4,5 NIV)

In a somewhat extended life and ministry, again and again I have seen dear people of God who were out in the open going on with the Lord in the liberty of the Spirit with great promise and then they've been caught in

some “ism.” They simply are helpless to escape themselves from the tenets of that “ism.” Again and again I’ve seen it! Tragedy.... There’s a great ism sweeping right over America and over Europe in these last years. I can dare to mention this one, well I’m going to at any rate: Universalism. It’s an “ism” which has captured multitudes! And you just can’t get *anywhere* with these people once they’ve got it. But I have known them, oh so promising... so promising and then *this* thing has come subtly along their way, attractive and fascinating.... So appealing: everybody, ultimately, including the devil himself, will be saved. What are you going to do with that? Willy-nilly they’ll be saved... undercutting so many of the very *vitals* of the Gospel.

You may call these things gross errors, but there are things that are *not* such errors. Not such errors, indeed in themselves they’re quite true, but they have become the beginning of all and the end of all to the people who have taken them on. You can get no further, no further. They have lost the great ground, the vast ground of God’s *full purpose* for this dispensation and become stuck on some *thing* that is only partial at best. Arrested... like Judaism; come to a standstill, or going round and round in a circle, the circle of this particular thing. It should be a warning to us because, you see, this is the thing that has been the enemy of the fullness of Christ all through the centuries – this sort of thing....

There are many antichrists in the world and an antichrist is not a spurious, fearful creature, you know, with a tail and a pitchfork. No, an antichrist is something that *assumes the place of Christ*.... And with the natural judgment, natural powers, you are not able to distinguish between the true and the false. The Christ and the antichrist seem to be so much alike. You can’t discern the difference, but the Anointing will tell you! The Anointing which you have received, when you come into touch with something false, will tell you if the Anointing is really governing, saying, “Be careful,” not in words, but inside. You have a feeling there’s something not quite clear here, not transparent here, not safe here... “I don’t feel happy about this, I can’t tell you why, but I just don’t feel quite happy about this... there’s something in me that says: beware.” *I am convinced* that in a day like this of deceptions and misleadings and all that, *the great need* is our spiritual discernment; of knowing the Holy Spirit in this way, that He’s able to warn you.

From: The Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002144.html

May 24

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son. (Hebrews 1:1,2 NIV)

What was the tragedy of the old Israel? Of course, the tragedy of the old Israel, finally, is their dismissal. Their dismissal: “*The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*” That happened! And it stands today. The kingdom of heaven taken away – not for that Israel, but for another! The tragedy of Israel is that they are dismissed from the dispensation, or the dispensational movement of God. This has lasted for two thousand years. How many more years we do not know, probably, not so long, but you leave that alone.

Here I am going to upset a lot of you: you leave Israel alone for the time being. You will only get into terrible confusion if you get down on this earth with an earth touch in these things.... You see, you go on like that and it leads to confusion if you come down onto this earth. Leave it alone and see what God is doing, and God is doing a spiritual thing, not a temporal thing. I could take an hour to enlarge upon that last phrase, “not a temporal thing.” Do you see, in the sovereign activities of God, that now He is confounding and confusing and breaking down all temporal representations of His heavenly kingdom?! Men are trying to set up local churches after New Testament order. You have never had more confusion in local churches than you have today. They are trying to set up things, constitute things, Christian movements, Christian institutions, Christian organizations, and they are all in confusion and do not know what to do with one another. You may think that is an exaggeration, but you see what I mean? – God is breathing upon every temporal representation in order to have a spiritual expression of Christ! That is the heart of what we are saying, and that is what is here....

This new Israel is so much greater than the old because Christ, this Messiah, is so much greater than their conception of a Messiah.... I am talking about the greatness of this One Who is introduced in Hebrews: “*God, ...hath at the end of these days spoken in His Son, Whom He appointed Heir of...*” an exclusive party? – No, “*of all things.*” That is Paul’s great word all the way through: “*all things, ...all things, ...all things,*” and in the end, “*to sum up all things in Christ.*” And if I need to safeguard, I am not talking about universalism. I am talking about God’s ultimate realm and sphere where it will be nothing but Christ.

From: But Ye are Come Unto Mount Zion - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001417.html

May 25

*Be strong in the Lord, relying on His mighty strength.
(Ephesians 6:10 ISV)*

The Lord does not put us in glass houses to grow us, to be His trees; the Lord does not protect us from the storms, the adversities; He exposes us to the bitter winds and the scorching suns of adversity and trial. The Lord is working in us that which is according to His own Nature – *eternity*, the enduring, the everlasting God – that which will not be easily or hardly carried away. He is putting substance in you. Oh, today we fear that the appeal to become Christians is so often in terms of having an easy or a good time; being happy and enjoying yourself; well, thank God for ALL Divine joy, but this is true to the House, to the City, that the first thing the Lord is working toward and seeking to work into His people is that substantial, steadfast, enduring faithfulness that is according to His own nature. Substantial! Oh for substantial Christians that don't need coddling and nursing and running after all the time; being pandered to to get them to go on or stand up. Men and women like cedars of Lebanon; like the hewn stones – weighty, accountable, and responsible to carry weight – and all that is meant by strength.

I can only remind you again of what a large place that has in the Word of God: be strong, *be strong* in the Lord in the strength of His might, *be strong* in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Think again. Want to understand why the winds are allowed to blow so fiercely... the storms? To get us away from that natural, easy-going-ness or cheapness, lightness, frivolousness and to make us people of weight. Strength – through testing, through adversity – strength... to endure throughout all ages. There is much which is going to be carried away in the last great testing, and if, therefore, trial and adversity is the only way to deepen us, to put caliber into us, I suppose we must expect more of it as the time shortens.

From: Aspects of the City
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001413.html

May 26

*They shall be Mine, says the Lord of hosts, in that day when I publicly recognize and openly declare them to be My jewels.
(Malachi 3:17 AMP)*

If we have committed ourselves to God thoroughly and really meant with the Lord that we want His full will and we do not want our own, and by His grace we will go the way that He leads and shows, whatever it costs, if we have done that and then situations have arisen which look terribly complicated and seem to contradict the faithfulness of God, what am I to

conclude? What are we going to conclude? We have to conclude one of two things – that God cares nothing for all our devotion and consecration, and just lets us get into any mess, or else this is all under His eye. That is ultimate. We have either to believe God or not to believe Him. You have all this here in the Word, and it all bears down upon this, that people who are related in Divine foreknowledge and Divine sovereign action come into situations like that, but in the end that sovereignty has been shown to relate to something unusually precious to the Lord, “and they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, even Mine own possession, in the day that I do make” (Malachi 3:17).

The Lord is after something more than ordinary and He needs a people for it, but such a people will have unusual experiences, inside and out. It will not be the ordinary, normal course where everything goes well and straightforwardly. It will not be like that for these people. They go through ways that are tortuous and exceedingly difficult, but there is a sovereignty at work. That is my way of analyzing and summing up the situation as I see it in the Word, and I can only say to you that it is not foreign and strange to God’s special purposes to have experiences like that. Whether it be the remnant of Israel, whether it be the reactions of God in this Christian dispensation, in the book of the Revelation, the messages to the churches which are just on this ground, it is all like this. Nothing seems normal with a people like that, because God is not going to have anything that is just normal, as we call the normal. It is something more, something extraordinary, and our experience therefore is extraordinary.

From: Attaining to God’s Full Thought
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001593.html

May 27

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 12:11)

There are so many of the Lord’s people today over whom Satan is lording it; lording it along the line of accusation, bringing them under a sense of condemnation and judgment, robbing them of their peace, of their assurance, rest, hope; and you will find these people are everlastingly talking about their own short-comings, their sinfulness; they are forever circling round themselves, all that they are that they would not be, all that they are not that they would be. Their deliverance from Satan is that they should have a fresh apprehension of the absolute satisfaction of the Father in His Son on their behalf, and that they find their standing before the Father in acceptance. That is the way of deliverance, the way of the Adversary’s casting out. This is the way of overcoming him as the Accuser. Yes, the ground of the Blood is sufficient for this full-orbed, many-sided, all-round victory. “They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb,” and the first and supreme factor in the virtue of that Blood in all these

directions, is its untainted sinlessness, the nature of the Lord Jesus. There has never been another who was such.

Oh, I am so glad that it was God that came in Christ, GOD that came in Christ. Can you charge God with sin? Can you lay sin to God's charge, to God's account? It was God in Christ, the absolutely and altogether holy One in whom there was no sin, who came in incarnation; and in virtue of that Divine nature in its perfection Satan in his authority is defeated – on that ground. Blessed be God! We receive by faith the virtue of that precious Blood; that is, the perfection of the Lord Jesus can be put to our account. That is grace – the wonder of the Gospel. If we were to begin to analyze ourselves and take stock of ourselves, that would be a terrible business, a wretched business, and it would be endless – think of it, beloved, with all that we know of ourselves, all that God knows about us – "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart. I try the reins...." Though all that be a fact, you and I can stand now in the presence of God as sinlessly perfect, not in ourselves, but in Christ, as having absolute sinless perfection put to our account by God.

From: "Because of the Blood of the Lamb"
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000477.html

May 28

The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. (Acts 1:7 NLT)

We are apt to think that if and when the circumstances and conditions of our lives are changed and we are in another position than the one we now occupy, then something will happen, the purpose of God will begin to be fulfilled. The Lord would say, "No; it is not circumstances, not conditions, at all; it is you." Some think that it is a matter of graduation and ordination and office, and that when they get into an official position, and have recognition there, then they will begin to fulfill the purpose of their lives. So they are waiting until they are either ordained or appointed to their work. The Lord says, "No, it is not office, it is not ordination, it is not placing; it is you; you are the key." And alongside that, many are looking to the organization, the society, the mission, the church connection to which they are related, and expecting a new day for themselves to originate there, and that when the institution, whatever it may be, takes action, then the work of their life will begin. And the Lord says, "It is not the church, the mission, the organization, the society, the institution; it is you." These men in Acts 1 were waiting for something to happen outside of themselves. They called it the restoring of the kingdom, the setting up of an order which would be a national – perhaps an international – movement: a new order outside of themselves in which they would find their place and

probably be allocated, appointed or ordained to it. And the Lord simply swept the board of all those ideas and said, "No, it is not that, it is you." That is how it proved, how it worked out. We individually may be the key to everything in the purpose of God.

From: "But Ye..."

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001738.html

May 29

Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. (Hebrews 10:23 NIV)

Faith is going to determine which of two things is going to characterize us. This is the real point. It is either going to be that we are living under a terrible paralysis, as altogether petrified through confusion, perplexity, inability to understand, being unable to disentangle, to sort things out, to see straight and see clearly, to know what is meant by happenings. That means utter paralysis, simply standing with our hands on our hips, helpless and hopeless. That is the effect of the absence of a positive faith.

The only way of Life and deliverance from such a paralysis is a deliberate faith in God which causes us to take the attitude that we are going on with God, understanding or not understanding, explaining or not explaining, having light or having no light; we are going right on with God on the basis of what God has done in us, made real in us, of what God Himself is to us by what He has effected in us. We are going on! We, beloved, shall come there and may come there more than once in the course of our life; we shall come to the place where we realize we are going right out into outer darkness and despair and paralysis, to be ruled completely out of any effectiveness, fruitfulness, or value whatever, unless we pull ourselves together and say to ourselves, "The whole thing is an inexplicable, bewildering confusion, a tangle from our standpoint or the standpoint of man; but God is, God is faithful. That is what He Himself says He is." Thus without questioning God we go on believing God. We have even to believe God to the point of putting over on to Him the responsibility for failures, for mistakes, in so far as we have really and honestly put our lives at His disposal and have become utter for God and are free from personal interests and worldly interests and are here only for God. We have to make over to the Lord's account things which may have been mistakes or failures, and trust Him with these and go on.

From: "By Faith..."

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001750.html

May 30

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin. (Zechariah 4:10 NLT)

It is no small thing to be involved in the testimony of God's glory. We should not make a virtue of smallness, as though there were something important about being despised by others, but at the same time we shall find that whenever God has called people to display His glory, He has chosen those who have no glory in themselves.

God has always been obliged to strip His instruments of their own glory. A Moses, full of Egypt's sufficiency, must go for forty years to the backside of the desert to be emptied out and made to confess his complete inadequacy before he can become an instrument for the display of the glory of God. There were times when some of the Israelites did try to despise this now humble Moses, and he made no attempt to stand up for himself, but God soon made it manifest to all concerned how wrong it was to despise him. The glory of God appeared at the gate of the tabernacle and took up the challenge. Sometimes it takes the Lord years to get us sufficiently emptied, weak and small, so that we can bear His glory in our lives, a fact which may well explain some of His dealings with us. When He has got us small enough and empty enough, then there is a chance for the working of His Spirit in glory.

From: "By My Spirit"
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000478.html

May 31

*Get out of your country... to a land that I will show you.
I will bless you. (Genesis 12:1,2)*

The call of God contains both grace and truth. Truth is the separating instrument. "Get thee out." Grace is the promise. "I will bless and make a blessing." Man often grasps at the grace, the "I will bless" of God, and fails to comply with the demand thereof – "Get thee out." Now this does not only apply in the matter of our salvation in its first steps, but it comes in new revelations and calls at different times in the Christian life. The call of God to some fuller and higher acceptance of truth and ministry; of testimony and witness; of surrender and experience, will undoubtedly come by one or another of the Divine forms of visitation to such as the Lord wishes to lead in grace. This will be timed, definite, and challenging. A messenger may come as out from nowhere; the nowhere of reputation, recognition, worldly fame or honor. He will deliver a message, only staying long enough to leave its essential implications with those who hear. Then, having passed on, things can never be the same for them again.

The “call” has sounded. The crisis has been precipitated. The issue is between the life which has been with its limitations known or unrecognized, and that which God offers. But, as usually is the case, this truth is going to call for a “getting out.” Getting out, it may be, of a certain popularity, a comparative easy going. There may be a risking of reputation, a loss of prestige, a disfavor among men, a being labeled “singular,” “peculiar,” “extreme,” “unsafe.” It may mean a head-on impact of all the prejudice, tradition, and disfavor of the religious world. It may involve exclusion, ostracism, and suspicion. These are the accompaniments of all calls of God to advance with Him beyond accepted standards. This is the cost of path-finding for souls. This is the price to be paid for the higher serviceableness to God and men.

From: “Called. Chosen. Faithful.”
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002783.html

June 1

*God, who... made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
(2 Corinthians 4:6 NIV)*

We stand by revelation, “God who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” “God... called me through grace to reveal His Son *in me*.” – Gal. 1:16. How are we going to be made to stand, to be established? How is this endurance going to be put in us? By knowing the Lord Jesus in this inward way, by revelation. The people who are going to stand are those in whom this thing has become a living revelation; “God hath shined in our hearts,” this is one side. The other is, “pressed on every side, perplexed, pursued, smitten down... yet not unto despair” – 2 Cor. 4:6-10. We are troubled and pressed down... why? “That the LIFE of JESUS might be made manifest in our mortal bodies” – 2 Cor. 4:11. Is not that endurance? Pressed on every side yet not strangled! “In pressure Thou hast enlarged me” – Ps. 4:1 (Darby). What was meant to be “pressed down,” God has made for enlargement. Cast down, yet a wonderful rising up. Why? How? It is “God who hath shined in our hearts... in the face of Jesus Christ,” *therefore* you can go through and survive. Nothing can carry us through but the revelation of the Lord Jesus by the Holy Spirit in our hearts; an inside knowledge of Him – not mental assent to a creed or a doctrine, but a living, vital reality in our very being.

From: The Cross and the City of God - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002924.html

June 2

*Do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.
(2 Timothy 1:8 ESV)*

That which represents the testimony in its fullest and closest approximation to the ultimate purpose of God, then has to be shorn of much that has been good, necessary, and of God in a preparatory way, and must be shut up to what is ultimate. The captivity is not to a conceived truth or a superimposed doctrinal acceptance. It is wrought into the very fiber of the being by experience following revelation, and revelation interpreting experience. It is not the championing of some espoused interpretation: it is that it is the very Life of instruments and the instrument is that in its very being. It is not a matter of wanting to be or not wanting to be, but cannot be other, a prisoner, the sovereignty of God has done it.

This applied both to Paul and to those who were brought into touch with him. For the Apostle the settling in to the sovereign ordering of God in his imprisonment issued in increasing illumination leading to spiritual emancipation. No one can fail to recognize the tremendous enrichment of ministry as contained in what are called “the Prison Epistles”. If he had been restive, piqued, rebellious, or bitter, there would have been no open heaven, and a spirit of controversy with the Lord would have closed and bolted the door to the fuller Divine unveilings and clarifyings. When all was accepted according to the mind of the Lord, then “the heavenly places” became the eternal expanses of his walking about, and earthly bondage gave place to heavenly freedom. So it must be with every instrument set apart in relation to the higher interests of the Lord’s testimony.

From: Captivity In The Lord
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000689.html

June 3

Called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)

The chosen vessel becomes the instrument of a Divine wisdom which surprises the vessel itself. Sooner or later that chosen vessel is full of one question: “Why did God choose me? Why did He call me to this work? He ought to have chosen anyone but me! I am the most unsuited for this kind of life and this kind of work.” That was true of Moses. When God would send him to Egypt, he said: “Oh, if you can send by anybody, do so, but not by me.” When God chose Jeremiah, the latter said: “*I cannot speak: for I am a child*” (Jeremiah 1:6). A prophet, whose one business it was to speak, felt that it was the one thing he could not do. Divine choice is a very

extraordinary thing, and it is not always the thing that we would like or would choose that God calls us to.

When we are young we have perhaps a great idea of being in the Lord's work, and we leap to it very eagerly as though we can do it, but when we get older we feel more acutely our dependence. It is then that we discover that naturally we are not fit for it, and many of God's chosen vessels have had to be kept in the work by the very power of God itself. You see, it is God's own sovereignty in His choice, and the point is this: It is not the vessel, but the purpose for which the vessel has been chosen. What is it that unites us as Christians? Now listen to this: It is not salvation, nor redemption, but it is God's power in salvation and redemption that unites us. It is the common consciousness of all believers that they exist for a purpose and that God has saved them with a great purpose in view. This is a very important thing to remember. We may all be saved, and yet we may all be divided. We may all be redeemed by the precious Blood of Jesus and yet remain just individual units. But see what a uniting power there is in everybody feeling that they are called to a purpose! They are united by one common vision.

From: Into The Mind of God - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001635.html

June 4

My little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you. (Galatians 4:19 ESV)

The profaning of the Lord's Name, and the taking away of His glory, is the inveterate habit and course of the old creation nature. Should you see any of the old creation getting into the realm of the things of God, what is the result sooner or later? That man takes the glory, and dishonors God. Is not that the tragic, dark story of "the Church"; man in his old creation powers and life pressing into the things of God, and making a name for himself? The Church has been the happy hunting ground of men for reputation, position, influence and all such things. The flesh always does that. It takes God's glory away, it profanes God's Name. In order that that might not be so there must be a new creation, where all things are of God....

I see the appalling state of things today amongst the Lord's people everywhere; death, weakness, limitation, defeat, failure, inability to stand up, to go on; and, without being critical, censorious or judging, you have to come to the conclusion as you speak with so many, that the measure of Christ is pathetically small. Sometimes when you speak about the Lord to people, who have borne the name of Christian for many years, they gape at you as though you were talking a strange language. Let us ask the Lord that, so far as we are concerned, there may be an increase of Christ in every way.

Let us seek grace for any fiery furnace in the light of the explanation, that it is neither what is of Christ that is being tested in us, nor any good within ourselves, but that what is not Christ should disappear, that it should be Christ, only Christ. At last this universe will know nothing but Christ. He will fill all things, and that will be a great day! May He be fully formed in us.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002210.html

June 5

*Whenever two or three of you come together in My name,
I am there with you. (Matthew 18:20 CEV)*

We must be completely clear as to what it is that God is particularly concerned with at this time in the world's history, and, therefore, what it is that we who are the Lord's children are called unto. The thing that God is doing in this dispensation is the formation of a spiritual and heavenly Israel. In doing that He is repeating the laws of the old Israel *in a spiritual way*. He is following along the lines of His ways with the old Israel, but now *on a heavenly and not an earthly basis*, because, while God's methods may change, His principles are changeless. He has left the earthly basis of the Old Testament and has moved on to a heavenly basis in the New Testament. He has moved from the temporal to the spiritual, and the spiritual is far greater than the temporal....

And that leads us to that wonderful revelation which we have in the New Testament – the revelation of Christ and all His members being made one Temple for God. Christ is our Temple, and in Him we find all that a temple was ever intended to be. Oh, how people have gone astray over this! We go to many places that are called "churches" and the word is applied to the building. When people pray in those places they usually say something like this: "We have come into Thy house today. We are in this house of God." They are really talking about a building. But we don't need a building to give God a temple! "*Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them*" (Matthew 18:20). People gathered into Jesus Christ constitute the Temple of God. It is not a special building, but people who are in Christ Jesus. This is what God is doing in this dispensation.

From: The On-High Calling - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000979.html

June 6

*To whom was God speaking when He took an oath that they would never enter His rest? Wasn't it the people who disobeyed Him?
(Hebrews 3:18 NLT)*

We have no right to go to the unsaved and bid them come to Christ and find rest until and unless we ourselves know that rest. Our testimony and our ministry is jeopardized, weakened, limited and discredited if we are not ourselves in rest; and this is the object of the enemy's activity in this matter – to discredit us by taking from us that very birthright of our union with Him Who is never perturbed, never anxious, never in doubt as to the issue, the One Who reigns. You see, rest is the practical outworking of our belief that He is Lord, and the very Lordship of Christ is struck at by the unrest of the people of God....

Do not think that it is necessarily such-and-such things that account for our condition. These may be contributing factors, they may be very testing, may bear upon us very heavily. Physical matters – yes, they do press, they do make the situation exceedingly difficult, they do make a difference. Circumstances in which we have to live our lives, they do make a lot of difference, they make the situation exceedingly difficult. We say, “If only the Lord would deal with this physical matter or these circumstances or this something else! It is all due to that, that is the cause of it, the reason for it.” That is our way of reasoning, but it is not the Lord’s thought at all. The thing is deeper down than that, and it is simply a matter of believing God; resolute faith, confidence in God. The Lord is trying to get us out of our variable and varying soul life where we are at the mercy of all our feelings, thoughts and reasonings and all that kind of thing, into a realm where, in spirit, we are steadfast. That is the point upon which it is all fixed in the Psalm. “Their heart was not steadfast with Him” (Ps. 78:37), and around that the whole of their forty years is gathered. The key to this is spiritual; tested by every other line, every other means, it is a spiritual matter ultimately. To be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inward man (Eph. 3:16) is the answer to it all.

From: The Rest and the Courage of Faith
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000451.html

June 7

The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2 Corinthians 3:6)

If you want to know the mind of the Spirit about anything, you will know it by quickening, by Life in that direction. If you want to know what the Spirit is against, you will know it because there is death in that direction in your spirit, you have no Life, you say, in that direction. All

right, that means you know the Lord, you know the Spirit, you know what it is to move on the basis of the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ. The Father governed Him by that law. He governs us by exactly the same law when we are joined to the Lord, one spirit. Guidance, direction, is a matter of Life in the Spirit, Life by the Spirit. The Lord Jesus had His life ordered, governed, conducted, arranged in every detail by the quickening Spirit; the Spirit of Life in Christ.

These Jews came along and said: "Here is the Scripture, and the Scripture says You ought not to do certain things, and You are doing them; You are all wrong because the Scripture says this!" When Christ so acted was He violating the Scripture? Or was He giving God's meaning to the Scripture? When God gave that law, did He not have a fuller meaning than what men see just on the surface? Was there not a spiritual interpretation? Was it not pointing on to something, which when it came was to supersede – I do not mean break, but transcend – simply because higher, fuller, deeper meaning was reached? Christ is God's Sabbath. It is in Christ that God comes to rest in all His works; His new creation. But they said, "You must abide by the letter!" We put it in that way to show the difference between taking the letter and having the Holy Spirit's illumination of the letter. Life and the letter are often contrasted in the Word. The letter killeth, the Spirit maketh alive.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002221.html

June 8

*He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.
(1 Thessalonians 5:24 ESV)*

I believe we need a new understanding of the spiritual pilgrimage of the Lord Jesus. We think that because He was God's Son, and because of what He was, His way was less difficult than ours. He had certain powers that we have not. He had a nature that we have not. We cannot understand the mystery of One such as He being subjected to trials and difficulties and adversities, and being tested to breaking-point, where it called for the intervention of heaven to get Him through. He was brought there; He was brought to the point more than once where even He would not have gone through, had not heaven intervened and angels ministered to Him. You say: "I have never had that experience." Ah, but you have. You may never have actually seen angels coming to minister to you, but there is no believer who has gone this way, who has gone any distance, but knows in his heart, "But for God and Heaven, I would not be here today." My own testimony is that it has required the intervention of heaven, more than once, to save me from succumbing. But what is true of ourselves was far more true of Him. We do not understand this mystery, but He had a spiritual pilgrimage, with far

deeper testings and tryings than ever you or I need, have, or will have. Yes, “in all points like as we” it is true; but, for Him, with greater acuteness than for us. Through it all He has been perfected – “made perfect.” “*Though He was a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and having been made perfect (having been made complete) He became... the author of eternal salvation*” (Heb. 5:8,9), “eternal redemption” (Heb. 9:12). He has reached the end of the road of perfection *for us*. And He is the guarantee that God can do it in us! That is the point. He is there like the “title deeds” for faith; the guarantee and the certainty that God, having got Him there, can get anybody there. He can get you and me there at the end. He can make perfect His work in us.

From: God's Purpose in All - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002969.html

June 9

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1)*

God does not tell us what He is doing when taking us through dark experiences. If He did, it would be all right. If He said, “I am going to lead you into a bad time, it is all going to be dark and strange and perplexing and bewildering and helpless, but it is all right, I am working a tremendous thing, this is what I am going to bring out of it,” if He said that, the faith element would fade out. If only He would tell us He is doing something, and what He is doing, instead of leaving us in the dark and seeming to be so far away and without any interest in us! If only! Ah yes, but He did not do that, and we know He does not do that, He does not explain. But here is the challenge. This is what is meant by Heb. 11 and the men of faith, that is what it means. And thank God we have the heritage, we have a great heritage, we have more than they had. These men did not have a Bible; it was not written when they were going through it. We have their story and so many more. We see the issue, we have the sequel, but is it really helping us? When you are having a bad, dark time and feel that all has gone wrong, read the story of Joseph again... starting on it you will not want to put it down. Take its great lessons. The God of Joseph is our God and He is doing the same thing, and we know that that is true to life. What I have been saying is so true to life. We have that evidence. That, at any rate, is very much like my experience, and therefore I have reason to think and believe that the same thing is involved. The God of resurrection is working this to glory.

From: The Testimony of the Christ - Chapter 6

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002985.html

June 10

*This is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ.
(Philippians 1:9,10 NIV)*

Personal, inward, spiritual intelligence is a very rare thing. No wonder that the enemy has such a successful line in delusions, counterfeits, and false representations. Our greatest safeguard against such will be a deep knowledge of the Lord through discipline. To know the Lord in a real way means steadfastness when others are being carried away – steadfastness through times of fiery trial. Those who know the Lord do not put forth their own hand and try to bring things about. Such are full of love and patience, and do not lose their poise when everything seems to be going to pieces. Confidence is an essential and inevitable fruit of this knowledge, and in those who know Him there is a quiet restful strength which speaks of a great depth of Life.

Let me point out that in Christ “are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden,” and the Lord’s will for us is to come to an ever-growing realization and personal appreciation of Him in Whom all the fullness dwells. We have only stated facts as to the Lord’s will for all His own, and their greatest need. The absence of this real knowledge of the Lord has proved to be the most tragic factor in the Church’s history.

Every fresh uprising of an abnormal condition has disclosed the appalling weakness amongst Christian people because of this lack. Waves of error; the swing of the pendulum to some fresh popular acceptance; a great war with its horrors and many-sided tests of faith; all these have swept away multitudes and left them in spiritual ruin. These things are ever near at hand, and we have written this message to urge upon the Lord’s people to have very definite dealings with Him that He will take every measure with them that they might know Him.

From: On Knowing the Lord
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000415.html

June 11

Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit! (Luke 23:46)

“Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” I am so glad that the story of the Cross does not end there. The cry, the awful cry, is “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” but the last words from the Cross are not such. “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit” (Luke 23:46). He is back on the ground of perfect fellowship with the Father and absolute trust.

The victory is gained, the work is done, the enemy is defeated, and the ground is secured. Whatever Satan says, as he does in our deep hours of spiritual experience, about the Lord having given us up, departed from us – all that sort of thing; whatever he says, it is not true. It may be that you do not feel the full weight of that; but if ever you come, as perhaps some of you have come, to a time, such as many of the most faithful and devoted and greatly-used servants of God have known, when the dark forces spread themselves over, gather around in their hordes, and seek to come between you and your Lord and then begin their whisperings – “The Lord has given you up, handed you over,” or something to that effect – when you come to that place, then I trust you will know that this word is no light word, no unimportant word: for the last depths of Calvary were fathomed in the moment when our Lord cried that bitter cry and gained the answer and came out victorious and into rest. “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.” That was not for Himself, that was for us – for you, for me.... Never, never is it necessary for anyone to know that desolation of God-forsakenness while they put their trust, their faith, upon His taking up this age-long issue as Man for man – the issue of “the light of Thy countenance.”

So let us rejoice that we have an open heaven secured for us by our blessed Lord. We have but stated the truth, the fact, of this thing. There is much more bound up with it, which the Lord may show us as we go on, as to what kind of man it is who enjoys that opened heaven, but that is with the Lord. Let us thank Him for the fact that we may have the heaven opened to us. He has done it. But to a Nathanael He will say, “Ye shall see the heaven opened.” God grant that we may all be in that blessed position.

From: The Significance of Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000838.html

June 12

I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the One who is the stairway between heaven and earth. (John 1:51 NLT)

We have seen Christ as the true spiritual fulfillment of Jacob's ladder, which was set up on the earth, and the top of which reached into heaven. Of this the Lord later said to Nathanael: “Hereafter thou shalt see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” Now if the Lord Jesus is the same, in effect, as the ladder of Jacob, then He is both in heaven and on earth. He is on earth, and He is at the same time in heaven. In Him heaven and earth are united, brought together, and whilst He is here on this earth for purposes of expression and action, He is also in heaven. The point is that His Life, and all His resources, were drawn from above. He was in touch with inexhaustible resources, and

resources which could never die, because they were not of this earth, and could never be subject to the touch of corruption which is characteristic of everything on this earth....

So then, to gather that up in one word, it means that for our lives and for our service, our ministry, our heavenly vocation, there are, in union with Christ, resources at our disposal which are heavenly, inexhaustible, and incorruptible. This is the great secret of strength. We have seen something of what those resources are, and of how they operate; of their value for spirit, soul, and body; mind, heart, and will. Not on our own charges are we commissioned of the Lord, but He Who commissions places His own resources behind His commissioned and His commission.

From: The Risen Lord & the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 10
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002225.html

June 13

I correct and discipline everyone I love. Take this seriously, and change the way you think and act. (Revelation 3:19 GWT)

There is the big question which is always confronting us as to why is it that some leap into the light and go on, and others do not, but always lag behind, and never seem to see any more? Is it that there is a selectiveness on the part of God, a kind of elect of the elect that He has, is it that He has favorites? I do not think so. I think a great part of the answer lies here, namely, in what God finds He has to deal with, whether people mean business with Him or not, whether He has a clear way or not, whether the ground is occupied or not already by that which is an obstruction to Him. I do not think anybody will fail to get all the light the Lord wants them to have if they really do mean business with God. The Holy Spirit knows us. He looks right deep down into our hearts and knows whether we mean business. He sees exactly what there is to hinder Him and how far He can go; for the Lord is not going to coerce anyone.

If we are taken up with ourselves, occupied with ourselves, circling round ourselves, centering in ourselves, then the Holy Spirit has not a chance. We have to come to an end of ourselves. That is the trouble with so many. They have got a self-complex set up, and all the time it is a continuous going round in a circle and coming back to the same point at which they started, and it is all round themselves, and they are wearing themselves out. Before long they are going to have an awful crash that involves all that for which they are supposed to stand and represent for the Lord, and it will come down with them. The Holy Spirit has not a clear way. We have to get out of the way, so far as this self-occupation is concerned, if we are going to move straight on, and to go on. He knows exactly where we are, whether we are so tied up in them that we are not

open to the Lord to consider any further light at all. “We have got it all, or our people with whom we are associated have got it all, and we are a part of that!” You know what I mean. The Holy Spirit cannot do much with folk who are in a position like that; and He knows. His attitude is, “It is no use, I cannot do much there, they are too tied up.” But, if we are prepared to put everything into the water, then the Lord can go on and get a clear way.

From: Spiritual Sight - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001062.html

June 14

From now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. (2 Corinthians 5:16)

The word “flesh” as used here is comprehensive and general. Not knowing Him after the flesh, and not knowing one another after the flesh means really what we should think if we were to say we do not know one another naturally, in the natural realm. Whatever that might be, that is all-embracing. We know one another as we know Christ, spiritually. The context here sets forth that our relationship with Christ in the new creation is purely a spiritual thing, and therefore our relationships with one another as being in Christ are spiritual relationships. The whole new creation is a spiritual matter, because it is Christ.

That leads us to this specific point, which goes right to the heart of things. *In this realm the thing which dominates is the measure of Christ.* Everything here is determined and governed by the measure of Christ. Christ fills this whole realm; Christ dominates this whole realm in a spiritual way; from this realm of the new creation everything which is not Christ is excluded: all things are out from God. We might say that God’s world is Christ, so far as we are concerned. The entire sphere of God for us is Christ. For us as believers there is nothing else whatever in relation to God, but Christ. Nothing is accepted by Him, but Christ. Nothing is blessed by Him, but Christ. Nothing is used by Him, but Christ. Nothing is seen or considered by Him, but Christ. Here, filling God’s entire realm so far as we are concerned, is Christ, only Christ.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002211.html

June 15

Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me. (Mark 8:34 NIV)

In the end it will be the End that judges our Christian life. And so it is the Holy Spirit's work, His interest, concern, energy and activity; not only to bring people to the door and to get them inside the door, but to make them know that that door is but the opening of a Way, on the other side of the door everything lies. It is not the door alone, but it is what lies beyond the door, and that is this *renewal*, this making *anew* after the image of Him that created. The End governs: it is Christ in all that He signifies and means and stands for. It is that vast All that He is. "Christ is All, and in all" is the last clause. It is Christ in that fullness, which is more than our salvation, more than our initial salvation. The door is essential, *but* it is what it leads to that justifies going in it at all.

Christ Himself, when He was here, never failed to let people know that when they entered that door, or that straight and narrow way, they were in for trouble.... Now that may sound like a very terrible thing to say, especially to you young Christians who are not far inside the door, but be perfectly clear about it; the Lord Jesus never deceived anybody about this, never at all. He let people know that to "follow Him," as He put it at that time, involved them in difficulty and suffering and persecution and trial and a lifelong thing. There is a cost here, a great cost. And we shall discover that while there are the compensations, for there are undoubtedly the compensations in this life, and the mighty compensations for eternity, this is a way which is *not easy* for the natural man by any means. This work of the Holy Spirit is drastic, exacting, and very trying to the flesh. Make no mistake about it; it will take all the energy that the Holy Spirit Himself has to accomplish this work. It really will. So the Lord Jesus has not left us in any doubt about this.

From: God's Supreme Interest in Man - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002928.html

June 16

Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in My Name, claiming I am the Christ, and will deceive many. (Matthew 24:4,5 NIV)

We want to say a word about the religious, for the same thing holds good here, adapted by the Deceiver to the realm in which he is working, the type of people with whom he is dealing, the religious. Yes, religiously deceived, to put it in another way, deceived by their very religiousness, and that is a strong and a mighty delusion. There is power in that delusion that seems so often to defy every kind of attempt to deal with it. The religious

are deceived by religiousness! What more can be expected than the recognition of the fact of God and the giving to God of reverence, acknowledgment, and recognition: of taking active interest in things which relate to God, attending religious services, and being very busy in religious activities and interests, and finding your chief interest in religious things and the religious realm? What more can be expected? What is the matter with that?

Be patient, bear with me if I say with very great emphasis: *that may be one colossal delusion*. So often that very thing obscures one fundamental thing, a true and living relationship with God. “Ye must be born again” and religion very often obscures that issue. Oh, religion is no argument for salvation. Religion can be found in the darkest places of the earth. Universally there is religion; depraved and very low in many places, but universally there is the consciousness of standing in relationship to some supreme object of worship, demanding worship. Then men’s minds or imaginations get to work to give some kind of expression to that consciousness, of that supreme object of worship. The imagination produces that sometimes out of a tree, a stone, or in the heavenly bodies. Somehow it is expressed, but it is the thing that is there, behind all the forms of expression which is universal. All the highly civilized forms of that brought into the realm of Christendom are only the same thing developed. It does not say that Christendom’s more intelligent, civilized, educated interpretation of God, even though it gets its ideas from the Bible, is salvation. It may be a mighty delusion and very often is.

From: Christ The Power Of God - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002158.html

June 17

Jesus... said, “What do you want Me to do for you?” They said to Him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” (Matthew 20:32,33 ESV)

We shall never see Divine things by the aid of our reason. We shall never see things because they are put plainly to us by the one who ministers. No, it will only be as Jesus of Nazareth comes into touch with us and we with Him. And that applies to every stage of the Christian life. If there are any reading these lines, who have never in the first place had their eyes opened to *see*, so that the result is Life eternal – for knowing is only another word for seeing, and Jesus said, “This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ” (John 17:3); “that they should know” – another word for seeing – if you have not yet entered into Life, received eternal Life, remember that it will not just *happen* to you; it will not simply *happen*. You will have to become tremendously concerned about this and show the Lord that you mean business; you will have to be like Bartimaeus and cry,

and “so much the more” cry. Remember that the Lord does so often wait, delay, and hold off, to see if we really place value upon this seeing. We are tested as to how much we esteem His things.

And what is true at the beginning is true all the way along. There is no end to Divine revelation; there is no end to our seeing. Oh, how little we have seen, how little we know, of the vast stores of Divine intention and thought and purpose and meaning. We stand and paddle on the shores of this vast ocean of God and of His purposes and meanings in our creation. How little we know about it! – and we are not going to know until we have deep heart exercise. But it is there, and it is there for us, and oh, we have got to come in this way – “so much the more.” Are you like that after a conference, or after any meeting in which there has been a ministry of God’s Word? Are you sure you have seen all that God meant you to see? Are you just hearing what is said? You agree – but what is the effect? The real effect waits upon this heart exercise, this crying out – and a crying out “so much the more.” The Lord is not close and mean, holding it from you, but He is wanting to know that this is of greater price to you than all else; if needs be, of greater price than your sleep, your rest: you are going to give Him no rest until He opens your eyes.

From: The Significance Of Christ - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000843.html

June 18

The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. (Numbers 23:9)

Not reckoned among the nations. Oh, that is glorious! That puts Israel not only apart from the nations, but on top of the nations. Now, if there has been one thing which Satan has ever tried to do with the people of God in all ages, it has been to get them reckoned among the nations. I speak solemnly and carefully. Right at the very heart of Christendom as we have it today is the desire to be recognized. Recognition! Everything that organized Christianity does is to gain recognition. What are all these churches? I mean, in this instance, all these elaborate and imposing buildings. They are to gain recognition. They are in order to be reckoned something. To what end is all the procedure, the advertisement, and the much else besides? It is in order to get recognition, to be accredited here on this earth, to be reckoned. Yes, that is Satan’s triumph. That is where spiritual power has gone out. That is where the Church has ceased to be something to be reckoned with up there. It has, in spirit, come down here, to be reckoned among the nations. If only Satan can get the people of God into a position where they are taken up by this world, written up by this world, made something of by this world, he has triumphed and pulled the Church down out of its heavenly place and made it an earthly thing. That is

the principle right through the Old Testament. That too is seen to be the trouble in the Revelation. God will not have it. Satan's success is along that line. He has pulled the Church out of the heavens. Somewhere he has made it touch earth, form a link in some way with earth.

What we have just said does touch us in so many ways, yes, in countless things, this question of being reckoned among the nations in principle, this coming down from the heavenly position. The Lord never meant His Church on this earth to be something that would be taken up by this world, to be something that would be reckoned among the things of this world, recognized and accredited by this world. What He meant, and what obtained when things were right, was that the world itself could not bear the presence of the Church, did not want it. That is the power of the Church to testify against the world.

From: The Overcomer - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003655.html

June 19

Now comes My hour of heart-break, and what can I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? No, it was for this very purpose that I came to this hour. (John 12:27 Phillips)

There is one all-comprehending, all-embracing, all-governing purpose to which God has committed Himself, by creation, by redemption, and by union. That purpose is the conformity of a race to the image of His Son. This is man's chief end and chief good. What more satisfied and "happy" person is there – even amidst suffering and sorrow – than he or she who is most perfect in patience, love, faith, and the other "fruits of the Spirit"? If our requests regarding *things* were granted, while we were left the same people, unchanged in disposition and nature, it would not be long before we should be in the same unhappy condition over other things. There is possible for us some inherent quality that wears out circumstances and reigns above them. Some of the most radiant people have been the greatest sufferers in infirmity, poverty, or other forms of adversity; whilst the most "privileged" are often the most discontented.

The solution to the problem of suffering does not lie in being philosophical; it is not in fatalistic resignation – "This is my lot; I suppose I must accept it." It is not in passive or active suppression of desire. It is far removed from self-pity, bitterness, cynicism, or envy, and the rest of their wretched family of wilderness-makers and wanderers. We may have to let go the particular occasion of our trouble, and first recognize, and then embrace with our heart, the fact that in the affliction there resides the immense eternal potentiality of an increase of the image of God's Son, which is to be the one and the only character and nature of the eternal

kingdom. We have too much visualized the “Heaven” that is to be, as geographical and pleasurable, without giving sufficient weight to the fact of a *nature* to be inculcated and perfected.

From: One Universal Answer
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002930.html

June 20

Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. (Galatians 5:25 NLT)

Satan is a great master of strategy, and one of his favourite lines is that of pushing things to extremes. Among the Galatian believers, he had sought to push legalism to an extreme. But now he is thwarted along that line; Paul wins the battle – there is no doubt about it. What is the enemy's next line of attack? “Very well then,” he says, “if you won't have the law, then don't have any law; discard all law. You are no longer under law, you are under grace – you can do as you like! Just behave as you like; just carry on as you like; you must know no limitations, no restrictions. Any kind of restriction is law – repudiate it! Go to the other extreme – licence instead of law!” I believe that, if Paul were alive today, he would be just as vehement against this as he was against the other: for here is a work of Satan indeed. If Satan cannot bind by the law, and change the whole nature of things in that way, he will seek to dismiss all law and make us wholly lawless.

But remember, if this Letter to the Galatians is the letter of the liberty of the Spirit, it is also the letter of the government of the Spirit. We are only free when we are governed. In George Matheson's well-known words, that we sometimes sing: “Make me a captive, Lord, and then I shall be free.”

A paradox – but how true. We are not free when we are giving way to licence, when we take liberty that far. No: this Letter, and the Letters to the Romans and to the Hebrews, are not documents of lawlessness. Even if they do set aside the whole of the Jewish system, they do not introduce a regime of lawlessness. But they do most clearly bring in the life and government of the Holy Spirit. Remember – no child of God who is governed by the Holy Spirit, who is really living a life in the Spirit, will infringe any Divine principle. Indeed, a life governed by the Holy Spirit will be the more meticulously careful about spiritual principles.

From: The Arm of the Lord - Chapter 8
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002047.html

June 21

Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing. (John 15:5 NLT)

I have not been the least of those who have striven, and agonized, and strained, and pressed and reached out for all that the Lord would have, all that is possible. It is possible to wear yourself right out, and kill yourself in a spiritual quest, and the Lord at last says to our hearts: "If you only know Me, things will happen; it will all come to pass without any of your strain, struggle and agony. *I am* going to bear this fruit. I will bear it through you by way of union and fellowship. Remember that the holy, blessed secret of fellowship is just resting in Me, abiding in Me." If you saw all the branches of the vine every day groaning and agonizing, and writhing in order to bear their fruit, you would see something which is altogether unnatural. As a matter of fact you will see nothing of the kind. You will see them abiding there and bearing fruit. It is what we often speak of as the rest of faith. What is behind the rest of faith? It is not bringing yourself to a passive state, when you inwardly sink down and say, "I am just going to rest." It is knowing the Lord, *God in Christ*; for the way in which God has joined Himself to us is in Christ, not apart, and the way in which we have been joined to God is in Christ, not apart. The answer to every need is knowing Him in this way.

From: Knowing God in Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003117.html

June 22

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last. (John 15:16 NIV)

The new creation is in Christ. It is not in you, and not in me, and never will be. All that it will mean in time, and in eternity will be through our spiritual union with Christ. All God's fullness is in Christ. We shall receive all that fullness, and enjoy it in a practical out-working. But this, while we are yet here in time, will ever be by faith's union. In eternity, where the reception of that fullness will be unhindered, the work of faith, though not its fruit, will have passed. But we shall never be absorbed in Christ in the sense that we become so many Christs. It will still be Himself as distinct Who is to be glorified. We shall never be glorifying ourselves, neither shall we be glorified by others as though we were Christ. Christ is not some great widespread essence, which is going to become the constitution of a great multitude, so that that multitude becomes a Christ in essence. It will ever be true that Christ remains apart in His Person, though

manifested in His glory and in His excellence in the saints, and we shall still, therefore, be worshiping Him as objective and distinct in His own Person from ourselves. Perhaps that hardly needs saying. But it is very important that we should recognize that *forever* God has bound up everything with His Son, and that nothing will ever be had or enjoyed apart from Christ, while for this present life that is only by faith in the Lord Jesus. The object of this present emphasis is to seek, as the Lord will enable, that there shall be an emancipation from ourselves; for *that* occupation, *that* consideration, is always taking from His glory. Let us ask the Lord to cut us really free from ourselves by an unveiling and presentation of His Son to us, as the sum total of all that ever God desires and wills.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002211.html

June 23

*If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. But all things are of God.
(2 Corinthians 5:17,18 ASV)*

The all-inclusive rule of the new creation is that “all things are of (out from) God.” Concerning this fact the Apostle Paul uses the word “but” – “*But all things are of God*” – as though he would anticipate, intercept, or arrest an impulse to rush away and attempt life or service upon an old creation basis, or with old creation resource. The great question then is: What does it mean that all things in this new creation are out from God? What kind of a life will such a life be? To answer that question adequately would be a very comprehensive task and the most revolutionary thing conceivable.

To begin with, we should have to be settled regarding the *difference* between the old and the new creations, and then as to how far-reaching that difference is. In addition, we should need to see that God has put these two creations asunder, utterly and forever, and however gracious and forbearing He may be with us in our ignorance and slowness of apprehension, He never accepts the overlapping or intertwining of the two. Then there would be the further need of an inward, intelligent judgment and power by which we are made aware of the Divine veto upon the one and energy toward the other.... It is not what is done for God that will last, but what is done by God. The measure of spiritual value is determined by the measure in which God promotes it, not the measure of human activities according to human judgments and energies in the name of God.

From: A New Creation
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002203.html

June 24

God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of His own purpose and grace, which He gave us in Christ Jesus.... (2 Timothy 1:9 ESV)

Whenever we are being faced with some new and different course, some fresh proposition or position, there is one all-governing question that we should ask, and which we should take ample time to ponder and pray over seriously. That question is – Does this thing before me stand in direct line with the full purpose of God, as revealed – not in a fragment – but in the fullness of His Word? God has left us in no doubt that He has a clearly defined purpose in view as the ultimate object of all His dealings. He has also made it abundantly clear what that purpose is. Further, it is distinctly shown that believers are “called according to His purpose,” and that they are to “make their calling and election sure.”

It is the business and duty of every true Christian to study so as to be quite clear as to what that “Eternal Purpose” is. Having done so, *everything* that arises to engage us must be brought to the judgment bar of that purpose, and interrogated in its light. God will not cut across our path, or give us particular light at any fork in the road if we have not been diligent in this quest, or faithful to the light given. It just will not do to allow ourselves to be influenced by questions of comparative right or wrong, good or bad, permissibility, desirability, expediency, or policy. Nor must ambition, soul-gratification, enlarged prospects “for the Lord,” wider acceptance in Christianity, or any such thing, color our judgment or affect our decision. Advantage and cost are ruled out here as deciding factors. One question, and one alone, will decide tragedy or glory: does this that is before me stand directly in line with the full purpose of God? When the end is reached, the full story told, the sum taken, how much that is bound up with this will be stripped off, as having no real substance with what is Christ, and therefore fail to be carried over into the eternal? What will the River carry away, and what will emerge on the other side?

From: The Danger of Coming Short
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002966.html

June 25

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. (Revelation 22:13)

We have to put back all our schemes, and all our plans, and all our arrangements, and all our programs for the Lord, and in the secret place with the Lord get into the value of true, living, spiritual union with Him, that the purpose may not commence with us – in our thought, in our desire,

in our will – but may begin with God and find a registration in us from God. He would have us see with spiritual perception what He is doing, and do it, and “in like manner”; for God is as particular about His method as He is about His purpose. The question is not one of doing a thing *for* God, but *of* God. That is why the Apostle adds that governing clause to his great statement about the new creation, when he says, “If any man be in Christ there is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold all things are become new. *But all things are of (out from) God....*” In the new creation all things are out from God. There is a Man in the work of God. There is a Man to whom all the works of God are entrusted. There is one Man, only one. All the works of God are bound up with that Man in the glory. The important thing for us is to see what Christ is; not only who Christ is (though it is important to see that Christ is God), but what Christ is, that Christ is an inclusive new-creation Man; that He is a Divine humanity now, and that He fully and utterly, conclusively and finally, expresses the thought of God. There is no expression of God apart from Jesus Christ, so far as the new creation is concerned. God’s thoughts, God’s will, God’s desires, God’s works, are finished in Him. He is the First and the Last, and you cannot get outside of that.

From: The Meaning of Divine Life - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002997.html

June 26

*Let the person who has ears listen to what the Spirit says.
(Revelation 3:22 GW)*

The man or woman who has no inner ear, no inner silence, no inner place for hearing the Lord is never going to be of much use in the service of the Lord, and mark you, it must be the Lord, and we must be very careful that we do not give even good men and good writers the place that the Lord ought to have.

There is a time when we must sweep our books aside, when we must shut ourselves up from the voices of men, when we must get quiet with the Lord and listen, and more, we must seek to cultivate, by the grace of God, the ear that is always open to the Lord even when all the other sounds are around us. It is difficult, yet not impossible, that in the raging of the street and the rush of business life the Lord should say something; but He will only speak to those who recognize the value of listening to the Lord and who are giving Him His place of silence to speak when possible. The ear to hear the Lord when all other sounds and voices are around us is prepared and trained in these times of detachment which the Lord demands, and against which the devil is eternally active to capture the ear again.

Now, that is elementary (we are not seeking to be profound), but tremendously important. You and I know, never mind how spiritually mature we are – the one object of the devil is to capture our ear from God, to make it impossible for us to have the silent hour and the silent ear for God. The pressing in, and all the things which happen just when you have decided to have a little quiet time; then it is you have to fight for the ear – you know it is true. Do you see there is something bound up with that; the undoing of the work of the devil, the registration of God's mind upon this universe, everything which is meant by priestly ministry, which is bringing God in, is bound up with this: God having the ear.

From: The Servant and Service of the Lord
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002991.html

June 27

I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit. (Ephesians 3:16 NLT)

The strength of the Lord's people is none other than the strength of the Holy Spirit in the inward man. Right at the very center of the being, deeper than thought or reason, deeper than emotion or feeling, deeper than all that which comprises the more outward man which, under given circumstances, may prove weak and incapable of standing up to the situation. In the variations of our soul life, the changes of our moods, our ideas, our attitudes, our feelings, our minds; deeper down there is that strength which does not let us go.

That is the true nature of spirituality. It is not the tremendously forceful conviction of our intellects or the mighty power of our wills. When these cannot stand up to conditions of intense spiritual antagonism, opposition or perplexity, there is that more inward thing, right in the inward man, which is of God – the Holy Spirit: "*Strengthened with might by His Spirit into the inward man.*"

Test that out and the result is that when the mind is bewildered by the perplexity of a situation, and the arguments are all in the direction that a mistake has been made, a wrong course has been taken, everything is false – when all the feelings are churned up, disturbed, anxious, fearful, or when there are no feelings at all, they are simply petrified by the position – when circumstances are all arguing in the opposite direction of that which we, in the purest moments of our fellowship with God determined upon. The world around us – and very closely around us, even within the sphere of our own natural life, our own soul life – is an inexplicable mystery. Then spirituality is proved by that inward strength which abides: that standing when you cannot go forward; that holding when you can do nothing; that remaining when all the forces are seeking to sweep you off your feet. That

represents a measure of spirituality. That is the true nature of the child of God. The opposite is to be carried away by argument, reasoning, appearance, circumstance, and all such things. That proves a lack of true spirituality. In a sentence, true spirituality is not to live on the outside; it is to live with God right down deep in the inner part of your own being, where He, the Spirit, is.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 11
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002867.html

June 28

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13 NIV)

If it is true that you and I have been anointed of the Holy Spirit, as we ought to be, our presence in this world ought to register something positive for God. It ought to be impossible for us to come into this world, and go out of it, without having registered something upon it. People in this world ought to feel something when we are near them. The devil himself ought to take notice that, because we are here under the Holy Spirit, Jesus is here. It is impossible for Jesus to be anywhere without something happening, and now Jesus is here by the Holy Spirit in believers. Therefore there ought to be nothing neutral about any Christian....

The Holy Spirit is positive, and not negative, and if the Holy Spirit is really Lord in our lives, our lives will count for something. There will be an influence from our lives which will be eternal. Thank God for the Holy Spirit! Let us be sure to ask the Lord that the anointing shall have a free way in our lives. The effect of the Holy Spirit may be to condemn some people, and it may be to redeem others, but He cannot be neutral, and if the anointing is upon you and upon me, the devil will take account of it. May the Lord help us to see that that may not be a bad thing! Do you want the devil to say: "Oh, that man, that woman, does not matter. You need not bother about him, or her!" I had a friend once who, whenever we were parting and going our different ways, took hold of my hand and said: "Goodbye, old man. The Lord make you a nuisance to the devil!" Well, that is how it will be if the Holy Spirit is really upon us, for that is how it was with the Lord Jesus.

From: The Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Anointing
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002195.html

June 29

The words that I speak to you are Spirit, and they are Life. (John 6:63)

This Life is a very vast Life. It reaches into God's great purpose, and we are a part of it; we are "the called according to His purpose." We want to know the purpose; we want to know our place in the purpose; we want to know our faculties, our functions. How shall this be? Not by studying up what they are, but by being in Life. It may be very interesting to have a scientific knowledge of the workings of our human bodies, but it is not necessary in order to live. Live, and the thing happens. You never have to consider whether you will take your next breath, to sit down and make a mental problem of it. You do it, and everything else is bound up with it, and follows in proper order. Breathing properly has a great deal bound up with it. Well then, live and everything else will follow. That is only saying, in other words: move, have your life in the Holy Spirit, and all the plan and order of God will follow. You are bound to come into it, you cannot help yourself.

Thus the object is to get the Lord's people to a place where they walk with the Lord, and are so open to Him that they are prepared for all that walking with Him means. Sometimes it will mean that they will have to leave a great deal that is of a secondary character; perhaps forsake many things, even religious things, the accepted things, to walk with the Lord. There may be a price attached to it; misunderstanding, and loneliness, and much besides; but if you are so open to the Lord that nothing else matters, and you mean to walk with God whatever the cost, no matter what people say you ought to do as (in their thought) a part of a great Christian order or religious machine, you will come into all God's secret thought as naturally as a flower opens to the sun, and you will be making discoveries and finding that there is a vast realm of meaning and possibility and capacity and power that you never dreamed of. The Lord is not going to stretch it out before us, and show us it. We shall discover it as we walk in the Spirit.

From: Life in the Spirit - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003083.html

June 30

*He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.
(I Corinthians 6:17)*

The nature of this relationship is essentially spiritual; that is, it is a union of spirit. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." "They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit..." because "God is Spirit." The union, then, is the union of spirit. That goes deeper than any other kind of union. We cannot go deeper than that. That defines the nature of man in the

deepest, the most real part of his being, that he is fundamentally in the sight of God, spirit. The basis is Life. That is what John brings out so clearly, by way of illustration in his Gospel, and by way of direct statement in his epistle – “...God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” “He that hath the Son hath the life.” That is a statement imposed upon the basic declaration that our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son. The fellowship is explained as being that of possessing His very Life. The basis of union with God is that God’s own Life is given to us in new birth, and upon that God builds everything, on that He counts for everything. Where that is not, God can do nothing so far as union is concerned.

In order to reach and realize all God’s thought, God must put Himself into man in the very essence of His being, His very Life. God cannot realize spiritual, eternal, universal intentions on the basis of natural life. The Scriptures make it very clear that man’s own natural life can never be the basis of the realization of any of God’s purposes, that God’s own Life alone can be that. Thus for all His hopes God first of all provides His own basis. God’s hope is in His own Life, not in ours, and He puts the basis of His hope within at new birth, and on that basis He proceeds to the development of all His thought, and the realization of all His intention.

From: The Power of His Resurrection - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001164.html

July 1

Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead. (2 Corinthians 1:9)

We shall not be able to raise ourselves any more than we can crucify ourselves, but we must recognize that the Lord’s dealings with us are with that in view. In order to display the power of His resurrection, He will very often have to take the attitude toward us of letting things get well beyond all human power to remedy or save, of allowing things to go so far that there is no other power in all the universe that can do anything whatever to save the situation. He will allow death, disintegration to work, so that nothing, nothing in the universe is of any avail, except the power of His resurrection.

We shall come to the place where Abraham came, who became the great type of faith which moved right into resurrection: “He considered his own body now as good as dead” (Rom. 4:19). That is the phrase used by the apostle about Abraham: “as good as dead.” And Paul came into that: “We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead” (2 Cor. 1:9). Whatever else men may be able to do in the realm of creation, they stop short when death has actually taken place; they can do no more. Resurrection is God’s act,

and God's alone. Men can do very many things when they have got life, but when there is no life it is only God who can do anything. And God will allow His Church and its members oft-times to get into such situations as are altogether beyond human help, in order that He may give the display, which is His own display, in which no man has any place to glory.

From: Bethany – The Lord's Thought for His Assembly

www.austin-sparks.net/english/000422.html

July 2

This is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11)

Christ is never proved to be alive from the dead, nor to be Lord, by doctrinal statements. Your statement of faith may include the fact that you believe Jesus died and rose again, ascended to heaven, and is at the right hand of the Majesty on High, but how are you going to prove your statement? What has God given as the evidence of that? You may believe it; you may be willing to lay down your life for that faith; you may state it with tremendous emphasis, and yet you are not thereby proving it. You will never prove anything by saying: "I believe with all my might that this is the case!" You will never prove a thing by standing up and declaring it as something which you believe. You will never prove a thing by saying: "I believe in all the fundamentals of the Christian faith!" and calling yourself by some name which indicates that you believe in the inspiration of the Bible. Nothing is ever proved in that way. Reducing the whole matter to these two points – that Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead, and is Lord of all – you have still to prove your statement after you have made it. If you have appealed to the fact that the Word of God says so, even then you have proved nothing. Your proof can never be by argument, because what argument can build up argument can pull down, and what logic can construct, logic can destroy.

How, then, are you going to prove that this is so? By the expression and manifestation of His risen Life, that is all – but it is a mighty "all"! That signifies that you are the embodiment of the thing which you declare – that besides the doctrinal statement there is the living expression. Thus the resurrection and the Lordship of Jesus are bound up with this expression which is called the "testimony." The testimony is not a system of truth. It is that extra factor to the statement and presentation of truth which is the power of a Life which conquers death. How, then, will you prove that Jesus has conquered death? The proof of it will be a death-conquering Life that expresses itself in you.

From: The Battle For Life - Chapter 5

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000706.html

July 3

I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. (Ephesians 3:14,15)

God is acting in this dispensation to get a Family, and God's present dispensational activity is not going to be defeated by death, and He is not going to be cheated of it by death. He will get a Family, and will cheat death of that Family. It is not God, Infinite and Mighty, as such, it is the Father; and it is a deathless Family that He is after. This Family is never divided by death, this Family is never broken into by death, this Family knows no such thing as bereavement by death, this Family will never lose a child by death. Of course, as the Family, when we enter into the appreciation of that, that is our comfort: that in this Family we do not lose anyone. Death may touch things here, but the spiritual Family is no more separated in the spiritual reality and in the eternal oneness of the Father's house, than they would be if they were still here. It is the natural, human side of us that suffers the loss and knows all that pain. But what is the comfort of the believer? We sorrow not as those who have no hope. What is our hope? Because we have a Father who has got a Family that can never be broken up by death and never lose a member by death. Our hope is that the whole Family will be together with not one missing. The hope is that we have not lost any. Ours it is to be together forever. "*The whole family in heaven and on earth...*" That is a part of the meaning of Fatherhood, and that is what the Father is doing in this dispensation; getting that kind of Family.

The mentality of "God" is sometimes severe. We can never have a severe mentality in the right atmosphere of "the Father." All these things have to be brought into that realm; the Lord's dealings with us now are the dealings of the Father and are along the family line. That is what is happening in this dispensation.... The revelation above all revelations of God in the history of the world is the revelation in which we are now living; the revelation of the Father, brought to us by the Son, Jesus Christ. In future when we say "Our Father" may it have a fuller meaning for us.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002863.html

July 4

To me, to live is Christ. (Philippians 1:21)

I wonder very often if the fact that our tremendous knowledge about Christ, our tremendous doctrinal apprehension, failing to lead us into triumphant joy, failing to result in something of this contagious spirit of triumph that was about Paul, does not imply that it is something which is

not Christ personally with which we are occupied and taken up. We are getting to know Christ purely by a book knowledge, and a Conference knowledge, an address knowledge, an historic knowledge; that really, apart from our Conferences, our books, our studies, our addresses, and all these things; in the secret place, in the secret history back of it all, we are not living on Christ Himself, and out from Christ, and knowing Christ. So much of our Christian life is a matter of teaching, of things about Him.

We recognise the simplicity of that word, but we are quite sure that you understand what we mean, because you have known a very great deal about Christ in doctrine, and then you have discovered something of the Lord Himself, and you have discovered the tremendous difference. There is nothing more uplifting than to come into a personal experience of the Lord, a knowledge of the Lord, in a living way, to have Christ ministered to your heart by the Holy Spirit. Then you discover that there is something there which is more than all your suffering, and which makes suffering worthwhile, and which robs suffering of its deadly sting. It is Christ. Paul lived on Christ: "For me to live is Christ." Now, what might have been put afterward? For me to live is to be able to go to meetings! For me to live is to be able to have fellowship with other believers! If I am cut off from them I cannot live! If I cannot go to the meetings I cannot live! You can put in anything else: For me to live is to have encouragement in the work, to see results for my labours! You can cover a great deal of ground, if you are going to cover the ground of our demands in order to be triumphant. But Paul looked out, and he saw his work being injured, damaged, outwardly destroyed, his old friends being alienated and led to doubt and suspect him. Oh, he saw enough to take the heart out of any man at the end of such a life, but he did not say: "for me to live is to see my life work standing as a monument, intact; to have all my old friends faithful and around me; to know that my message has had universal acceptance and appreciation!" No! "For me to live is (when all these things, and many others, have gone) Christ!"

From: The Excellency of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003542.html

July 5

I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief! (Mark 9:24 NLT)

Here is something that you and I must dwell upon. Personally, I am constantly brought to this: I have not yet learnt thoroughly to believe what I believe in! I believe in the finished work of Christ, yet sometimes I am just as miserable about myself as any man could be. I am often almost at the point of giving up because of what a wretched kind of thing I am. If there is anything in this world that would cause me to give up the Christian ministry, it is myself. Do you understand what I mean? Oh, how we are

discouraged by what we find in ourselves! And so, we don't believe what we believe in. We believe in the finished work of Christ, and that God puts all that finished work to our account. God does not see us in ourselves – He sees us in Christ. He does not see us, He sees Christ in us. We don't believe that! If we really did we would be delivered from ourselves and would indeed be triumphant Christians. Of course, that does not mean that we can just behave anyhow.

We may speak and act wrongly, but for every Christian there is a refuge – a mercy seat. It has not to be made; it is there with the precious Blood. That has not to be shed; it is shed. There is a High Priest making intercession for us. There is everything that we need. The work is finished, completed. Oh, we Christians must believe our beliefs! We must take hold, with both hands, of the things which are of our Christian faith.

From: The On-High Calling - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000970.html

July 6

*Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was,
I am.” (John 8:58 ESV)*

The Lord's ability to crowd vast ranges into small phrases is amazing. He compasses the whole range of human need, and answers every heart cry in a simple sentence of two words: “*I am.*” I cry for resurrection, for Life, for something to happen, for a filling, a consciousness, a sensation, a movement, an energy, a “something.” The Lord's answer is, “*I am the resurrection and the Life at any moment, in My will, anywhere.*” Oh that we might live on that “any moment – anywhere” because of Him! He would woo us away from subjects, experiences, and teachings to propagate. Such a course has done much harm.

The people of God are divided into groups, larger or smaller, around some thing, some experience, some truth, and the all-embracing and all-uniting reality is lost. Away, then, with things, experiences, and truths, to Him. “This is life eternal, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” “Do you not understand? Who do you say that I am?” With a touch of Divine illumination in your heart you see the thing that you have known so long. Only the Lord can do that. That is the direction of inquiry. The Lord set our hearts on that.

From: Knowing God in Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003117.html

July 7

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:2)

Let any of our old man, whether of our old temper, our old way of judging, our old disposition, any of it come up at all, if we are children of God, we know quite well that at that point a barrier is set up and we cannot get past, we are held up in our spiritual life and we have to go back and have that thing cleared up. It is as real as any other thing in the universe to us. At that moment we stand still spiritually, and the flaming sword is across our path. There is no way for that here. Bring that here and you will be judged. You will meet the judgment of God. You will be broken. It is coming up against the fact that God finished with all that long ago and we have to accept God's standpoint. When we have accepted it then the thing works out, it continually works out. We take that position, we accept the truth. We cannot bring an actual end to the old creation ourselves, but we say in a positive way: "I reckon as God reckons." Well then, we shall find as we go on that God, having put all that under death, death rests upon it and if ever it shows its head again, the sentence of death is met. If we begin to work for the Lord with our own natural strength we meet death and before long our natural strength will come under death. If we begin to use our natural judgment in the things of God we shall meet an arrest and before long we shall come to a deadlock, unable to get through. Anything which we bring of nature into the things of God will bring us up against – not some new issue, but the old issue – death which was made to rest upon the old creation. In so far as we move in the newness of Life, work by the Spirit of God, and walk after the Spirit, death is done away and we are in Life and we can go on and can get through, no matter how much there may be of handicap and weakness in nature, we can get through as we go on in the Spirit. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death." We are free!

From: Foundations - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002124.html

July 8

*We were dead and buried with Him in baptism, so that just as He was raised from the dead by that splendid Revelation of the Father's power so we too might rise to life on a new plane altogether. If we have, as it were, shared His death, let us rise and live our new lives with Him!
(Romans 6:5 Phillips)*

In our union with Christ in His death, we cease and He begins, and from the beginning He becomes the All. That is a progressive thing, as well

as a basic thing. It is a thing all-inclusive in its meaning, in its intent, but it is also progressive. We have to accept the fullness of that thing in an act. We have to take the position quite definitely and consciously that now, in accepting our union with Christ in His death, this is to work out in our having no more place at all, and that whenever we come into evidence we shall be smitten, we shall be put aside, we shall not be allowed to go on. We have to accept that once for all in a definite act of commitment, that from henceforth everything that is of self is going to be smitten unsparingly with that Cross, and whenever self comes in it will not be allowed to have a standing.

We had better settle it once for all, and have a dealing with the Lord on that inclusive, comprehensive, and utter ground, that He will make His own meaning in that real; not our understanding of it, not our grasp or apprehension of it, not what we think to be the "I" which is to be forbidden, but what He knows to be the "I"; not the measure of our knowledge of ourselves, but His knowledge of us. There will be revealed a very great deal more that is "I" than has ever entered into our thought or imagination. Self, then, not as we know it, but as He knows it through and through, is to be brought under the power of that Cross, and this we accept in an act.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 11

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002226.html

July 9

I do know one thing. I used to be blind, but now I can see.

(John 9:25 GW)

If you and I were allowed to be perfectly satisfied with what we have got at any stage, and not to feel the absolute necessity for something we never have had, should we go on? Of course not! To keep us going on, the Lord has to bring about those experiences where it is absolutely necessary for us to see the Lord, and know the Lord in a new way, and it must just be so all the way along to the end. It may be a series of crises of seeing and seeing again, and yet again, as the Lord opens our eyes, and we are able to say, as never before, "I see!" So it is not our study, our learning, our book knowledge, but it is a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of our hearts being enlightened, and it is that seeing which brings the note of authority that is so much needed. That is the element, the feature, that is required today. It is not just seeing for seeing's sake, but it is to bring in a new note of authority.

Where is the voice of authority today? Where are those who are really speaking with authority? We are languishing terribly in every department of life for the voice of authority. The Church is languishing for want of a

voice of spiritual authority, for want of that prophetic note – “Thus saith the Lord!” The world is languishing for want of authority, and that authority is with those who have seen. There is far more authority in the man born blind seeing, in his testimony – “One thing I know that, whereas I was blind, now I see” – than there is in all Israel, with all Israel’s tradition and learning. And may it not be that that was the thing about the Lord Jesus that carried such weight, for “He spoke as One having authority, and not as the Scribes” (Matt. 7:29). The Scribes were the authorities. If anybody wanted an interpretation of the law, they went to the Scribes. If they wanted to know what the authoritative position was, they went to the Scribes. But He spoke as One having authority, and not as the Scribes. Wherein lay that authority? Just that in all things He could say, “I know! It is not what I have read, what I have been told, or what I have studied that is with power, but this – I know! I have seen!”

From: Spiritual Sight - Chapter 1

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001059.html

July 10

Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. (Ephesians 4:15 NIV)

We know of many children of God who have been the Lord’s children for years and they have been working for the Lord many of them, and yet they have come to a standstill; they have come under an arrest. Why? Well in some way, at some point, somehow, something of themselves, their old self has come up, has come into evidence, and has come into the way. It may be some of their old mind, some of their old will, some of their old affections, desires and feelings. They are in their own way somehow. They are in the Lord’s way. What is needed is not that they should die again, but that they should come to accept their once-for-all death in Christ in relation to whatever that may be that has come up, and let it go and be set free from that law of sin and death. “Repentance from dead works.” That is exactly what the apostle is saying to these Hebrews: “You have come to a standstill. You simply ceased to go on. You went so far, now you have got to a certain point and for years you have not budged a bit from that position. You have never got past foundations, you are not going on to full growth. You have not settled it once and for all that you died when Christ died. You ended the whole system and order of the old creation religiously and otherwise when you came to Christ. Christ is the end of the law and Christ is the end of the old creation, and He is the beginning of everything new. Do not be wearied at repetition of old truths, they are very important as foundations, and this is foundational.” We are destined, whether we now accept it or not, whether we like it or not, we are destined to discover that God’s foundation stands. This is true, and no one

will ever get through in relation to God and His things while still bound by the old creation, on the old creation level. This new way of Life is so narrow that we cannot take ourselves into it, we have to leave ourselves behind.

From: Foundations - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002124.html

July 11

Let us then be eager to know this rest for ourselves, and let us beware that no one misses it through falling into the same kind of unbelief as those we have mentioned. (Hebrews 4:11 Phillips)

Those who failed to go in failed, it says, to enter into His rest. Those to whom the Gospel was afore preached failed to enter in. That is remarkable! The Gospel was preached to them. These are they to whom the Gospel was afore preached. What is the Gospel? To answer the inquiry in that connection, it is Christ as our Rest. That is the Gospel: and the Gospel of Christ as our Rest was preached to them in type, and they to whom the Gospel was afore preached failed to enter in. Then, says the Apostle, “Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest, that no man fall after the same example of disobedience.” They failed! God set forth another day, saying, “Today if ye shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts....” The Gospel is preached to believers to enter into His Rest. The Lord Jesus put this in the germ form of truth when He said: “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Christ in heaven is our spiritual Rest, heart rest.

What is the essence of rest? It is satisfaction and assurance. If you are satisfied, you are at rest, no matter how much work you have to do. And if you are quite sure that your work is going to be successful, you have assurance, and you are in rest. Everything for us is based upon Christ having entered as the Forerunner, and having become our Rest. We shall labor: we shall pour ourselves out; we shall spend; we shall be spent; but in it all there can be real heart rest. We shall be assailed: we shall be pressed on every side; we shall be cast down; we shall be tried; but Christ can still remain our Rest: for in the first place, we know that these things are not going to be to our destruction, since He has destroyed the power of destruction; and, in the second place, that our labors are not in vain, because He has swallowed up death victoriously. He is our Rest.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002212.html

July 12

I wrote to you out of great sorrow and anguish of heart – along with many tears – not to make you sad but to let you know how much love I have for you. (2 Corinthians 2:4 ISV)

There is nothing that is precious to the Lord, and which He would make the property of His people, but there will be suffering for it. It will only become their property – in that sense – as they suffer for it, and then woe betide who criticizes that! If you are detached from a thing, if you are detached from a testimony, from a work of God, you can do all the criticizing you like. You have no inward heart-relationship to it, and so you pass your judgments upon it. But if you are in it and you have suffered, if it has been a costly thing where you are concerned, then you are seeing more than all the failings, more than all those faults. The people who can criticize like that and judge and point out faults are the people who have not suffered.

On the other side, we may know all the terms, all the phraseology, all the doctrine, all the truth, and it may be just objective, something we have heard; we have lived in the midst of it, it is familiar to us. But what the Lord will do if that is to become ours is to take us into travail over the matter. He will relate that thing to our hearts in a deep, inward way, so that none of us will be able to say, “I know all about that, I have heard all about that, I could tell you all that you could tell me about that.” The Lord would so work in a costly, deep and painful way in relation to that, to make it ours through travail, that we are brought into a new position.

We are not spectators, looking on, criticizing; we are on the inside, looking out, defending. We are jealous over it. Suffering is a great purifying thing. It destroys selfishness. It destroys that self-interest that is the cause of so much of the trouble. It makes us in a disinterested way jealous for what is of God. Yes, suffering purifies, and suffering makes this deep, inward link. It gives an extra feature to things. That extra feature where we cannot just be occupied with faults and be people of a criticizing attitude, the extra feature with a love which covers a multitude of sins. We have suffered together. When we suffer together, what a lot we get over!

From: The Eternal Reward of Labor and Suffering
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002012.html

July 13

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people both now and forevermore.

(Psalm 125:1,2 NIV)

Mountains? And the Lord like the mountains? What is that? It is fortification, it is strength, it is protection. And what is the point of fortification if there is nothing against which to be fortified? Away back in Old Testament times, when the people came into the land, the remarkable thing is that they occupied the higher places more than the lower. You will find that their towns, cities and villages are almost all of them upon some high place; the reason being that their enemies, who had chariots and horses, had their strength on the level, in the plain, but they could do nothing with chariots and horses against mountains. And therefore the safety, security and fortification of the Lord's people was by being on high places.

That is a parable. If the enemy can get you on to his level he has beaten you. So he must pull you down, he must get you down, he must get you to accept something less than God's full place and mind for you, and then he will undo you. That is what he has done with the church, speaking of the church now in very general terms. He has pulled it down to this world level; he has reduced it to the level of things here, and he has absolutely disintegrated it, broken it up and divided it and robbed it of its power. The church which is revealed to us in the New Testament is always on high ground... In Ephesians, it is "in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." It is a great power to be on high ground, it is a great defensive, protective factor; the enemy can do little with you if you keep up there and refuse to come down. Nehemiah found that to be so, when they said, "Come down and let us confer"; and he said, "I am doing a great work so that I cannot come down" (Neh. 6:3). It is a principle operating.

From: The Mountains Around Jerusalem - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003266.html

July 14

I have come to set the world on fire, and I wish it were already burning! Do you think I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I have come to divide people against each other! (Luke 12:49,51 NLT)

If you and I are going to be men and women of the Spirit, we are not going to have an easy time. Hell will see to that. At once the clash arises and it is true that the more the Holy Spirit is able to have His way in us and to lead us into all the will of God, the more we find this opposition, this

antagonism. And it not only comes between us and the world, it sometimes comes in the circle of the Lord's own people. It is inevitable provocation. You wonder why, sometimes. As you read the New Testament you wonder, "What is the matter with these people? Why should they be so upset and so annoyed? And why should it be so spontaneous, this thing? And persistent; so unreasonable?" but there it is. There is the fact. It is inevitable.

You see, this thing that the Lord came to do and is doing, will not allow for any neutrality. It is going to be one thing or the other. It is going to be for or against. The eyes of flame (here the fire comes in again) the eyes of flame will not allow lukewarmness or anything that is of the Laodicean character. The fire is a positive element always, and it will create positive situations. If everything is all just nice and quiet, no disturbance, no trouble and no antagonism and opposition, you have reason to question whether the Holy Spirit is doing much, because He does aim at such a positiveness, which is a very, very costly thing. It is either with the Lord, or not with the Lord, and there is nothing between. It is going to come out sooner or later and be precipitated. Now, the Lord says that is what He came to do. This is not an accident, a chance or things having gone wrong or miscarried. This is exactly what He came to do – to scatter fire on the earth and these are the inevitable effects of the fire. They are going to work out.

From: The Cross and the Way of Life - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002845.html

July 15

We have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. (2 Corinthians 5:16 NLT)

The first and primary thing is the absolute necessity for knowing one another after the Spirit. "*The love of Christ constrains us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him*"; "*Henceforth know we no man after the flesh.*" That means that as far as we can see, we have not made what we are by nature the final basis of our relationships, of our expectations, of our judgments, of our appraisals, of our valuations. It does not mean that we are oblivious of one another's human nature. It does not mean that what we are in the flesh never strikes us; that we are to be totally insensible to the defects of one another's nature. No! We shall always be sensitive. It is probably true that the more spiritual we are, the more sensitive we become to what we are by nature and to what others are by nature. Perhaps we shall suffer all the more because of the defects and imperfections, the strengths and the weaknesses of one another naturally.

Men of the world have but a very, very minute degree of the difficulty that Christians have of getting on with one another. They seem to be able to ignore and ride over one another's difficult parts and make-up. It seems that Christians are much more alive to that sort of thing than others, and are touched by it more keenly. Of course, we can explain that along two lines. If we become spiritually sensitive the flesh is sensed very much more quickly; what is not spiritual registers itself upon spiritual sensitiveness. There is also the fact that we have an adversary to reckon with who is always seeking to make a lot of the imperfections and brings them up and hits us with them. He is at work in this matter of seeking to upset the relationships of the Lord's people. He never tires of that. Not knowing one another after the flesh does not mean that all that realm will cease to exist for us, but it does mean that we shall look beyond that realm and we shall steadily seek grace and the help of the Holy Spirit to cultivate and develop a determination to look through what we are by nature to what there is of the Lord Jesus and of the Holy Spirit in one another, and keep our eyes upon that.

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 10
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002866.html

July 16

*With man this is impossible,
but with God all things are possible. (Matthew 19:26)*

There are two ways of viewing the impossible. Everything depends upon where you put the impossibility – on the thing or on God. The things which are not possible with men are possible with God (Matt. 19:26). And He answers these impossible things in the normal way – for it is the normal way; the abnormal would be by signs and wonders and extraordinary happenings: demonstrations to our senses; but the normal way in the Christian life is the way of the continuous transcendence of His Life over the working of death. That miracle is far more general than we recognize. You have to live your life and do your work in a sphere of spiritual death where everything is against spiritual Life, and there is nothing to support you at all, and yet you go on there in the Lord, and are not swallowed up, engulfed and destroyed by that atmosphere and by those conditions. That is the miracle of Divine Life working silently. Yours, then, is a life – as is the life of everyone – set in the presence of the great stone of death, spiritual death. We know it, and yet we are preserved alive spiritually and we go on. That is the great miracle. It is the miracle of every day. That is the testimony that God raised Him from the dead....

In the resurrection of the Lord Jesus – or let me put it this way – in union with the risen Christ our hopes are far greater than all our worldly hopes. We may in His death have to lay our treasure in the dust, we may

have to let go much that is very precious to us of hope and expectation and ambition and outlook. Our world may have to be placed with the stones of the brook (Job 22:24). In resurrection union with Christ something more is given back than what we formerly wanted. God is like that. You may say that is language and sounds very beautiful, but is it true? Well, I appeal to those of you who have any spiritual Life and history at all. You have doubtless gone through a time of deep and dark trial in which you have had to hand everything over – you have come to a crisis where you have had to place on the altar something that was very precious and let it go to the Lord. If the Lord has not given that back to you, have you not come into some spiritual wealth, some spiritual good, something more in a spiritual way that makes you say, “Well, it was worth it!”? The answer of God through the Cross to all disappointed hopes and expectations is, and in the very nature of God must be, something more than that which was laid in the grave. It is the very principle of Christ risen. He was a far greater Christ in resurrection than He was before – if I may put it like that without being misunderstood.

From: The Problem of the Stone
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002118.html

July 17

*I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me.
Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ.
(Galatians 1:12 NLT)*

For strength to overcome and press on, only a revelation by the Holy Spirit in us can suffice – but it can! A revelation that is within one's spirit and not a mental appreciation of truth, even though it is truth about God. Oh, the power to be able to say “I KNOW,” not “I have heard or read,” but “I KNOW.” It is an experience nothing can rob us of. It is absolutely essential to have this revelation by the Holy Spirit because we have to meet forces of evil against which nothing can stand save that which is of God. “In pressure Thou hast enlarged me.” How? Because of the constant uprising of the *Life* within. Trouble, trial, sorrow... we are subject to these things, they are common to all men, but we rise above them through the “strength of His might” within. We are strong because of the Light given in the knowledge of God – Eph. 1:19. This is a growing revelation. Paul is writing to the Ephesian saints, and what a wonderful history these had! See Paul’s words to them in parting (Acts 20:17-38). To such he says, “That ye may be strengthened to apprehend,” showing the necessity for the mighty power of God in bringing through revelation. The enemy mightily withstands revelation; to mar or hinder that, he’ll stop at nothing!

Light and Strength go together; endurance is by revelation, “I know.” Establishment in the truth by revelation of the truth, this brings an impact

on Satan and his hosts; light leading to might. When the Lord opens eyes you see what happens, “the eyes of your heart being enlightened, *that ye may know*” this is the result of opened eyes. “Knowing that He that raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus” – 2 Cor. 4:14.

From: The Cross and the City of God - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002924.html

July 18

You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? (Galatians 5:7 ESV)

Something had broken in and interrupted their running in the spiritual race. This was extremely serious and disturbed Paul to the depths of his being. It seems that in the case of the Galatians it was again the natural man, but this time in the realm of natural emotions. They seem to have been of that temperamental constitution which corresponds to Christ’s words in the parable about seed falling into shallow soil. The seed was received quickly and earnestly, but did not go on to produce a harvest. There are some people who make an enthusiastic start in this way and make quite a stir about it, but then do not go steadily on. These Galatians were like that; they made a tremendous response; they loudly protested their devotion; and then they were very quick to drop out of the race. Why? Because they lived on their emotions, on their feelings, and these were changeable. This may well be a matter of temperament, but in fact something of such a characteristic can be found in most of us. We respond to an appeal, come under the power of a great emotion, and then slack off. In the words of the Lord Jesus: “When tribulation or persecution ariseth... he is offended” (Matthew 13:21).

Clearly, then, if you and I are going to persevere to the end we must have a greater power than that of our natural emotional life. The only hope is that it may be true of us, as of Paul: “The love of Christ constraineth” (2 Corinthians 5:14). There is all the difference between the natural and the spiritual in this matter of the energy of love. This word translated “constraineth” is the same one used over the arrest of Jesus when it says: “the men that held Jesus” (Luke 22:63). So it is that the love of Christ should hold or grip us, conquering our natural emotions by the mighty power of the Spirit.

Our feelings come and go. They may be strong at times but they can also grow very weak. If we do not know something of the mighty grip of Christ’s love, we will never go right through to the end of this strenuous race. After all it is the love of Christ which makes for the fullness of Christ. If we finally come to that fullness it can only be by the constraint and holding power of His love. “Ye were running well: who did hinder you?”

The answer is, “You ran in the strength of your own emotions, you ran as your enthusiastic response to God’s call because it affected your feelings for the time.” The letter to the Galatians is devoted to emphasizing the place of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, for He alone can supply the necessary energy of love for us to go on running well.

From: God’s Purpose in All - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002968.html

July 19

“Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” The words “once more” indicate the removing of what can be shaken – that is, created things – so that what cannot be shaken may remain.
(Hebrews 12:26-27 NIV)

The fact is that, while certain things characterized the New Testament churches, the New Testament does not give us a complete pattern according to which churches are to be set up or formed! There is no blueprint for churches in the New Testament, and to try to form New Testament churches is only to create another system which may be as legal, sectarian and dead as others. Churches, like the Church, are organisms which spring out of Life, which Life itself springs out of *the Cross of Christ wrought into the very being of believers.*

This brings us to our particular point. What is the pressing imperative in view of this oncoming flood of testing, which has already carried away very many of those who were called Christian, and even evangelical Christians? Surely there is only one answer:– On the one hand, a ministry which has as its substance and object the “rooting and grounding,” the establishing, the building up of believers, and the real increase of “the measure of Christ.” This must get behind evangelism, so that the work is deep, not superficial; enduring, not transient; intrinsic, not general! On the other hand, believers must really take stock of their Christianity. Is it just a tradition, an assumption, an external system, the thing which is common acceptance – more or less? Or is it really “by revelation of Jesus Christ” in the heart? A real walk with God, and a growing knowledge of Christ, a life in the Spirit? God has said it: the things which can be shaken will be. What have we got that, being unshakable, will remain?

From: Editor’s Letter, Nov-Dec 1952
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002091.html

July 20

May He equip you with all you need for doing His will. May He produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to Him. (Hebrews 13:21 NLT)

So long as we are in line with God's purpose His work can go on in us. What matters is not first of all our activity. God is more concerned with what is done in us than what we do for Him. He often reaches His end with us much better when we are in a state of inactivity than in times of much work. The hand of the Potter was upon Moses when he was in the wilderness where he could not do much. During forty years he was just looking after a few sheep. That is not very grand. No doubt he wondered sometimes to what purpose he was there, whether his life had any value. But principalities and powers saw something and wondered at God's wisdom. God knew how to equip this man, how to get His way in that life. That is true in the case of many a servant of God. God is working for good, He is shaping His vessel. There is wisdom in all His dealings with us. But we have to see to it that we have no plans or personal ambitions of our own. The clay has to be completely in His hands. If we are really here for God, we can be assured that He will reach His end, that He may work out His purpose in us. And there we shall find strength.

Are you sure you are in the great purpose of God? Everybody has some part in it. Paul, when speaking of the church, illustrates it thus: "*that all the body is fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplies.*" No part of the body is without function. Each and every one has to be in God's purpose. Some parts may be very small, they nevertheless are equally important. We have to remember that God has called us for a purpose which will be realized as we abandon ourselves to Him. Whatever it may be to which He has called us, let us be ready and do it. A Holy Spirit possessed life is always marked by purpose. Nothing can be lost in such a life; let us not believe in mere generalities. That is not good enough. There is something far more definite in God's thoughts for our lives. Let us abandon all personal desires, and be filled with the Spirit of urgency — "straight away." Those who know that they are called of God, and who definitely recognize the purpose of their life, will be wholly given up to it. Such no longer have any interest for the things of this earth. They have no time to lose. They must buy up their time.

From: Christ Our All - Chapter 10
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002942.html

July 21

To those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. (John 1:12,13 NIV)

What, in the thought of God do Christians exist for? What does the Church exist for? There is only one answer. The existence and the function is to be an expression of Christ. There is nothing less and nothing more than that. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, and all between! Let that be the starting point; let that be the governing rule and reality in *all matters* of life and work, and see at once the nature and vocation of the Church. This vast, incomprehensible heavenly system, of which Christ is the personal embodiment, touches every detail of life, personally and collectively. But remember only the Holy Spirit sees and knows how it is so; hence, as at the beginning, there has to be an utter submission to and direction by the Lordship of the Holy Spirit. What the bloodstream is to the human body, the Divine Life is to and in “the Church which is His body.” What the nerve system is in the physical realm, the Holy Spirit is in the spiritual. Understand all the workings of those two systems in the natural, and you begin to see how God has written His great heavenly principles, first in the person of His Son, and then in His corporate Body.

As an individual believer is the result of a begetting, a conception, a formation, a birth and a likeness, so, in the New Testament, is a true local church. It is a reproduction of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Man cannot make, form, produce or “establish” this. Neither can anyone “join” or “enroll,” or make himself or herself a member of this organism. First it is an embryo, and then a “formation” after Christ. So, all talk about “forming New Testament churches” is nonsense. The beginning is in a seeing of Christ.

From: According to Christ - 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000718.html

July 22

The Jewish leaders began harassing Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules. But Jesus replied, “My Father is always working, and so am I.” (John 5:16-17 NLT)

A true knowledge of the Lord Jesus will reverse a good many of our ideas, and a good many of our procedures. A true knowledge of Christ and union with Christ, with all that that means, will make us go to work in entirely the opposite way from that in which we have been accustomed to go. We shall come to be governed by this one consideration, that it is not what we would do for the Lord, but what the Lord would do through us,

that is alone to rule. It is a very testing way. You can hardly believe, unless you have been the same way, how often and intensely and bitterly the enemy fights and tempts you to come down on to a lower position, and to take up things again for God and launch big schemes, enter upon big undertakings, set up some thing on the earth that can be seen, because all those who are governed by that standard of things seen have said: "You see, you are doing nothing! Show us what you are doing! You cannot show us anything for it all!" Satan does work on that line. To the flesh that is not easy. To go on with God and have nothing to show for it, never to be able to have the work written up in the papers, to publish no reports, nor statistics, and yet to know in your heart of hearts that, although it is hidden, something is going on, and that you cannot do otherwise than you are doing, is far from being a path of ease to the flesh.

It is a testing way, but, blessed be God, if we do endure the testing and go on patiently with Him, in His time, when that flesh has been finally laid low; when the voice of natural ambition is no longer sounding and having influence, and we are now utterly at the place where if things are not going to be of the Lord then there is not going to be anything at all, the Lord has a free way, and He is able to indicate that all the time something has been going on. He shows how He has been at work, and how that in time there will be manifested a work of God, a work that shall have such a large percentage of spiritual value and meaning in it that you are very glad, after all, that you walked with God and not with men in the work of God.

From: The Meaning of Divine Life - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002998.html

July 23

I am able to do nothing from Myself. (John 5:30 AMP)

You get to the heart of everything in the case of the Lord Jesus when you recognize that the one question which constituted the testing ground of His life was: "Will this Man act alone, speak alone, choose alone, decide alone, move alone?" And His answer was always, "Not out from Myself!" "The Son can do nothing out from Himself." "The words that I speak unto you I speak not out from Myself." Every kind of appeal was made to Him to persuade Him on the impulse of the moment, or in response to an entreaty that seemed to promise success, or by an argument that appeared to be the truest wisdom, to move, act, speak, do something as out from Himself....

At times the suggestion would be influenced by necessity of circumstances, at times by the promise of effectiveness in His service, or again by representation of the utter un-wisdom of the line that He was taking, as when His own brethren, who did not believe in Him, chided Him

for delay, saying, “Go up to Jerusalem and show yourself!” To them He said, “I go not yet up to this feast!” And then, so quickly after, when His brethren were gone up He went up also. But He would not go up at the persuasion of popular reason; He would not do this merely because it was the thing which everybody else was doing, or because it was urged upon Him that, since everybody was going to the feast, He ought to go too. That ninety-nine people do a thing is no argument for the hundredth to do it. We are not to be led by the appeals that decide the actions of the many – “It is the popular thing! Everybody else is doing it! It is the recognized thing to do!” No! Does my Father want me to do this thing? That is the question that must ever rule our steps. In the case of the Lord Jesus there was all the time an underworking to get Him to adopt the contrary course, to act without inquiry of His Father, without direct leading from His Father; to act in His individual capacity as though He were His own Master, as though He had not to make appeal elsewhere. In Him there was none of that which was personal, independent. We are not speaking merely of such things as are sinfully personal, positively personal, but simply of independent action, action taken for the best ends, for a good motive, with quite a proper intention. Yes, all this may be done, but apart from the positive word from the Father. That creates an independent thought, however good may be the motive.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002218.html

July 24

*Shun (keep clear away from, avoid by flight if need be)
any sort of idolatry (of loving or venerating anything more than God).
(1 Corinthians 10:14 AMP)*

There are many things which are not only harmless but good in themselves, which have, nevertheless, been allowed to take the place of the Lord Himself, and good things can therefore embody the principle of idolatry in the one in whom the devotion is found. Touch some Christians, or Christian institutions, and let the touch be even in relation to something more of the Lord Himself, and you will find an uprising of jealous regard for the institution which utterly blinds to that possibility of an extra measure of the Lord Himself. You can be so devoted to a denomination, a missionary society, a piece of Christian work, that there is no room for any extra measure of the Lord. The thing itself has become the end, the object for which you live, and when the Lord wants to get you moved on into something more of Himself, the obstacle is that good Christian work, association, institution, tradition, connection. Yes, and that is idolatry in principle, and we see from history how the Lord again and again has had to

smite with smashing blows things which in themselves were good, in order to save His people unto Himself personally....

What is He after? It is Himself which He is seeking to establish as the object of man's life, and not the things that have relation to Himself: and I say again, you meet something intensely fierce if you touch a thing, even though you are touching it maybe with a view to getting people to move on with the Lord Himself. To put that in the other way, if your appeal for moving on with the Lord seems to people to involve their having to move away from this or that or some other thing, then there is warfare; which shows that Satan in his eternal campaign of idolatry, has got a footing amongst Christians in relations to things which take the place of the Lord Himself, good things though they be in themselves; and you find, if you are spiritually sensitive, that you are not just encountering the established institutions, but you are encountering a terrific spiritual force. Is that true? It is true. Had I never come up against it, never would I have believed the terrific force there is lying behind Christian institutions if your ministry touches them. You meet something which turns upon you, and it is not just the thing or the people. It is something that threatens your very life, to slay, and this in principle and essence, beloved, is idolatry; because its ultimate effect is that even the Lord cannot have what His heart is set upon and get His people spiritually where He wants them, because they are so bound up with His things. They are not able to discriminate between His things and Himself.

From: The Cross, the Church, and the Conflict - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001853.html

July 25

The Most High does not live in houses made by men. (Acts 7:48 NIV)

Christianity has become a tremendous buildup of things which were not at the beginning. The Christianity which we know today is a very complicated thing. The hands of men have come upon the things of God, and men have tried to build this great thing according to their own judgment. And so we have all the confusion, all the divisions, and all the complications. It is really hard going in Christianity. Christianity has become its own great hindrance.... You will go about this country, you will go about this city, and you will see these great religious buildings with a cross at the top. And when people enter those buildings, they bow themselves; they look very reverent. And they think that this is a sacred building. If you interfere with anything there, it is called sacrilege. To God that is all nonsense. It does not mean anything at all. The only thing that matters to God is not the wonderful building and all the wonderful things inside the building, and not even the cross on the top. The one thing that matters to God is whether He is there. Is God Himself present in this place?

But what about ourselves, we hear Christians who come into a meeting like this speaking about coming into the house of God. Perhaps they say when they are going to this meeting place, "I am going to the house of God." And when they pray, they say, "We are very glad to be in the house of God this morning; it is a good thing to be in the Lord's house." What makes any place the house of God? What makes this place sacred? If it is sacred at all, what makes it sacred? It is not the building, this is not a sacred building. It is not a congregation gathered here. The only thing that makes it sacred is that the Lord is present. The Lord is not interested in our places or in our congregations; He is only concerned that He may find a place for Himself where He may be present in pleasure. I wonder where the tabernacle in the wilderness is now? I expect it is buried somewhere deep under the earth. I wonder where the great temple of Solomon is now?! I think you would be wasting your time to try and find it. You see, God had buried those things.... Everything that is not of Christ is going to be dissolved. Make no mistake. This whole structure of Christianity is going to be tested according to Christ. Christianity is just going to be tested as to how far it was the work of the Holy Spirit of God according to Christ.

From: "That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One" - Meeting 9
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001076.html

July 26

In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ. (Colossians 2:9,10 NIV)

We have said that Christ is a heavenly revelation, but Christ is also a heavenly fullness. If God has revealed His mind, His thought in Christ; if all that God intended has been brought to us in a personal revelation: God has followed that up by the fullest provision in Christ for its realization and its attainment. So that every need of ours is supplied according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. In Christ there is not only a standard set, but every kind of provision for attaining to God's standard. All the secret resources of God to reach His end are there in Christ for us. If He has come out with the mind of God in fullness, He has also come out with the resources of God in fullness. All the fullness dwells in Him, and we are made full in Him (Col. 2:9). God could never judge us at the end by His standard of revelation if He had not made all provision for our realizing of that standard....

God's thought is centered in Christ in heaven, and God's resources are centered in Christ in heaven. That means that the Lord's people in this dispensation are essentially a heavenly people, and that means that it is quite impossible to attain unto God's thought or to know God's resources in Christ until we are a heavenly people. If in any way (and we are speaking to the Lord's people now, and speaking of the life which we

would call the Christian life), or in any measure we are earthbound, it will be in that measure impossible to attain unto God's thought, and to know God's resources. God only takes responsibility to supply and to carry on that which is essentially heavenly, and in the measure in which a thing is heavenly, and only in that measure (but *surely* in that measure), God takes responsibility for it. If it is in any way linked with this world, becoming a part of this world system, related to this earth, it has got to take responsibility for itself to carry its own weight, to find its own resources, to see its own way through.

From: That Which Was From The Beginning - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002953.html

July 27

The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine. (Isaiah 9:2 NLT)

What a tremendous thing this breaking in of Light upon us is, how it lifts us out, how it fills us with glory, how it changes the outlook when there breaks in spiritual Light, Light which never was on land or sea, Light from above. And the Lord Jesus is the sum of that Divine Light. He is the Light. If only our eyes were opened to see the significance of the Lord Jesus, what a tremendous difference it would make, how we should be emancipated. The need is that: to see the Son of God as having vested in Him the prerogative of Divine Light-giving, because He is the Light. It is with Him to come right into our scene of darkness and drive the darkness out. That is His glory, and you can know the glory of the Son of God, you can worship Him, because your eyes are opened.

He is here. Just as He, being the resurrection and the Life, means resurrection at any moment, and not merely at the last day – you remember Martha said, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day,” and the Lord, in effect, said, “Stop, I am the resurrection and the Life, and I being here, the last day may be here so far as the resurrection is concerned; it is no time matter when I am present, it can be now!” So He, being here, there may be a new creation now with a new creation Light: not, I shall get light later on, but now; by this glorious intervention from without. The glory of Jesus Christ which He had with the Father before the world was, the glory of the Son is that; that He has this sole Divine prerogative, right, power and ability to bring Light. No one else can give it; it is not possible to attain unto that Light. It is His gift, it is His act. That is His glory.

From: Spiritual Sight - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001064.html

July 28

With God nothing is ever impossible and no word from God shall be without power or impossible of fulfillment. (Luke 1:37 AMP)

It seems that when the Lord Jesus chose His twelve disciples there was, at the back of the choice and back of the purpose of having a company of men always with Him – the intention of showing and expressing what the character of the Firstborn is so far as relationship to other members of the Family is concerned. To put that in another way: if we study the characteristics of the Lord Jesus in relation to His own when He was here on the earth, we have a good example of what family characteristics are in the thought of the Father. For instance, take the imperfections, the shortcomings, the weaknesses of the twelve and see what the attitude of the Lord Jesus was toward them. The Holy Spirit takes no pains to cover up those faults and those flaws. There is no attempt made whatever to present those men as an ideal group. Their picture is painted true to life and all the difficult lines are there – the bad and the good – and nothing unpleasant is hidden from view. None of the lines are taken out of their faces. They are all clearly seen. The Lord Jesus was not dealing with an easy company, but a company which might often have provoked despair. But one thing was characteristic of Him in relation to a difficult handful, and that was His faith for them.

What faith the Lord Jesus had for those men! It was not that He had faith in them, neither was it that He had faith for them because of what He saw in them; but He had infinite faith in the Father for them. His attitude was: “Well, nothing is impossible with God. Here are these men; they are difficult and they could easily be My despair; they never seem to understand what I say! They always seem to get the wrong interpretation; they always seem to miss the point. When I say a thing they get it from an altogether wrong angle; they are utterly materialistic in their outlook, in their expectation and in their desires. They never see far beyond this world and their own personal interests. They seem totally incapable of getting a spiritual conception. *And yet* the Father can do wonders with a handful of men like that; nothing is impossible.”

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 10
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002866.html

July 29

We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7 NIV)

All God's purpose, all that God means for us on that other side of the Cross in union with Christ risen and exalted absolutely demands

brokenness, complete brokenness, in all those concerned. Not just the brokenness of their pictures and outward hopes, but an inward brokenness. “*We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves*” (2 Cor. 4:7). The self-hood broken, broken vessels for heavenly eternal fullness.

The Cross is necessary for our breaking. It is not a pleasant note, I know, but in all faithfulness it must be said. This is the Lord’s word to you: that if you are not broken by the Cross, if you have not gone through an experience of real brokenness under the hand of God, all that the Lord means in you and through you will still be suspended, it will be impossible. If the Cross means one thing, it does mean that the Cross is the way to the glory and to heavenly fullness. It is the way of an inward breaking. Let me be very precise, because I know of different kinds of brokenness. I know the brokenness of disappointments, of disappointed hopes and expectations, but the kind of brokenness I am talking about is the brokenness of the self-hood, the strength of Self that holds its position and holds its ground and that will not let go. That is the kind of brokenness. This self-strength, whether it be intellectual and mental or whether it be emotional or whether it be in the will, that strength of the natural life has got to be broken as truly as the sinew of Jacob’s thigh had to be touched and withered. Something like that has to happen in us that we carry through the rest of our days. God has done something in the realm of our self-hood and we are broken men and women so far as self-sufficiency, self-assertiveness, self-confidence and every other form of Self is concerned. It must be.

From: The Testimony of the Christ - Chapter 9
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002988.html

July 30

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. (Colossians 2:8 NIV)

It is absolutely useless, dear friends, to refer to tradition and say, “Well, God did this in the beginning, and this is the place where the oracles of God are found and the temple of God is and the great tradition of Israel as the chosen people. It is here, and we rest on that.” No, tradition will not support now. History will not support now. Institutions will not support now. It seems as though God has no regard, at length, for temple or ark or altar or priesthood. He cries through the prophets: “*Away, away with you. I want none of your sacrifices*” Isaiah 58. What a chapter! “*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice.*” Then, what follows? “*Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways.*” “I will have none of it,” says the Lord. “I will have none of it. These are not the sacrifices I want. This ritual is not what I

am after. This traditional system is not what I desire. It is a spiritual state.” And only on that can the Lord associate Himself, ally Himself, to Zion....

If you look again at this letter to the Hebrews, you will see that we are come to Zion. We are not come to some thing, some religious thing, some tradition, we are not come to historic Christianity – if I may put it that way – we are come to a spiritual situation which is calculated to startle us. Oh, we say, “We are in the day of Grace. This is the dispensation of Grace.” True! Is the Letter to the Hebrews on any other ground than the ground of Grace? Surely not, but do you know that in this letter the most awful things in the Bible are written? *“How shall we escape (we, we escape, we Christians, we believers of this dispensation) how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? ...Our God is a consuming fire... it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.”* This is said to these people, these Christians; and other things like that are said. But I am pointing this out, that this letter is written in the day of Grace; and it is a day which brings into view not some new Christian system, not the formation of a new Christian tradition, but a spiritual condition, without which everything else is as nothing. You have come to Zion, yes, but you have come to the controversy of Zion. You have come, we have come, to the great battle of Zion; and it is a spiritual battle.

From: But Ye Are Come Unto Mount Zion - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001419.html

July 31

Adam’s one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ’s one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone. (Romans 5:18 NLT)

The whole subject of spiritual power is most important. So many Christians find themselves involved in a continual struggle to live up to what they know to be God’s standard. For them Christianity is a manner of life composed of various rules and regulations. They know what ought to be and what ought not to be, and they therefore struggle to attain to this level of living. Their consciences play a large part in this constant effort, and for this reason they suffer many fears and fail to experience the promised joys. Life for them has become a strenuous business, fraught with much disappointment and many failures. They may from time to time have a sense of attainment and success, with much resultant gladness, but with the fluctuating emotions of the soul, things seem to collapse and go all wrong. So it is that people find the Christian life burdensome; they long to know real victory, true deliverance and the joy of the Lord, whereas they experience the ups and downs of a constant struggle. The Christian life depicted in the New Testament seems so different from their actual experience that the devil is never slow to pounce in with his suggestions

that a life of constant victory is quite impossible, so that all their hopes are but unreal dreams. Satan wants God's people to despair of knowing His power. But there is an altogether different life, different because it is based on the entering into something already completed in Christ; not something to be attained to but rather that which has already been accomplished. It is not a standard to be lived up to, but a Person to be lived with. It is impossible to measure the vast difference between these two kinds of life. The former is one of self effort and defeat, while the other consists in enjoying the reality of Christ the power of God.

From: "Christ The Power of God"
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000633.html

August 1

*Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you; He will neither fail you nor abandon you.
(Deuteronomy 31:8 NLT)*

If we are seeking to go on with God to any degree beyond that which is commonly accepted as a true Christian life; if we are called to pioneer the way for any further advance in spiritual life or Divine service; if we are given a vision of God's will and purpose not seen by the general mass of God's people – or even the larger number of the servants of God – ours will be a lonely way. There are many other ways in which we may feel aloneness. It may be for geographical reasons; or it may be because of an inward experience through which we are passing; an experience or phase which cannot be shared by another, even the one closest to us. All these and other reasons may respectively become our "wilderness" in which Satan comes, and, while there is a basic occasion, his business is to push things into the extra realm of untruth and tell us that we *are* actually and utterly alone. It is not a rare thing for him to tell a child of God that God has left him or her.

Elijah verily believed that he was the only one left in faithfulness to God, and he repeated his plaint several times, "I only am left." He had lost sight of the possibility that the prophets reported by Obadiah to have been hidden might still be in that underground faithfulness, or some of them at least. But the Lord knew better and told him of seven thousand unsurrendering saints who would not capitulate to Jezebel or Baal. The fact is that what Elijah believed was positively not true. If we look at things horizontally we shall only see so far, but if we look from heaven we shall see much more.

From: Alone? – Not Alone!
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000646.html

August 2

*May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other
and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.
(1 Thessalonians 3:12 NIV)*

Love for those of our own company may not be so difficult. But the Word adds “and toward all men.” That goes deeper. I have of late felt more deeply and strongly than ever before the force of very familiar words – “Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up” (1 Cor. 8:1), and other words such as “maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love” (Eph. 4:16). If we are going to be affected by that which is present in other people, all those features in Christians and in Christian work and activity which are repugnant to us, we are going to close up and withdraw in heart and nothing is going to be done in the way of mutual helpfulness and edification. Again and again the very practical question arises – because of this or that which we meet in another can anything be done, is anything possible? And very often, in the acute consciousness of so much that appears on the surface, we have revolted against it; and then, going to the Lord about it and facing it out with Him, we have been enabled to go on, and something has happened and the Lord has wrought, and we have been surprised, and rebuked for our original offendedness. We have to look through all that to the heart, and be reminded every time that the Lord looks on the heart. We are looking on all this which is largely the result of ignorance, lack of proper teaching and so on, and this can offend us. But the Lord looks on the heart; He sees if there is something deep down under all these preponderances, if there is a real heart love for Himself, and He knows if this is really the endeavor to express that love.

There may be misapprehension, there may be ignorance, there may be other causes, but this which offends us is, on the part of those concerned, their way of showing their love for the Lord, and we must not be turned aside – we must get close to them and find what possibilities there are for the Lord. He is going on, He is not giving up; He is making all He possibly can of the least bit of heart love for Himself and for all men. The challenge of this is very practical and very searching for us.

From: Abounding in Love
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001722.html

August 3

*Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint.
(Proverbs 29:18 NIV)*

No one who knows anything about the present conditions will disagree with the statement that the Church is in tragic need of men with a

message, but our point is that what is needed is the knowledge of what *the* message is for the time. *That* message must come from God to men chosen for the purpose. This is not a ministry which can be taken up. Usually for such ministry there is a long and deep history with God, a history full of mystery and suffering. Many phases are passed through, all in the permissive will of God, or in His directive will, inasmuch as they are intended to educate and give experience, but the course is never that of the established and settled kind, and so big changes may be called for, each of which comes by a new spiritual crisis. No one can do anything in the making of such vessels, however much they may be concerned for them. This is God's work alone, and they have to be left in His hands....

Men of vision and courage! Yes, and more courage will be required here than in any other realm of which we know. A specific revelation will – to begin with – set a distance between such as have it and such as have not that specific revelation. This will give rise to many possibilities. Even the best servants of God who have not so seen will probably stand back. It will mean loneliness, and going on alone perhaps for quite a time. It will mean ostracism, misunderstanding, misrepresentation, suspicion, closed doors (so far as man can close them). Then, no revelation from God is ever just verbal truth, it always involves practical issues. These practical issues will appear like the crystallizing of the truth, so that those who obey it will become marked people. This raises a new set of opposing elements.

If God has given a revelation concerning His purpose in Christ which is of such vital importance as to have called for all this special history and preparation, we must realize that it is of very great moment to Satan's interests, and he will leave nothing unused to make its course impossible.... If the greatest need of the hour is that of men of vision, along with it will go the need for willingness to pay the price. But there is another side, and that is God's side, and the compensations are great. It is a great thing to be in possession of an open heaven and of a mandate from God.

From: The Need of the Hour
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000466.html

August 4

*Be on your guard not to be carried away by the deception of people who have no principles. Then you won't fall from your firm position.
(2 Peter 3:17 GW)*

From the high altitude of the first years as set before us in the book of the Acts, the church began to decline. When we get out of the apostolic age we find that decline steadily going on, until the church publicly, generally, becomes a thing of this world, even becoming politically attached to the earth. The battle all through the ages has been in this very connection, as to

whether the church would maintain or retrieve the loss of its heavenly high position, or for any reason at all, by prosperity or adversity, accept something lower. What is and has been true throughout all its history is true today and is true with us. It is true in the case of every individual believer, as it is of the whole – the tendency to come down; and everything from the side of the enemy is directed towards creating a lower level of things than God intended, and therefore a lower level than that to which the Lord can wholly commit Himself. It is only as the Lord's position for His people is held that the Lord can commit Himself.

It is at this point that we need to recognize something that may solve some problems or just give the final answer to a lot of our difficulties. That to which the Lord really does commit Himself wholly is the spiritual side of things, not the temporal side of things, even in relation to His work. He may facilitate; He may help; He may send resources; He may rule and overrule in temporal matters; but we would agree that it would be very dangerous for the Lord to make that His realm of complete operations. That is, whenever a difficulty arises in the temporal realm, if the Lord immediately came right in and swept that out of the way and gave an easy, clear path to His work and His servants, it would really militate against true spirituality, and it would bring the whole thing down to a temporal level, and you can see what would happen. Multitudes would come in because of the advantages. "It is a good thing to be a Christian; God does everything for you if only you will be a Christian," and so you become "rice Christians," as they are known in certain parts of the world. So the Lord neither can, nor will, nor does, commit Himself fully to the temporal aspects of His own work.... Spiritually the position in union with a heavenly Lord means fullness, and the measure of fullness depends entirely upon that heavenly life and the heavenly nature of everything.

From: The Mountains Around Jerusalem - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003270.html

August 5

*That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom, and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know....
(Ephesians 1:17,18)*

And then there is given a list of things to know. And you find that list moves out into the dimensions of the knowledge-surpassing love: "...that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God." Spiritual illumination leads on to being filled unto all the fullness. Spiritual illumination, therefore, is a basic thing to God's end. We can never come to the fullness of Christ by the mere enquiry and investigation of our own brains into spiritual things. There must of necessity be the Holy Spirit giving revelation concerning

Christ. The Testimony of Jesus has as its essential law: spiritual illumination and revelation – through the Word. The Testimony of Jesus can never be something static, something that you take up and say: “This is the Testimony of Jesus,” and then put it into a formula. The Testimony of Jesus is something that has been revealed.

The Testimony of Jesus is: *“I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.”* Stephen died for that Testimony. *“At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice....”* The inner meaning of that is not something apart from the Word, but something that comes by the Holy Ghost through the Word. That is more than the letter; it is Life. It is something that makes you say: “I have read the Scriptures on that for a long time, but I have really never seen that before.”

From: Filled Unto All the Fullness of God - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002858.html

August 6

Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)

What does this mean? Not that I come before God saying, “I have had pure motives; I have been very honest, earnest and conscientious, and my intentions have all been of the best.” Let us stop talking nonsense. It is utter folly to talk like that. We do not know ourselves. Only God knows the truth about us, and none of that finds a place with Him or counts with Him for a moment. The point is, have I recognized that the Cross of the Lord Jesus was the smashing and ending of me, good and bad, so that I am not holding up before the Lord anything? I am as capable of the worst as any being in God’s creation is. For anybody to take the attitude that they are not capable of the worst is an attitude of the deepest deception. We do not know the power in our beings until we are put to it. If we have never committed the worst, it is because we have never been put to it in the mercy of God, but it is all there. The Lord puts His finger upon it in principle when He says, *“He that hates his brother is a murderer.”* It is the same spirit. You have only to extend that, provoke that anger enough, put that nature into certain circumstances, and you will discover that you are capable of things of which you would have stood in utmost horror at one time.

You and I have got to come down before God and admit that we are capable of the worst, not standing on the ground of our right. The only right one is Christ from God’s standpoint. The only safe one is Christ, and therefore the only one who stands in God’s eyes is Christ, and it is as you and I, in all the brokenness, frailty, conscious weakness and humility of our

own beings, by faith cling to Christ that we shall find the way out, the deliverance, the salvation. We must look behind God's words to see bigger things than words on the surface indicate. "*To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembles at My word.*" That statement embodies all that we are saying.

To what one will He look? To the one who never says, "I am right!" but to the one who says, "I may be as wrong as ever a man or woman was wrong, there is nothing of which I am not capable; my only ground is Christ; so help me God, Christ is my ground!" To stand on Christ is to stand always in the consciousness and recognition that this other ground, ourselves at any point, is dangerous ground. *He* is so Other, and there is the great divide, there is no overlapping. Between Christ and us there is a gaping chasm. God never sees that bridged, but thank God He will put Christ into us by the Holy Spirit, and while the two will ever remain apart, the old creation will go one day and that which is of Christ, as wrought into us, will abide.

The Church of the Firstborn - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003328.html

August 7

One thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on. (Philippians 3:13-14 NIV)

The Lord desires us to go on. Sometimes going on means loneliness in going on where others cannot go with us. That means a price is bound up with obedience. It may mean a big break, a big change. It is the challenge of whether we are adjustable before the Lord. Our adjustability is the proof of our utterness for the Lord. That proof being there, the Lord is able to bring us on into all His thought. Let us remember always that we shall never get to a place while we are here where there is not some higher level and some greater fullness of Christ. There will always be yet another step, and perhaps another after that, higher on. Let us have our hearts set upon reaching all. The Lord will so graduate things as to make the challenge not too severe. He takes us a step at a time, and He does not want us to take six steps at a bound, or to contemplate six steps at a time. He shows us our next step, and that is all we have to be concerned about now. The other steps will come at the right time. Every step prepares us for the next.

Very often our lives are like mountain climbing. You see from below to a certain height, and that seems to be the top, and you make for it. And when you get to it, you see a little further on that there is another top. You think that must be the very top, and so you make for it, and when you get to it there is something still further. You never do seem to get to the top!

But we shall arrive at last. The Lord hides the other things and says: "Now, that is your next step; obey that and fuller revelation will come after that." Those of us who look back and see how terrible a thing it would have been if the Lord had shown us at one time all that to which we have been brought, know that if we had seen it all at one time, we could not have gone on. We see that He brought us by stages, and today we are not ungrateful for the price paid, in view of the measure of Christ which we enjoy and the greater fullness of revelation. Let us ask the Lord to put into us the spirit of His servant: "*Not that I have already obtained it... but one thing I do... I press on....*"

From: That Which Was From The Beginning - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002955.html

August 8

*I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.
(2 Corinthians 11:3)*

Deception is not something out there that is put upon us willy-nilly, or in spite of ourselves. All deception has its own ground in man. What is that ground? It is the fact that man is now a psychical being. Now if you can get to the bottom of that, if you can apprehend that, you will understand the whole thing. The ground of all this is in the fact that man is a psychical being, and when Satan interfered with man at the beginning and man consented along the line of his own soul-life, Satan made man suitable to his own government. It was not that he came and set himself up as man's ruler and subjected man by sheer force to his own government. How did he do it? By breaking into that realm in man's being where man was linked with God, and that was in the realm of man's spirit. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit," and man was in fellowship and communion with God by means of his spirit, not his soul, not his body. These two were under the government of his spirit. The enemy, the Deceiver came to man's soul, and instead of man reacting by his spirit-fellowship with, and knowledge of, God, he dropped down on to his soul, came out of his spirit and reacted in his soul.

What is soul? It is reason, emotion, feeling, desire, and then, of course, choice, or will. And the enemy reasoned through the desires and captured the will by deception. You see what happened when man violated the very organ of his union with God, his spirit.... So the enemy governs man, and the whole of the race now through the nature of the soul-life. What is the basis of deception? It is just that! How do you get a counterfeit Holy Ghost operating? By reason of your psychical nature. You can become mediumistic in your very psychical nature and open all the avenues of your being to supernatural guidance and come under the power,

the sway, dominion, of deceiving spirits operating in a multitude of ways. You can so suspend your soul and come into a state of utter passivity that you are open to everything to play upon you. You can have your quiet hour in your soul, which is the most perilous hour of your life. That happens by suspending all spiritual activity and becoming utterly passive and opening your psychical being, which is a most dangerous thing. God never asks you to become spiritually passive. Waiting upon God is not being spiritually passive. God wants us active in spirit even when waiting on Him in silence.

From: Christ The Power Of God - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002158.html

August 9

I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things.

(Philippians 3:8 NIV)

The saving of men from sin, death, and hell, and getting them to heaven, was as nothing compared with what Paul saw as to the significance of a believer now. All that which he has seen concerning Christ in His eternal purpose – eternal, universal, vast, infinite – now relates to believers: “Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be... unto the praise of His glory... in the ages to come” (Eph. 1:4,12,21). Believers also are lifted out of time, and are given a significance altogether beyond anything here....

What a Christ! It is Christ Who will lift us out, Christ Who will set us free; but let me say this, that it will not be by His coming and putting His hands under us and lifting us out, but by being revealed in our hearts. How did Paul come out of his narrow Jewish conceptions about the Messiah? Simply by the revelation of Christ in him, and as that revelation grew his liberation increased. There were some things which he did not shake off for a long time. He clung to Jerusalem almost to the last. He still had a longing for his brethren after the flesh, and made further attempts for their deliverance on national grounds. But at last he saw the meaning of the heavenly Christ in such a way as to make it possible for him to write the letter to the Ephesians, and the letter to the Colossians, and then Judaism as such, Israel after the flesh, ceased to weigh with him. It was the revelation of Christ which was emancipating him, leading him out, freeing him all the time. In that way Christ is our Deliverer and Emancipator.

It is just the Lord Jesus that we need to know. Everything small will go as we see Him. Everything of earth and time will go as we see Him, and in the background of our lives there will be something adequate to keep us through difficult and hard times. We shall see the greatness of Christ and

the corresponding greatness of our salvation "...according to His eternal purpose."

From: All Things in Christ - Chapter 1

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002767.html

August 10

Jesus left the temple and was going away, when His disciples came to point out to Him the buildings of the temple. (Matthew 24:1 ESV)

How does that strike you? The disciples wanting to take the Lord Jesus on a sightseeing trip, and show Him the buildings of the temple! That is where their eyes are, that is what they are thinking to be important, that is their idea of impressiveness, importance, greatness and grandeur.... You know what follows through Matthew 24. We see that material and temporal things according to this world's ideas and standards of greatness and even of the religious world's standards, are the things which govern the mentality of these disciples after all this time. There is something there so deep-rooted, so inveterate, so persistent.

We do not judge them, we are just like them. However spiritual we may think we are, the fact remains that we are tremendously influenced by temporal standards. It is a continuous battleground as to how things stand in this world before men, and even as to what the great religious leaders, and even evangelical leaders of our time regard as the important thing. It has a good deal of influence with us.

The Lord makes His pronouncement about that. The whole thing is going to be completely disintegrated. And it is on a mountain that He takes up this whole question, and you cannot get away from the fact – however it may be chopped up by those who are interested in these things – that at least the first part of this chapter relates to Jerusalem, and what comes out is that it is going to be broken up, shaken to its foundations and will totter to the ground. All that which they thought so great and so permanent is going. All that which they thought so established here will not have one stone left upon another. On the Mount He begins to show the disintegration of the one in order to make room for the other. On the Mount, heaven touches earth and from there the heavenly dispensation is clearly in view.

From: The Mountains Around Jerusalem - Chapter 5

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003270.html

August 11

*Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.
(Isaiah 9:7)*

Everything which has to do with the realization of God's purpose in creating man, and this world, and its universe, is a matter of *knowing God in Christ*, which, of course, means knowing Christ. Every aspect and detail of God's will and God's way and God's end is a matter of knowing the Lord Jesus. All progress, as all life, rests upon that – knowing Him. The Christian life here is meant to be one of continuous growth and development and progress, but that only takes place as we come to know more, and still more, of the meaning of the Lord Jesus.

This progress will not stop when we leave this world, and when time gives place to eternity: "*Of the increase of His kingdom there will be no end.*" Stagnation is no mark of Life, and Life there will be ever manifesting itself in new and more wonderful fullnesses and forms. Therefore, the knowledge of Christ which will, in time and eternity, be the secret of growth and progress, will continue in heaven, and it will take eternity to exhaust it....

Seeing He is so vast, so immense, so many-sided, we can only see Him from one standpoint at a time; we have to move round to see Him from every angle. And at this time we are just looking at the Lord Jesus from one of the many angles, or points of view, which is this particular aspect of His significance: that He, in His Person and in His work, stands related to an eternal, heavenly order. He Himself, in His wonderful, complex Person, is the very embodiment of all the principles and laws of a great heavenly order. When everything is conformed to Christ and takes its character from Him, it will be one glorious, harmonious whole, perfected into one, just one glorious unity.... I have only opened a window to you through which you can see a universe.

From: Divine Order – In Christ - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002837.html

August 12

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3 NIV)

Familiar as these words and these thoughts are to us, there are tremendous possibilities of freshness, and newness, about the enjoyment of these things.... If there is no fresh glimmer of light and glory associated with the reiteration of this truth, there is all the more reason why we should

ask the Lord what has happened to us, that we could contemplate such a thing without a stirring of heart. Now, is that our Christ, the Christ of our experience, the Christ of our knowledge? Are we living in the realization of that, not to its fullness – because that fullness will never be exhausted – but in the wonder of the fullness which lies before? A land flowing with milk and honey, a good land indeed.

Any fresh contemplation of our Lord in this way should ravish our hearts: Christ, the fullness of spiritual blessing *now*, the Sphere of our experience, our exploring, our enjoyment, our satisfaction. That is heavenly union with the Lord Jesus. Anybody who is in that is in heaven. You have not to define and explain to such people what it means to be in the heavenlies in Christ. They know of what you are speaking. Spiritual geography is understood by those who walk up and down in Him and enjoy His fullness.

If you are not there, all that we can do is to be like the spies, and report upon it, and it is left with you to say whether you are going in or not. It is left to the crisis of faith or unbelief, just as it was of old. Do you believe that that is the Christ Whom God has presented as the Sphere of your life? If so, go up and possess; appropriate by faith the fullness that is in Christ for every need which arises, for every demand which confronts you.... Let us face the whole issue in this definite way: "Lord, it is clearly represented in the Word that You are the fullness of God for me! Here is a need, a spiritual need. In order that You should be glorified in me, I by faith take You to meet this need!" That is very simple. That is almost the infant class of things, but it is a very effective way of proving the Lord. Do not sink back afterward and decline into discouragement and say, "Nothing has happened!" Stand your ground just as Israel had to stand their ground and prove thereby that the Lord had indeed given.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002212.html

August 13

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live,
but Christ lives in me. (Galatians 2:20)*

Christ is not a second personality or power, to come along to reinforce *us*, to vivify *us*, to strengthen *us*, for us to use in life and in service, and that He should make *us* something. That is not the thought, and that is not the angle of Scripture at all. And yet, how almost universally, perhaps largely unconsciously, that is what is happening. Christians are wanting to be made something, even as Christians; and Christian workers and the Lord's servants are, though perhaps unwittingly, wanting to be made something as workers; and they want Christ to

reinforce *them*, come behind *them*, and make *them* something as His servants and in His service.

That whole system of things is diametrically opposed to the truth. The truth is that Christ shall be All, and that we decrease that He may increase; that He should be the primary Personality, and that the impact and registration of any life and any service should not be: "What a good man he was!" or "What a good woman she is!" or "What a fine worker!" but: "What a presence of Christ! What a testimony to Christ! What an expression of Christ! What a sense of Christ! What a reality of Christ!"

Are our hearts set upon God having that which is wholly of Himself? That means "I" crucified! No longer I, but Christ! And that means that Christ in us is the basis of our conformity to His image, until we partake with Him of His own nature – pure gold. It is something to face seriously before Him. It brings to us a challenge, but surely it also brings to us a glorious possibility! What Christ is can be made good in us!

From: Christ in You

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001617.html

August 14

May I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of that cross, my interest in this world has been crucified, and the world's interest in me has also died.

(Galatians 6:14 NLT)

You can have Christian law just as much as you can have Mosaic law; you can be in bondage in Christianity just as much as men were in Judaism. Christianity can be made into an imposed system just as much as Mosaic law was, and there are many Christians today who live under the fear of the "Thou shalt" and the "Thou shalt not" of a legalistic conception of the Christian life. You can take the Bible as God's standard for your life and try to fulfill it and yet still be burdened with a sense of constant failure. It is God's standard, and it is a very exhaustive one which leaves no part of the practical life untouched, but those who make the effort to try to live up to it only end in disillusion. No, it is not just a matter of a Book but of a Person, the Person who did live up to that standard, absolutely fulfilling every least demand with the most perfect success, so satisfying God to the full. By His death He has delivered us from the bondage of legal demands. This same Person now lives in us by His Holy Spirit, seeking to work out that perfect will of God not on the basis of some binding instructions from without but as a living force within. We have the law written in our hearts. To be in Christ is a matter of Life and not of legalism.

Christ, and Christ crucified, is the power of God to bring deliverance from sin, from the flesh, from the law and from the world. "*God forbid*

that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14). Paul was not glorying that he could enjoy so much of the world and yet have a clear conscience, but was enthusiastic about having been delivered from the world. For believers the only possible way of staying in this world is to know that they no longer belong to it.

From: Christ the Power of God
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000633.html

August 15

God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful. (1 Corinthians 1:9 NIV)

This is an age of cheapness. Get it as cheaply and as quickly as you can, with just as little cost and tiresomeness. "Get it quickly: get it easily." That thought governs the whole world system. Everything is now aligned to getting it done easily and getting it done quickly. It is that way in your kitchen, your scurrying, your household affairs, and in every other realm. What is true in the secular has now become very largely true in the spiritual. The standards have been terribly lowered. Bigness has substituted greatness. Greatness, the true meaning of the word, is no longer considered. Oh, how we hear, "Big, oh yes, the bigger, then assuredly that is the most successful," but this is absolutely contrary to the Bible, to all gospel. It is like that. Ease and easiness, lightness, glamorousness, excitement, emotion: this is the order of our day. This hurrying that we are speaking of comes so largely into Christianity: and the result is that we have quite a poor type of Christian....

I am very glad that there is a manifest outreach, especially on the part of young people, for reality. They are tired and sick of unreality. That is a very good thing indeed if only they find reality and do not go in for the substitutes that are today being retailed so lavishly, the substitutes which seem to be real and are an illusion.... While we are going to be joyful in the Lord, sometimes there is a large gap between being happy and joyful. "Happy" depends upon "hap": "Joy" goes on whatever "happens." There is a need of a recovery or reappraisal of the true nature of that into which we have come when we have come into Christ....

Paul opens a window and just gives us a glimpse in that letter to the Philippians when he says, "...Who, existing in the form of God." A long way back before anything else was this One to Whom we have come; and in the terms of fellowship, we are "called into the fellowship" of this One.... We have not come into some very small, light, frivolous thing. However we may joyfully sing our choruses and so on, but remember, this is no cheap thing. This is no small thing. This is no easy thing. This is a thing

which embraces the universe, and we are called into that fellowship. I pray that you may have a new glimpse of the wonder of the One Whom you love and Whom you call, Savior *AND LORD*.

From: Called Unto the Fellowship of His Son - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000723.html

August 16

In Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. (Colossians 2:9,10 NLT)

Oh, those subtle suggestions that are ever being whispered in our ears, that if we give up this and that we are going to lose, and life is going to be poorer, and we are going to be narrowed down until we have nothing left. It is a lie! That is the thing that is countering God's great thought for us. God's thought for us is that One, no less than His Son Jesus Christ, in Whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in bodily form, should be our fullness. All the fullness of God in Christ for us! You never attain to that by rejecting Him. Life must be much less than it need be if you are not going all the way with the Lord; and what obtains in the matter of our consecration to the Lord, our entire and complete abandonment to Him in our life and our complete cut with all that is not of the Lord, obtains in the realm of service.

This flesh loves to sport itself in Christian work, and tells us that if we are going to be dependent upon the Lord we are going to have an anxious time. But a life of dependence upon God can be a life of continual romance. It is there that we make discoveries which are a constant wonder.

You may be nearly dead one minute and in the next the Lord gives you something to do and you are very much alive, dependent upon Him for every breath you breathe. But thus you come to know the Lord. Then after that experience you are just as helpless and dead again for a while, but you remember that the Lord did something. Then He does it again; and so life becomes a romance; yet no one would ever guess you were depending on the Lord for your very breath. It is a very blessed thing to know the Lord is doing it, when you could not do it at all; it is, humanly, naturally, impossible, but the Lord is doing it!

From: Christ - All, and In All
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000617.html

August 17

I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised Him from the dead. I want to suffer with Him, sharing in His death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead! (Philippians 3:10,11 NLT)

You never do touch the Lord Jesus in His death in any new measure without knowing a new measure of resurrection Life. When the Lord Jesus by His Spirit brings us in a further measure into the meaning of His death, let it be settled with us, once and for all, that that is in itself a new measure of resurrection Life. The two things go together, it cannot be otherwise. It is death unto Life. It is loss unto gain. The Life and the gain are of a different sort from the death and the loss. The death and the loss is simply all that which, sooner or later, will go in any case, and even while it remains is of a very doubtful value, but the Life and the gain are eternal, and have in them all the values of God.

So Paul could, with something of joy, hail conformity to the death of Christ. He speaks about it in no mournful terms as though he were going to lose everything. There is no shadow on his face, or sob in his voice, when he speaks about being conformed to His death. It is the shout of a victor. There is something he is after....

He has known power, popularity, reputation, position, possession, and he says the knowledge of Christ Jesus is excelling all that. What knowledge is it? It is the particular knowledge of "Him, and the power of His resurrection." Why? Because of what that leads to, all the possibilities of that resurrection Life and power, because of its ultimate issue: because of the place to which it can bring him, no less a place than the very Throne of the Lord Himself.

From: The Power of His Resurrection - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001165.html

August 18

We who worship by the Spirit of God are the ones who are truly circumcised. We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us. We put no confidence in human effort. (Philippians 3:3 NLT)

The fact is this, that what God is after is not to do things for you and for me, not to impart things to you and to me, not to show things to you and to me, but to bring us to some fresh apprehension of God in Christ. The whole matter is a divinely personal matter. It is the realization of the Person which is going to result, firstly, primarily, and for evermore, not in doing things, not in activities, not in rejoicing in truth, but in worship.

Worship is the first, the continuous, and the final factor in the knowledge of God in Christ, and is basic to everything else in our relation to Him. True worship only springs from a heart discovery of Himself. Take your Bible, especially the New Testament, and especially the forty days after the resurrection (if you want that narrowed down to something that you can grasp), and see if that is not true. It was not because He did or said certain things that they worshiped, but because they discovered Him in a way in which they had never known Him before. God's dealings with us are governed by this supreme aim: that He might make known to us Himself in Christ; but this comes by illumination, and that illumination is by the touch of Christ.

From: Knowing God in Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003117.html

August 19

I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. But I have this against you.... (Revelation 2:19,20 ESV)

Oh, that we should get some better idea of what the service of the Lord is than that it is platforms and pulpits and open-air meetings. Beloved, service for the Lord is just as important when it is rendering some kindly act of helpful service to some rather depressed child of God in the ordinary domestic things of daily life; just as valuable as getting on the platform and giving a message. You see it is strengthening the hands of the Lord's children, it is coming in to check the crushing overweight of the adversary, coming alongside to lift up the testimony in some life or home where the enemy is trying to crush the testimony out – and the testimony is something maintained in domestic relationships, in family life, private life.

There are too many who want to give up their domestic service and go to Bible College, failing to recognize that that service there may be just as valuable to the Lord as their going out to the mission field. It is spiritual, not technical, not organized, and you may be as much a priest of the Lord in going round to some home tomorrow where the enemy is pressing in, and giving a practical hand in helping with the washing, as you may be a priest in standing on the platform....

There are many priests of God whose voices have never been heard in public, who have never been seen in a public way, who are unknown, hidden very often in the assembly and yet in secret history fulfilling a most valuable ministry. Get adjusted over this thing. We have to come to the point where we deliberately decide as to whether the Lord is worthy of this, and abandon ourselves to it because of our appreciation of Him, the Master.

You see, this servant abandons himself freely, voluntarily, for all time to the service of his master because he has come to love his master.

From: The Servant and Service of the Lord
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002991.html

August 20

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though He was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, He gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. (Philippians 2:5-7 NLT)

We have got to draw a very broad distinction between doing a lot of things, as we think “for the Lord,” rushing about and being busy and organizing and conducting and speaking and preaching and taking meetings and classes and all this, and we call this “Christian service.” We have got to draw a very broad line of difference between that and real service to the Lord. Real service to the Lord is the emancipation of a people from this world for Him and the formation of that people according to Christ for a heavenly vocation, and a heavenly vocation now, not afterwards. You can test your service by this: the measure of the emancipation of the people who come under your hands and the measure of the formation of Christ that is going on. These are things which are service. And then you will discover that, whereas the other line of things with all the movement and activity and feverish and excited work does not call for very much patience of this kind. It does not call for much real self-emptying, no, it does not call for a great deal of meekness: rather I think it ministers to the opposite. It makes us self-important. It makes us proud. It makes us self-sufficient. It makes us self-assertive. It makes us jealous for our position and our ministry, and resentful if it is interfered with. Yes, Christian work does that with many. The true service can be tested by these things, and the true servant can be tested by the measure of those virtues of Christ: utterly selfless, self-empty.

From: The Cross and the Way of Life - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002851.html

August 21

Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. (John 15:4 NIV)

He has chosen us from the foundation of the world in Christ. He has selected One in whom we shall find Him, and in whom *alone* we shall find

Him. All the forces of hell will be at work, in the first place, to keep us out of Christ. They rage to prevent people coming into Christ, and when once they have come in, these forces are unceasing and relentless in their efforts to get them off the ground of Christ, on to *things* possibly, or on to any other ground. There is an immense meaning in Christ's word: "*Abide in Me... except ye abide in Me...*" (John 15:4). It is a warning, governing word. Where and how shall we find the Lord? Only on the line of Christ, where Christ's interests are the object of our being here, where it is true "*For me to live is Christ*" (Philippians 1:21). You find the Lord there. Get off that ground, be driven off, be allured off, and you lose the Lord. It is there, on that ground, that the explanation of the Christian life is found. It is on that line that the very purpose for which we are created will have its out-working. It is on that line that we shall find Divine guidance.

This Divine law of God's way has many practical applications in the life of the Christian. How many spiritual tragedies we have known brought about by human selectiveness apart from the first and supreme interest of Christ. It might be the choice of residence, location, for instance, for reasons of convenience, pleasure, escape, or *seeming* necessity, as in the case of Abraham to which we have referred. No less a question than having the Lord with us is bound up with such choices and decisions. We cannot move off the Lord's ground without the consequence of spiritual disaster. How costly it was in the case of Elimelech!

If Christ is the Way, the Directive; then He is the Example. How meticulously careful He was not to move, or be moved by any consideration but the directive of the Father! Many motives were put to Him for action and movement, but He abode in the Father, and, often at great cost, refused other considerations.

From: The Line of Christ - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002765.html

August 22

The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. (Daniel 11:32)

After the Cross, all the fullness of the Divine power was released upon the world through those who had been brought into absolute oneness with the Lord by that Cross. That is the peculiar kind of knowledge which means the release of such forces and such powers upon the world situation as are unknown by the great world systems. First, let us remember that this knowledge of God is by *revelation*.

We can never get this knowledge of God merely by reading, by listening, by attending meetings.... You may understand it all by mental apprehension, know the terms and the verses, and use them – but what

about the dynamic of this thing? *What does our personal presence in a situation mean?* Does it mean that there is the going out of a power which cannot be accounted for on any human basis whatever, but which is a greater force than the forces that are represented by world organizations, world methods, world resources? It is a most important question. Is this thing alive, or have we merely got a little more mental apprehension of it through conferences? Do we know God in this thing by reason of a personal inward revelation on the subject?

Secondly, it comes by the way of pain. You get a thing revealed to you as truth, perhaps something about the Cross of Christ, or victory over Satan, and you think you know it, and you say, "This is beautiful!" And you begin to talk about it, and it is not very long before something happens – your circumstances are touched. Now you go down with this truth, down into the vortex of awful agony, right down to the gates of hell, your being is upheaved right from the very bottom, and all the time there is the question – "Will that truth hold good?" Is it going to work? And when you have got down as far as you can go, the flesh elements and the self elements have been dealt with, and you grimly hold on to the Lord in this matter of victory – then it comes out, you have tested it right to the very bottom of your being – that thing has become *you*, and then you can go to others in their grim conflict and their darkness, and say, "I know – I know this thing, and I know God is faithful, I know the victory." You have got a mighty emphasis on your knowledge, it is a thing about which you have no doubt, because you have gone down into the depths with it, and proved it down there, and by the very pain the thing has been proved.

From: The People That Do Exploits

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001535.html

August 23

*I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you...
(Ephesians 1:18 NIV)*

It is a seeing of the immense significance of Jesus in the eternal and universal order. With the Apostles that seeing was subsequent to the days of physical association. During the forty days after His resurrection it was like the dawning of a new day. First, those intimations, as when the uncertain light just passes over the heavens. Then more steady and certain rays, leading to the Day of Pentecost, when the sun appeared in full glory over the horizon dispelling the last shadow of uncertainty. On that day they saw Him as by an opened heaven. The mystery of the past was dispelled. The Bible lay open like a new book. They saw Him in the light of eternity. They began to see that, while He was the glorified, personal, Son of God, He was Himself the embodiment of a great, a vast heavenly and spiritual

order and system. This *seeing* was absolutely revolutionary. It was a crisis out of which a new world and a new creation was born. True to this fundamental principle, all that vast revelation, which has come down the centuries from and through the Apostle Paul took its rise from that crisis described by him as “It pleased God... to reveal His Son in me” (Gal. 1:16). “I received it... by revelation of Jesus Christ” (vs. 12). All the implicates were in the crisis; the full content was a progressive and ever-growing revelation.

While there was some initial testimony, the Apostles did not formulate in conference an enterprise, a mission, with all the related arrangements and organization. The new Life forced off the old leaves and dressed the new organism with a new vesture *from within*. The might, energy and urge of the Holy Spirit within produced a Way and an order, un-thought-of, unintended by them, and always to their own surprise. What was happening was really that Christ was taking form within them, individually and corporately, by new birth and growth. The believers and the companies were becoming an expression of Christ.

From: According to Christ - 1

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000718.html

August 24

You have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Christ is your life. When He appears, then you, too, will appear with Him in glory. (Colossians 3:3,4 GW)

We are very often inclined to think that the Life of the Lord in us needs in some way to be improved, to be added to, when really what is required is that we should discover what we have, and, discovering it by experience, live according to it. This Life is not something apart from the Lord Jesus, and we can never think of His standing in need of some improvement, nor of the possibility of something being added to Him to make Him complete, or more complete. We would never think like that. And this Life is one with Himself. As the Apostle says, it is Christ who is our Life, and our need is to discover what Christ is in us, and to live accordingly. So in a very real sense it is a matter of the Life getting more of us, rather than of our getting more of the Life. That, at any rate, is the way of its working.

This, in the ordering of God, has to be done in a world where death still rules and works; for in this world the destruction of death has not yet been made manifest. Death, like the devil, goes on, although Calvary still remains full victory. We are left in this world, and it is in this world where death reigns and works as a great energy that we, by this sovereign ordering of God, have to come to prove the values of the Life which has

been deposited in us, and to discover its potentialities. This is an experimental discovery. It therefore resolves itself into battle between that which is in this world and the Life which is in the believer. It is the battle for Life, not as to the forfeiture of that Life – not as to whether death can take eternal Life away from us, for that is not the question at issue – but as to the triumphant expression and the full manifestation of the power of that Life. That is the issue.

From: The Battle For Life - Chapter 5

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000706.html

August 25

*Creation was subjected to frustration but not by its own choice.
(Romans 8:20 GW)*

In searching for a sentence that will serve as a window through which what we have in view can be seen, the one that seems most potent is “The Curse of the Earth Touch.” To understand what is meant by those last three words is to have an explanation of an immense amount of history; spiritual and temporal.... The nature and features of the curse, as the Bible everywhere reveals, are frustration, thwarting, bafflement, discontent, abortion, confusion, travail, breakdown, and an ever-defeated struggle against despair and death.... Why is it that so many things which have greatly served the purpose of God have eventually fallen apart; broken up; and have little more than a great past to live upon? Why is it that the Lord Himself has not circumvented this and preserved intact these instruments and vessels that He has used? Why is it that division upon division follows almost endlessly the course of many things which have been very jealous for an utter position as to Bible truth? These and many such questions have but one answer. That answer is *the earth touch*.

Somewhere, somehow, that blighting contact has been made. There has been a gesture toward this earth. *Man* has put his hand on heavenly things and tried to bring them on to this earth. It might be a “New Testament Church” of a composite nature: certain things taught, enacted, and done in conformity to the record in the New Testament; a certain order, technique, and construction; these things have been drawn together for a creed, a form of procedure, and made the “basis,” the form and standard, the “constitution” of a body, an institution, a society: man’s mind and man’s hand defining, controlling, holding. The verdict of history is that God will just not commit Himself to any such thing.... The Apostles did not take a “Blue Print” of New Testament churches wherever they went. The outcome of their work was a crisis, a climax to an old creation and the fiat of the new. What followed of order and knowledge was organic, not organized; spontaneous, not imposed; Life, not legality; and – above all – heavenly, not earthly. It was only when man pulled this down on to the

earth that things went wrong.... Oh, this earth touch! How deadly it is! When will the Lord's people understand the essential meaning of their union with Christ *in Heaven!*

From: The Curse of the Earth Touch
www.austin-sparks.net/english/003239.html

August 26

I am the Lord, I do not change.... (Malachi 3:6)

There is a great difference between the old and the new, but that difference is not in God. The new covenant makes no difference in God. The covenant that is brought to us through the mediation of the Lord Jesus does not bring a different God to us. The difference is not in Him; that is, His nature and His standard are always the same, unchangeable. Grace never brings God down to a lower level. Grace does not make any difference to the holiness of God, or to the righteousness of God. The difference in the two covenants is not that of a change in God. His position remains as it ever was, perfect in holiness, perfect in righteousness. The difference is, firstly, in the mediators, secondly, in the ground upon which those mediators stand....

Oh, the snare of the platform idea that so often constitutes the whole conception of ministry, as though other people are not ministers at all. It is just as much your privilege to behold Christ as any man's in this universe, and, that being so, it is just as much your calling to minister what you see in Christ to others. Beholding Him, we are changed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. This is the latter glory, the glory of the new covenant. Christ is the glory of the new covenant. The difference is not in God, it is the difference between the mediators, and the difference in the position which we occupy because of the Mediator; we are now in Christ, Who satisfies God. The Lord give us the ministry issuing from a continuous and ever-growing contemplation of His fullness in Christ.

From: Spiritual Ministry - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003256.html

August 27

*When they looked up, they saw that the stone was already rolled back, for it was very large... and they were utterly amazed.
(Mark 16:4,5 AMP)*

When the Lord moves for His own Son's sake, and has those interests governing, and when those interests have brought us into such a

relationship with Him that we can say there is no stone so big to be removed, no problem so great for solving, no difficulty so intense, but the Lord will do what is necessary for His Son's sake – when we have come to a position like that, the Lord is free to do a lot of things very quietly. As we say, they just "happen." Ah, but they have been the objects of the exercise of exceeding great power – "There was a great earthquake" (Matt. 28:2). But here, in this aspect of the situation, it does not seem to be an earthquake at all. It has just happened. We must recognize that there is an aspect of activities in which the secret, quiet working of His immense power dismisses the greatest difficulties as though they had never existed. Sometimes He may bring us into the presence of the working of His power that is manifestly terrific, but not often and certainly not always. For faith it is more like this: there is such power at work as to make possible the setting aside of the obstacle very quietly, so that we afterward wonder – "And they were amazed." And the angel said, "Be not amazed." It is good to have amazement, but let us recognize that a certain amount of our amazement is because we have not sufficient faith.

From: The Problem of the Stone

www.austin-sparks.net/english/002118.html

August 28

You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have life. (John 5:39-40 NIV)

The value of everything is its livingness. The value of the Scriptures is not that we know our Bibles and can handle our Bibles and can give addresses, wonderful addresses, from our Bibles, and that we can quote Scripture fully and accurately and all that sort of thing. It is not that we bear the name of associates of Christ, Christians, not that we have this great inheritance and tradition. It is the *livingness* of it all which is proving itself in all ways, that this risen Life of Christ should prove itself.... That is a strong thing to say, it is a searching thing to say. You have the Christian tradition and a great deal of Christian teaching, perhaps you know your Bibles very well, or think you do, perhaps you have many advantages in your associations, but the question arises. Not do you know it all, have you got it all, all the teaching, the truth, the Bible knowledge, the association, and that you are at all the meetings and you have heard it for years and years past and your association with it has been very close. That is not it. You can have all that and yet you yourself not be marked by this vital something that you become a vital factor in the whole thing. You are still a passenger, perhaps a parasite; not really in the good of it yourself. Let us be frank about it. We must face this as a personal matter.

The answer is in the resurrection.... Resurrection is not to be only something that happened with Jesus, but it is something that has happened in us and taken place inside of us. There is a counterpart of that by His risen Life imparted, that we have been raised together with Him. And that is not just doctrine either. That is real, that is vital truth and something to happen in us as well as in Jerusalem so many years ago. It is not just history and tradition, it is experience.... We have not only to believe that Jesus rose from the dead, but *we have got to be alive ourselves with Him in that resurrection and on that ground.*

From: The Testimony of the Christ - Chapter 9
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002988.html

August 29

*Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.
Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?
(2 Corinthians 13:5)*

The sum of everything in the new creation is in Christ, or, to put that in another way, it is outside of man himself. It is apart from man, and it always will be. Although Christ, the sum of the new creation, may be in us, that new creation will remain in Christ, and we are only in it by reason of our union with Him. He becomes the fullness of everything *in us*, but *the practical outworking of that fullness will ever, and always, be purely and solely on a basis of faith.* If the thing could be said at any time to have its origin in us, then faith would be dismissed. If we had it in ourselves, if it were our constitution, faith would be dispensed with. That would result in a repetition of *us*....

The difficulty which we shall be meeting all along the way will be ourselves. We shall find that the main obstacle, the main enemy to our fullness in Christ, to all that the new creation means, will be ourselves in some way. It will either be our self-occupation – which is but a form of trying to be something fine, something in ourselves which will bring satisfaction to God – or it will be our self-effort in service. It will be this natural life of ours cropping up in some direction or another, and as it crops up it will cut clean in between us and the “all things” which are of God, and we shall find that it is *ourselves* which brings us up short, which creates the arrest.... If we look within ourselves to find more good, we are going to look in vain. We shall never find anything in ourselves but corruption. Is that really settled with us?

On both sides, the people who have some opinion of themselves had better settle it once and for all that there is nothing in them but corruption, and also those who have settled it, and yet are so occupied with their old man as though it were something really worth being occupied with. Put it

where the Lord Jesus has put it, in the grave, and do not walk round it, turning it over, if peradventure you might find something worthwhile. Fix and fasten your faith in God's Son, and leave yourself alone for ever. Only so will you find your emancipation.

From: The Essential Newness of the New Creation - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002211.html

August 30

*God in all His fullness was pleased to live in Christ.
(Colossians 1:19 NLT)*

Do not take these as just words. Do understand that in every fragment there is this truth: In the dispensation in which you and I are now living God has come to us in all His fullness. There is no more to be added. In His Son we have the absolute fullness of God, and it is out of that fullness that He speaks to us in His Son. God has only one Son in that sense – His *only*-begotten Son, which means that there is no one to come after Him. Therefore, God's last word is in His Son.

The Son brings both the fullness and the finality of God. It is that which gives the solemnity to this whole Letter. It says: "If you fail to hear the voice of the Son there will never be another voice for you. God is never going to speak by another voice. God hath spoken in His Son, and He is never going to speak by any other means." Hence this Letter contains this word of warning and of exhortation: "Because this is the fullness and this is the end, be sure that you give heed...." To come into touch with the Lord Jesus is more than coming into touch with a teaching: it is coming into touch with a living, active Person. "It is God with whom we have to do." It is a glorious thing to come into touch with God in Christ – but it says here that "*it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*" (Hebrews 10:31). No, it is not a book, a teaching, a philosophy: it is a living, positive, powerful Person....

Perhaps this is just like a window opened into heaven. If you get the right window you can see quite a lot. You can see great things and you can see far things. But the best that I can hope is that this has just opened a window, and that as you look through it you are seeing one thing – how superior is Jesus Christ to all else, and how superior is the dispensation into which we have come, and how superior are all the resources at our disposal to all that ever was before!

From: The On-High Calling - Chapter 10
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000975.html

August 31

Serve each other through love. (Galatians 5:13 GW)

It is always the work of God's enemy to clog up our lives by introducing love of self or love of the world, and it needs ruthless determination to remove the accumulated rubbish and re-dig the well in purity of devotion to Christ. It may well be, though, that the hindrances arise from lack of love to our fellow believers. We must remember that the Holy Spirit can never have free course in us and through us if we harbor unloving thoughts concerning other of God's children, let alone put those thoughts into actions. He is the Spirit of fellowship, so that if we fail in that realm then we fail in the matter of love.

It is so easy to allow unworthy considerations to quench brotherly love, to be clogged up with resentment or to be wrongly influenced by our susceptibilities or hurt feelings.... We have to be active in positive cultivation of fellowship. To some it is quite natural to be independent. For them deference to others represents a major difficulty. Sometimes they may deliberately ignore or despise others, but sometimes they just prefer to do it alone and never seriously think of inter-relatedness and inter-dependence.

The Word of God, however, is most explicit in ordering us to esteem one another, to submit to one another and to live and work together. The Holy Spirit demands that the people of God live according to a team order of things, that they should be governed by a family spirit. Anything which is of an isolated or detached nature, which fails to recognize and fully accept the family thought of God, is a check on Him. By failing to observe fellowship we quench the Spirit. It is not only a matter of avoiding giving offence but of active pursuit of fellowship. Some may be wondering why there is so little up-springing from the inner well, when they are sitting back in a wrong kind of modesty, failing to bring in their own personal contribution to fellowship life and ministry.

Unkindness is not the only obstacle in this realm. Shyness and diffidence can equally rest like a stone on the flow of Life. The only thing to do is to dig it up and move it away. Get in, get right in, and let yourself go! Do not always choose the back seat because you like to be left alone, but come forward in the Lord's name and give the Holy Spirit a free course in your lives. He is well able to check you if you become too self-assertive, but there is little He can do if your well is all stopped up with fears and inhibitions.

From: The Well Within
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000472.html

September 1

Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples. (John 13:35 NLT)

Love – not the presence of a lot of understanding and teaching and truth, and not the absence of all sorts of things – is the governing matter with the Lord. It is not that He Himself in His heart accepts the wrong things, but He sees through them, He sees differently from ourselves.... You can see there is no hope of building up unless there is love – and love for all men. You and I ought to be greatly concerned with this matter of building up.

Oh, God only knows how much of spiritual increase and building is needed! It is a paralyzing situation that faces us if we look at our own limitations. I am sure nothing is going to be done unless we have a very large heart to look over and in and through and beyond, refusing to be held by the thing that is glaring at us, striking us and hurting us, and reaching through to that which is true in the heart.... It is love that builds. Moreover, it makes differences in those who exercise it, it brings them into rest. Truth alone may bring a strained look into the face and eyes. Love ought to bring into the countenance some suggestion of quiet strength and restful confidence.... Well, let us sit down in the armchair of His love and be at rest, and then get to work. You cannot work unless you have a background rest, and rest does not spring firstly from truth. It comes from love, God's love. Whatever else He gives us and adds to us, may the Lord make us a people who are characterized supremely by this love for one another and for all men.

From: Abounding in Love
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001722.html

September 2

I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you.... (Ephesians 3:1)

The measure of approximation to the fullness of the revelation has always been accompanied by a relative cost. Every instrument of the testimony has been laid under suspicion and reproach in a measure commensurate with the degree of value to the Lord, and this has meant that, humanly, they were limited to that extent. Many have withdrawn, fallen away, held aloof, doubted, feared, and questioned. But as Paul could say "My tribulations for you, which are your glory" (Eph. 3:13), or "The prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles" (Eph. 3:1), so the measure of limitation in the Lord is the measure of enrichment in His people. The fuller the revelation, the fewer those who apprehend, or the greater the number of those who stand aloof. Revelation only comes

through suffering and limitation, and to have it experimentally means sharing the cost in some way. But this is God's way of securing for Himself a spiritual seed plot....

All this may apply to individual lives in relation to the Lord's testimony. There may often be a chafing against limitation, confinement, and a restless hankering after what we would call something wider or less restricted. If the Lord has willed us to the place where we are, our acceptance of it in faith may prove that it becomes a far bigger thing than any human reckoning can judge. I wonder if Paul had any idea that his prison meant his continuous expansion of value to the Lord Jesus through nineteen hundred years? What applies to individuals also applies to corporate bodies, assemblies, or companies of the Lord's people scattered in the earth but one in their fellowship in relation to the Lord's full testimony. May the Lord be graciously pleased to cause the merely human aspect of prison walls to fall away, and give the realization that, far from being limited by men and circumstances, it is imprisonment in the Lord, and this means that all ages and all realms are entered through that prison.

From: Captivity in the Lord

www.austin-sparks.net/english/000689.html

September 3

He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion... and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 1:20,21; 2:6)

Get a revelation of that to your heart by the Holy Spirit, and see its emancipating power and its sustaining power. And that is for present revelation to the heart. That is the thing which the Lord has been seeking to reveal to our hearts more and more for a long time. The point is this: that, inasmuch as that is the side of vision presented, you and I have to seek the Lord for spiritual capacity to see it. And that leads us to that other fragment in the same letter, from which we have just quoted: "That He would grant unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your hearts being enlightened...." The eyes of your hearts being enlightened! That is the other side of vision.

Will you pray this for yourself? Will you pray this for all God's people? When the Lord's people get a new spiritual Holy Ghost revelation of the Sovereign Headship of Christ, and begin to hold fast the Head, they let go of everything that is local, and personal, and different, and scattered on the earth. That is the place to which to come for unity. We cannot be at variance with one another as the Lord's children if Christ is absolute Sovereign Head in our lives. When the Lord Jesus gets the complete

mastery as Head in our lives, then all independence of action, and life, and all self-will, self-direction, self-seeking, self-glory and self-vindication will go. These are the things which set us apart from one another. You pass from Isaiah, and as you do so you remember that you have the results of such a vision seen in this man Isaiah. Such a vision immediately has the effect of humiliating him to the dust. Oh, yes, we lose all our pride, all our importance when once we see the Lord in glory. “Woe is me....” That is humiliation! Then, after humiliation, there is consecration: “Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.” And, after humiliation and consecration, there comes vocation: “...who will go for Us?” “Then I said, Here am I; send me.”

From: The Lord's Testimony and the World Need - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001461.html

September 4

*The Most High does not live in buildings made by human hands.
(Acts 7:48 ISV)*

What Stephen saw, and what is stated, intimated, and implicit in the New Testament (a monumental document on the matter is “the Letter to the Hebrews”), was that Solomon was – at most – but a figure of a greater “Son,” and his temple, with all its glory, wealth, and beauty, was only a pointer *onward* to “A house not made with hands”; what Peter – after a difficult and painful transition – called, God’s *spiritual* house. Stephen concludes with a comprehensive gathering of all this history into “the Prophets,” and virtually says that the spirit of prophecy was related to this ever-future, onward, and ultimate *spiritual* goal of God.

What again, then, does all this amount to? On the one side, it is a mighty exposure and denunciation of the incorrigible habit and disposition of *God’s people* to bring what is essentially heavenly down to earth and fasten it there; to make of the spiritual something temporal; to make of the eternal something which will not – and cannot – abide; to make form, means, orders, and technique all-important. In a word, to have things fixed and boxed, so that the Holy Spirit is thwarted and frustrated in His ever-onward and ever-sovereign movement and innovation, if He so choose. The most dominant note, the most imperative cry of the New Testament is “Let us go on.” But the context of this cry is – “outside the camp.” The writer of those words in the Letter to the Hebrews, who has so much in common with Stephen, makes it abundantly clear that “outside the camp” means outside of all that which in its Judaistic nature systematizes and crystallizes *Christianity* into a set and settled form: into something earth-bound and final. On the other side, all this is a revelation of how fierce and terrible will be the opposition of such systems to a purely and definitely

spiritual testimony. Unless there is a conforming, there will at least be ostracism, and at most martyrdom.

From: Stephen – Thy Witness

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001137.html

September 5

“Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honor at God’s right hand!” Then they put their hands over their ears and began shouting. They rushed at him and dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. (Acts 7:56-58 NLT)

You and I, on the broadest basis of the Christian life, are here... to represent a check; and because we are here for that, we shall be called “trouble makers.” In a very real sense we shall *be* trouble makers. The trouble will focus itself upon us, and we shall have to suffer for it. The very fact that you are jealous for the Lord will bring you into conflict with that trend that there is in this world, in man.... When there is the purest testimony, the fullest expression of what is of God, the heavenly over against the earthly, the spiritual over against the carnal or the natural, the enemy gives a turn to things, a twist to things, and lays the responsibility at the door of a spiritual and a heavenly ministry. He says: “You are the cause of all the trouble – you are the troubler!” But no. The trouble lies deeper than that, and in another realm.

The truth is, there is something here that, in its very nature, *must* create trouble, *must* be a source of trouble, so long as God’s known will, His revealed mind, is being violated; while the full expression of God’s purpose is being withheld. To bring in something that stands for that, there is going to be trouble. It is a costly thing to have seen God’s full purpose and thought concerning His people. It is always a costly thing. The Lord Jesus set a very vivid example and object lesson of this truth right in the foreground, in the incident of the man born blind (John 9). There is no doubt that the Lord intended that man to represent Israel and Israel’s condition at the time. He gave that man sight – and what happened to the man? “They cast him out,” that is all; they cast him out, they excommunicated him (v. 34). That is an object lesson, an instance of this very thing.

If eyes have been opened; if, in any sense – not officially – you have become a “seer” – one who sees: it is going to cost you a lot, it will involve you in a lot of trouble. This matter of “seeing” does that. It was Elijah the *Seer*, over against the *blindness* of Israel. It is a costly thing to be a spiritual man or a spiritual woman in this universe. It is a costly thing, yes, very costly, to hold to a heavenly and spiritual position. It is a costly thing to hold for Christ’s full place; it involves you in trouble. It is a costly thing

to have light – if it is true light, God-given light. It is a costly thing to have Life. But remember, it is here, in this, that the power is resident.

From: Jealousy for God

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001248.html

September 6

We who worship by the Spirit of God are the ones who are truly circumcised. We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us. We put no confidence in human effort. (Philippians 3:3 NLT)

In the New Testament circumcision is regarded as spiritual and inward. Paul said it quite emphatically, “*Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh... circumcision is that of the heart*” (Rom. 2:28-29). “*We are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God*” (Phil. 3:3). It is a spiritual thing, an inward thing; it is of the heart. And it simply means that in the Cross of the Lord Jesus, the natural life and the reasoning of the natural life, or the self-life – the willing of the self-life, the desiring of the self-life – has been cut off by the Cross. Every expression and aspect of the self-life has been cut through by the Cross and is put in the place where the door is shut. There is no open door to any expression of the natural life. The Cross says, “The door is closed; death rests upon that.” That is spiritual circumcision. Stephen, in that matchless discourse of his which resulted in his murder, cried at one point to those who were persecuting and about to stone him, “*Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart*” (Acts 7:51). What did he mean by “*uncircumcised in heart and ears*”? He just meant this, that they were only willing and minded to have what they wanted and nothing more. Prejudice is a certain mark of an uncircumcised heart. Bigotry is the same, and anything that you can find that made up the situation which brought Stephen to his death is a mark of an uncircumcised heart. That is the thought. Still there is the reasoning and the arguing of the Self, of the natural life. There is still the desiring and the feeling of the Self obtruding itself. The Cross, spiritual circumcision, says “No!” to it all.

From: The Cross and the Way of Life - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002848.html

September 7

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3 NIV)

What do we expect when we go on with God, when we come right out for God? What have we in view? Well, the answer to that question will decide whether, in relation to God, we have ambitions for something on the

earth. Do you get the point? You see, it is so possible to swing over your natural ambitions to spiritual aims. It is the same thing still at work, and the only difference is the direction or sphere. You can be as ambitious in the work of God as you can be in the world, and it is the same natural ambition. It is the ambitiousness of nature. You desire – what do you desire? To see something, to have something, to be in something? Ambition for success; yes, once it was in the world – now the same ambition transferred to other things....

It is a mark of going on when we can come to the place where it is true before God that we have let go all the prosperity and success even of Christian work and Christian ministry as men would count it. To be able to let go the great opportunities and the great advantages that may be had amongst Christian people, and the prizes that can be grasped, and to say, "It is all right, the Lord knows; it is for Him to give or withhold. I am not going to make a line for those prizes. I am not going to allow those things to influence my walk with God. Ambition is not going to dictate my course," is a sure sign of growth. It may not seem here on earth to mean very big things; wide open doors and all that, but somehow you may take it that there is Life there, spiritual influence there, something that is counting there. In the end it will have counted. But this does sometimes first of all necessitate that conflict with ambition where all those suggestions and influences have to be laid low, and we come to the place where we see that the way of Life is to go on with God though it costs us everything. The law of the Spirit of Life works in that way.... The way of Life demands that we shall get before the Lord again, and say, "Lord, though all my earthly prospects fade, though all my ambitions are disappointed, it is You I want. You are my ambition, my goal. If I have You, these other things will count for much less." I believe that, as we can get there – and not many of us have got a long way on that road – but as we can get there, we find the secret of Life, of joy, of release.

From: The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000904.html

September 8

The leading priests and the teachers of religious law saw these wonderful miracles and heard even the children in the Temple shouting, "Praise God for the Son of David." But the leaders were indignant. (Matthew 21:15 NLT)

From the Mount of Olives He went, and in that meek and lowly way presented Himself as King. The fickle multitude, of course, jumped at earthly possibilities, and again the disciples are all in it. But when you get to Matthew 21:15, you get to the true situation in Israel among the Jews, and it will be found that even the fickle multitude will come to that

presently when they discover that He did not mean a temporal, political kingdom at all. And when all that prospect seems to be more than doubtful, the crowd will join the ruler's cry, "Away with Him!" The real thing deep down behind is in verse 15: the positive antagonism towards Him; no desire to have Him, of course stimulated by envy and jealousy. The place where it was really drawn out as to what people wanted was the Mount of Olives....

Really their thoughts and His are very far apart, and that becomes very clear in the end. The Mount of Olives first of all gets down into the truth as to what people are after. You never know the truth about a situation. It may look all right, it may seem to be quite favorable, but in fact it may be all wrong, false, and untrue. You never know until you obtain the heavenly position of higher ground, and then from that higher ground you can see the truth about things. That works in principle; that works in history. If you present the high ground of God's full thought for His people and the hearts of the people are really set upon having a work for God down here that is flourishing and prosperous and well-spoken of, you find that people are really, after all, only going with Him so long as He comes into line with their ideas and ambitions. But immediately that runs counter to thoughts more earthly, thoughts even in relation to Him, something deeper rises up. They are not going to have that. You have seen that many times; you must not touch their things. They say it is for the Lord, but you must not touch it; it is their own. If you are not coming to help their thing or things with your ministry or presentation, of course they won't have it, and it resolves itself into this: they won't have Him; that is not the kind of Lord they want. They want a Lord who is going to make *their* thing for Him successful down here. You can only know and discriminate between the true and the false when you yourself are on the higher ground.

From: The Mountains Around Jerusalem - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003270.html

September 9

Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. (Philippians 2:1,2 NLT)

Error, false teaching, and heresy have always been a major means by which the devil has sought to destroy "the testimony of Jesus," but when he brought in the weapon of what is known as "Modernism," or "Higher Criticism," he used a double-barreled gun. One barrel he aimed directly at the great fundamental truths of the Person of Christ, the work of Christ, and the authority of the Bible. He has thus wrought great havoc, but one wonders whether even that is comparable to the mischief of his second and

closely related barrel. By it he has poured out volumes and clouds of suspicion, fear, mistrust, apprehension, and all the grievous effects of these among true Christians.

There is not a single person today who is quite safe in this “Christian” world and atmosphere. Some of the most outstanding and erstwhile evangelical stalwarts have at length fallen under its awful miasma, and died of a broken heart because of it – and all so untrue! The enemy stops at no point short of dividing the last two Christians, and if he cannot find true ground for doing it by spreading suspicion and mistrust – “evil report” – he will make it by giving a twist to anything that is capable of being twisted....

We beg to appeal to all those to whose eyes this message may come, that they will ask the Lord, if need be, to completely convert their mentality in this matter. Would it not be more according to the Spirit of the Master, who said, “Let him that is without sin cast the first stone,” and “He that is not against us is for us,” if, as our instant reaction to every “report,” “rumor,” criticism, judgment, insinuation, innuendo, or whisper, we instantly asked the question, “Is it true? Did the speaker – or writer – really mean that? Is there not another meaning to be given to it? Is it not – perhaps – an unfortunate way of putting it, but not necessarily pernicious?” Should we not, before accepting it, find out whether our interpretation is the right one, or whether we may be mistaken? The enemy is engaged more than ever upon a campaign of sabotage within the Church for its internal disintegration, and it is for us to resist him by seeking all the *positive* ground of fellowship possible, not looking for all the negative ground, either really or imaginatively existent.

From: Understanding of the Times
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002080.html

September 10

The mystery was made known to me by revelation. (Ephesians 3:3 ESV)

As we take account of the situation today we feel more and more deeply convinced that the greatest need of the hour is for men of vision and courage. But we use the word “vision” in the specific sense in which it is used in the Bible and not in the general sense, of enterprise. That is, what is needed above all else is men who have had a Divine revelation by the Holy Spirit in their own hearts as to God’s purpose in this dispensation, and the particular Divine emphasis for the present hour.

There can be much enthusiasm and zeal put behind a more or less generally conceived idea of what needs to be done, with a resultant activity and “movement.” The opposite of this, and that which we are seeing to be so much more needed, is a burdening of the hearts of “chosen vessels” with

God's own most pressing concern at this time, resulting in an all-consuming passion which will accept all the cost of its realization....

There are very few men in our day of whom it can be truly said, "That man has had a revelation from God." There is all the difference between being saved and then going into Christian service with the resultant studying of the Bible, the preparation of sermons, addresses, lessons; collecting material, mastering themes and subjects; etc., etc., and giving this out as required or as opportunity affords – there is all the difference between this and an open heaven, an anointing, a revelation by the Holy Spirit. It is the difference between our laboring to get, in order to meet a constantly recurring demand, and the Holy Spirit continually revealing Christ in us. This is a general difference, but it is a very great one, and it may represent all the difference between bondage and liberty, between limitation and fullness, even between Life and death in ministry. But this is not our particular point. The need of the hour is not only for a higher spiritual level of ministry in general, it is for men with a specific revelation which will meet the situation as it is *now*.

From: The Need of the Hour
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000466.html

September 11

Christ's love compels us. (2 Corinthians 5:14 NIV)

"*The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit*" (Rom. 5:5). That was the dynamic of service. Now, that is simple and it works in two ways. All activity, work, and what is called "service" for the Lord, without that behind it, is lacking in the true power of fruitful service, but if that is there, we cannot help being the Lord's servants. Nothing can make us true servants of the Lord but a personal passionate love for Himself. Nothing can substitute that. But given that, there is no need for any kind of human ordination, or an ecclesiastical setting apart. You are the Lord's servant right enough if you have an adequate love for Himself in your heart. It will be, it will work out. All our value to the Lord depends upon the measure of our heart-love for Himself. That is all. There is nothing profound about that, but it is testing.

We may do many things, like the church at Ephesus later on. It did many things, but the Lord said, "*I have this against thee, that thou hast left thy first love*" (Rev. 2:4). And in effect He said: "There is no justification in your lampstand remaining, it is merely an empty profession, an outward vessel without the inner Lord, the inner light." And unless this original first love is recovered, it is mere profession, doing many things, but the thing which justifies our existence is that love and only that. Nothing but that love will keep us going. It is the power of endurance through the years, and

it is an awful thing to come to a Christian life which has got to be kept up without that love for the Lord in the heart. It is only that love that really makes the Christian life possible under all the strain of the years. I am quite sure that in the case of the apostle, with all his suffering and all he had to meet, the thing that kept him going was that flame of love in his own heart for the Lord Himself. Through the suffering, nothing but a strong love for the Lord will keep us going.

From: The Representation of the Invisible God - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002148.html

September 12

I pray... that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints. (Ephesians 1:18 NIV)

What is Christ's inheritance in the saints? What are the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints? It is that the saints are to provide Him with the means of the universal manifestation of Himself as God has purposed Him to be. It is a part of the arrangement in those counsels of the Godhead, that He shall be the central fullness, but that the fullness should not be manifested, displayed in an isolated way. There would be no purpose in that, because He could have done that in Deity without incarnation, He could have possessed the fullness in that way, and that is what the letter to the Philippians says. He was equal with God, and had all the fullness, but He emptied Himself. Why? In order that others might be brought into the fullness, that He might not hold it all for Himself. That is what Satan wants to do.

The Lord Jesus let go in order to bring others in. The apostle says, "*Let this mind be in you.*" If any of you are inclined to stand for your own rights, on your own ground, to hold things for yourself, you are violating the very spirit of Christ who let go His own rights in order that others might come into them and get the benefit. So the inheritance of Christ is this: that He is made heir of all things, but He can have all things only as He has the saints, and He gets those "all things" through and in the saints. It is a part of the arrangement, the agreement. It is not as one isolated unit in God's universe, that He is to have everything, but by appointment man-wise, in a corporate sense, and not only in a personal sense....

The Lord is not satisfied with His people just being saved, and the Lord is not satisfied that people should just remain saved. The Lord has fixed this as His goal: the *full knowledge of Him*. It is indispensable to the Lord. His inheritance is bound up with it. The need today is that the Lord's own people should come into a knowledge of Himself which they do not

possess, into a position in relation to Himself which they do not occupy; in a word: into the full knowledge of Him.

From: The Church of the Firstborn - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003330.html

September 13

Strive earnestly to guard and keep the harmony and oneness of the Spirit in the binding power of peace. (Ephesians 4:3 AMP)

Oneness in Christ as a Body fitly framed together is what is portrayed. How is this perfect unity reached? By all that is individual and personal being left, by the Lord being the focal center, and by our giving diligence to maintain the unity in that way; keeping all personal things out, and keeping Christ and His interests always in view.... This is not visionary, imaginative, or merely idealistic, it is very practical. You and I will discover that there are working elements of divisiveness, things creeping in amongst us to set us apart. The enemy is always seeking to do that, and the things that rise up to get in between the Lord's people and put up a barrier are countless; a sense of strain and of distance, for example, of discord and of unrelatedness. Sometimes they are more of an abstract character; that is, you can never lay your hand upon them and explain them, and say what they are; it is just a sense of something. Sometimes it is more positive, a distinct and definite misunderstanding, a misinterpretation of something said or done, something laid hold of; and of course, it is always exaggerated by the enemy.

How is that kind of thing to be dealt with in order to keep the unity of the Spirit? Rightly, adequately on this basis alone, by our saying: "This is not to the Lord's interests; this can never be of value to the Lord; this can never be to His glory and satisfaction; this can only mean injury to the Lord." What I may feel in the matter is not the vital consideration. I may even be the wronged party, but am I going to feel wronged and hurt? Am I going to stand on my dignity? Am I going to shut myself up and go away, because I have been wronged? That is how nature would have it, but I must take this attitude: "The Lord stands to lose, the Lord's Name stands to suffer, the Lord's interests are involved in this; I must get on top of this; I must get the better of this; I must shake this thing off and not allow it to affect my attitude, my conduct, my feelings toward this brother or sister!" There must be the putting aside of that which we feel, and even of our rights for the Lord's sake, and a getting on top of this enemy effort to injure the Lord's testimony. That is giving diligence to keep the unity.... Life is by unity, and unity can only adequately be found in Christ being in His place as the One for whom we let go everything that is personal. We might not do it for the sake of anyone else. We might never do it for the

sake of the person in view. We do it for His sake, and the enemy is defeated.

From: All Things in Christ - Chapter 8

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002774.html

September 14

Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved His own who were in the world, He now showed them the full extent of His love. (John 13:1 NIV)

No ministry of the servant of Jesus Christ can be a triumphant ministry unless there is a deep, strong, abiding love.... Love is going to solve our problems and to bring us into victory; but apart from a sufficient love, the problems of human make-up, the many differences of disposition and character and all that goes to make up a company, and the continuous drain and strain, with all the pressure that comes from the enemy, will present a problem, a perplexity and a paralyzing task....

We may ask, "How did the Lord manage to maintain the relationship with His disciples?" They were so difficult, so different, so disappointing. "Having loved His own... He loved them unto the end." That is the answer. Love got above all that they were; love gave the extra thing which enabled Him not to take them just as they were and end there. So in our relationships, the spirit of the true servant is only possible as there is a deep love. Upon all those who have ideas of serving the Lord and working for Him I would urge this consideration: that the work of the Lord is not something which you outwardly and objectively take up. It is (if it is the true thing) the outworking of love for the Lord and for those who are the objects of His love.

That is very simple, but it goes to the heart of things. Sooner or later you and I will be brought to the position where the question will be, Have we sufficient love to go on? Can we find enough love in our hearts to get us through this particularly difficult situation? The situation will be constituted by all those factors which resolve us into servants, bondslaves. It would not have become so acute if only we had been esteemed and honored, and held in high regard. But when the situation is created by a great deal being expected of us, by demands being made upon our generosity, our kindness, calling for an almost inexhaustible fund of patience, and the letting go of personal feeling; when really the main issue in the crisis is this – I am being imposed upon: too much is being expected of me: I am treated as a servant – that is where we are found out. Love alone can support this service.

From: "Behold My Servant" - Chapter 8

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001747.html

September 15

*Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them... Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.
(Romans 12:9,10 NLT)*

"He loved them unto the uttermost." And I think in that statement, there is the most wonderful thing that ever came into this world. Jesus had had a lot of trouble with those men. They had often misunderstood Him. They had often disappointed Him. They were really a very poor lot of men... He knew what a poor lot of men they were, but He loved them unto the uttermost. That is the first thing about this love. It is not offended by our failures. He does not withdraw His love because we make mistakes. We may often disappoint Him, we may often fail Him, we may often grieve His heart, but He goes on loving us. He loves us unto the uttermost, right to the end. He is not offended by our failures. That is a very different kind of love from our love. This is God's love in Christ.... You know, it is so easy to talk about love, to pretend to love, to use the language of love, to sing hymns about love, and it can all be sentimental; perhaps we all know people who have told us that they love us, but very often they are the very people who have hurt us most. Now, the love of Jesus was not sentimental, it was practical. He did not go in with His disciples and say, "Brothers, I do love you very much." He showed that He loved them by what He did for them. It was not sentimental love, it was practical love. And this is the love with which He loved them unto the uttermost.... These things which characterize the love of Christ for His own ought to characterize us in love for others. That is why the Holy Spirit has come. So that as He loved us to the uttermost, so ought we to love one another.

From: "That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One" - Meeting 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001070.html

September 16

*You must warn each other every day, while it is still "today," so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God.
(Hebrews 3:13 NLT)*

We talk about our motives, and we say, "Our motive was right!" We talk about our conscientiousness, we talk about our intentions; but you and I do not know what lies behind what we call our good motives. There is a deceitfulness about this human heart that defies our greatest attempt at tracking it down, and we shall never do it.... Here is where the church has become such a confused thing, and such a tragedy; for the prevailing idea is that if you give yourself over to God He will take you up and use you: "Bring over your humanity and consecrate it to the Lord! Consecrate your

old man to the Lord, and go out and serve the Lord, with a consecrated old man!" it is utterly contrary to the teaching of God's Word. The result is that in the work of God all the world over you have people serving the Lord in the energy of the flesh, in the reasoning of the flesh, in the emotions of the flesh. Meet them, counter them, frustrate them, and you meet something evil; you meet with a fight, a division, a schism, a scattering, and wholesale resignations.

Do you see what a havoc the enemy can make in that which is called the church, because people with best intentions and purest motives have come to serve the Lord with all their own intelligence, their own strength, and their own emotion? They have not seen that God has closed the door to the old creation, and that God's attitude is this: "The only thing that can satisfy Me, that can serve Me is My Son, and if you are going to come into My service, He has to be the energy of everything, the Life of everything, the Wisdom of everything!" He has to be the governing, ruling reality in everything. It is not to be a matter of your impulses, but of His urgings and leadings by the Holy Spirit; not your sitting down to reason out what it would be good to do for the Lord, what ought to be done, what needs to be done, but what He shows you, nothing more.... You and I must not bring over our old creation and give it to God, expecting God to use it. God begins with birth. The church of the firstborn is something quite new, and it comes out of a death. That death is the death of an old creation, and the resurrection is of something that is not the resuscitation of an old creation, but the resurrection of something wholly of God.

From: The Church of the Firstborn - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003328.html

September 17

Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart. (Deuteronomy 8:2 NIV)

There is no question that Isaac was given of God to Abraham; he was a perfect miracle, impossible unless God had given him. And then we read, "God did prove Abraham." Abraham.... gave him up and he got him back; got him back with a whole kingdom.... He has the kingdom by letting go – the foreshadowing of this Son of God Who let go.... You see, it is intensely practical. Oh, how can this be? By getting yourself out of the picture! That is why it cannot be – because self is in the picture! Self-will, self-interest, self-realization; that is the kingdom of Satan, and God is not going to give you His kingdom on that ground....

This is practical. I have to be quite sure that I am not in this, that some secret ambition of mine, some motive of mine, is not at work. Oh,

how subtle are our hearts! You and I perhaps are ready to be utterly for the Lord. We mean well, and we mean it thoroughly. We would sing really with our hearts and with our voices at full strength, "None of self, and all of Thee," and we would mean it, and there would be no uncertainty so far as we are concerned. And yet God knows that we are all the time defeated in our very sincerity by secret motives, and nothing but a test position can prove whether we actually mean it. So He brings us to a test – to a prospect, and then a disappointment. How do we react? Is our sorrow, our pain, for the Lord or for ourselves? Are we disappointed, or is it really only the Lord for Whom we are concerned and we are not in it at all? You see what I mean – a test situation to find out after all whether it is "None of self, and all of Thee." We can never discover it except in practical ways along the line of very practical testings. The Lord knows it all right, but it is not enough that He knows it. You see, in order for us to come in, we have to come in intelligently and co-operatively. That is the point of every test. The Lord could do a thing with a stroke, it could happen mechanically. But we are in a moral world, and God acts towards man on moral ground. Man has a will that constitutes him a morally responsible person, and so he must exercise his will in co-operation with God.

From: The Cross, the Church, and the Kingdom - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001729.html

September 18

*What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift?
(1 Corinthians 4:7 NLT)*

There are still a lot of people in this world who think that there is something in man that can contribute to the glory of God and that Christianity is only the bringing up out of man of something that is for the glory of God. That is a long, long-standing fallacy and lie. It is not true. Call it what you like; it goes by various names, such as "the inner light" or "the vital spark." The Word of God all the way through is coming down tremendously on this thing. I start at zero, and zero for me means that I can contribute nothing. Everything has to come from God. The very fact that the gift of God is eternal Life means that you have not got it until it is given to you. You are blind until God gives you the faculty of sight. You are dead until God gives you Life. You are a hopeless cripple until God does something for you and in you which you can never do. Unless God does this thing, unless this act takes place, well, there you lie. Spiritually, that is how you are. You can contribute nothing....

This is one of the great lessons that you and I have to learn in the School of Christ, that God begins for His glory at zero, and God will take pains through the Holy Spirit to make us to know that it is zero; that is, to

bring us consciously to zero, and make us realize it is all with Him.... Have we got settled on this? We take so long to learn these basic elementary lessons. We do still cling to some sort of idea that we can produce something, and all our miserable days are simply the result of still hoping that we can in some way provide the Lord with something. Not being able to find it, but breaking down all the time, we get miserable, perfectly miserable. It takes us so long to come to the place where we do fully and finally settle this matter, that if we lived as long as ever man lived on this earth, we shall not be able to contribute one iota which can be acceptable to God, and which He can take and use for our salvation, for our sanctification, for our glorification, not a bit. All that He can use is His Son, and the measure of our ultimate glory will be the measure of Christ in us, just that.

From: The School of Christ - Chapter 8

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001040.html

September 19

*All who have entered into God's rest have rested from their labors,
just as God did after creating the world. (Hebrews 4:10 NLT)*

Christ is God's Sabbath. Christ is our Sabbath. When we enter by faith into Christ's righteousness, we enter into God's rest. It is a tremendous power.... The Lord says, in quite simple language, "If only you will trust Me, and trust My provision, and stop worrying, stop fretting, stop being anxious; if you will but believe Me, I have the ground upon which I could meet all your need; I am no longer without ground. There was a time when I had not the ground upon which to do anything with you, and for you, but now you are on the ground of Christ, the ground which I have provided; if only you will trust Me, if only you will rest in Me to bring you through, you will be saved from so much of this weakness, and fret, and anxiety!" Worry is a destroying thing. At the back of a lot that we suffer in body, and in mind, there is so often a secret, hidden restlessness, something deep down in our subconscious being of a fret, an anxiety, something that is not rest. It takes many forms. Sometimes over a concern of the Lord's we feel that, unless we do it, it will never be done. We feel that if we are not up and at it, then the whole thing will go to pieces; so much depends upon us.

No one will think that this is the call for passivity, for abandon of concern for the things of the Lord; but it is possible for us to have the things of the Lord on our hearts and yet not to have faith in God about them. There are hidden secrets to a great deal of our weakness and defeat, and unnecessary suffering. They are the hidden things of something which is other than just restful faith in God. There are some people who need to take things to heart a little more than they do, but for many the trouble is

perhaps of the other kind. They are thinking that they have to run God's universe for Him; they must look after things or else they will never be looked after! But to observe the Sabbath (no one will take that literally as meaning the observance of a particular day of the week), to recognize Christ as God's Rest through righteousness, to observe *that*, to keep *that* Sabbath, is Life which conquers death, because it is righteousness which cannot be destroyed.

From: Spiritual Ministry - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003257.html

September 20

The message about the cross is nonsense to those who are being destroyed, but it is God's power to us who are being saved.

(1 Corinthians 1:18 ISV)

Have you got a Cross in your history? Have you got a grave in your history? If you have not then you are dwelling in the shadows. You may get flashes and touches, but they will be fleeting, transient, coming and going. If you have a Cross and a grave in your experience, in your history, the Holy Spirit has got what He requires, and it is blessedly possible for you to have the abiding of this risen Life in which all these values are made good, and growingly good. What is the new creation? With it there comes first of all a new consciousness. You are conscious that things are new, and things are different. It is a new consciousness as to the Lord. You are alive to that to which you were never alive before; in every realm things are the same, yet entirely different. Somehow or other you move in the same surroundings, and touch the same people, but there is something new. There is a new consciousness. Things have become different....

Not only do we have a new consciousness, but we have a new capacity. The Holy Spirit gives capacities that none of us have by nature. We may by nature be very limited in our capabilities. By the anointing of the Holy Spirit we may have capacities that the best men and women of this world without the Holy Spirit have not got. A truly Spirit-indwelt child of God has capacities and capacities that no one else has. This very breathing carries with it capacity. Until Adam was breathed into he had no capacities for all that he was intended to do; but when he became a living soul by the breath of God he had capacities for knowing, for doing, for understanding.

The new creation is like that, with new capacities, capabilities for knowing, for understanding, for doing, that we never had before. No child of God ought ever to settle down and finally accept the position that they "cannot" in any particular. We should never say in any matter that is presented to us in the will of God, "I cannot." The presence of the Holy

Spirit means capability and capacity for doing things which we could never do before. We ought to prove the Lord in that way.

From: Knowing God in Christ - Chapter 13

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003129.html

September 21

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. (Colossians 3:1 NLT)

Our prayer life has got to be on a heavenly basis. It is not enough just to be praying for our earthly affairs. It is so easy to get up in the morning and hurry through a few words asking the Lord to bless us and ours, and our earthly things for the day, as though these things of this life were all. Oh, no! The Lord would have prayer touching things heavenly, things spiritual, related to that which is not of time, but of eternity; not of this world, but in relation to His eternal, heavenly intentions. He would have us separated from the merely temporal. There is a place for bringing those before the Lord, but they have got to be lifted in relation to the heavenly and not be dealt with as things in themselves. The blood makes everything heavenly, separating from the old creation. There is a very great deal of the old creation in our prayers; it is our convenience, our deliverance from inconvenience and discomfort, our salvation from what would bring us a great deal of trouble and sorrow. That is the motive behind a good deal of our praying. "Lord, don't let anything happen today, because it would spoil our life today!"

But supposing the Lord would lift us into something altogether new through sorrow, are we then going to pray that prayer? No, our prayer must be: "Today, Lord, I want that which is of greatest account in relation to spiritual values and if that must be by way of trial and adversity, I do not pray to be delivered from it." I say, "Lord, there is power to carry me through, and by prayer I come into touch with that power to carry me through the trials of every day in relation to the meaning of the trial." That is heavenly praying. That is praying with your heart in heaven. "If ye be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your affections upon the things which are above, not on the things which are on the earth, for ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3). "Our citizenship is in heaven." Now the life of the believer is to be, therefore, one with heavenly interests always in view, and our prayer life is in relation to those interests.

From: The Altar of Incense

www.austin-sparks.net/english/003691.html

September 22

I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. (Nehemiah 1:6)

It is one thing, beloved, for us to get a kind of public concern about things and then begin to make a great noise about it amongst men; to advertise, to demonstrate, and to give it a public form in utterance and effort and organization; to join ourselves to some cause, or to join some cause to ourselves, and then in that cause to make a great big affair of it: that is one thing. And that may have all manner of elements which just fall short of that which is essential and necessary from the Lord's standpoint. It is one thing to come to a situation from the outside, and link ourselves on with it, and take it up, and make it our work for life, our life-interest; it is quite another thing for the Lord to put into our hearts, in secret, an almost unbearable, intolerable burden which is His own heart-burden, and for us first of all to bear that thing secretly in the presence of God upon our hearts in a deep out-pouring of travailing prayer; quite another thing to come to the Lord's interests in that way.

There are plenty of people whom you could get interested in a cause; whom you could get to take up a piece of work requiring help, but it is another thing to have that spiritual fellowship with God which results in God putting His travail into your own soul. The difference is that in the one instance the thing is something objective; we come along and interest ourselves in it, take it up; but it is apart from us. It has our interest, it has our energy, it has our resources, but it is something objective to ourselves. It is a piece of work, a movement, a testimony – using that word in a technical sense. The other thing is this: before the Lord we take responsibility. Do you notice that "we" in chapter 1, verse 6? Nehemiah is a part of this and this is a part of him. You notice how, all the way through, in dealing with this matter he uses the word "we." He is apart from the whole thing, that is, he has not accepted the conditions; he is not responsible for the state of things; he certainly repudiates the whole thing, and does not for one moment agree with it, and yet he is in this thing as though he were responsible for it; as though God could lay it all at his own door. The thing has come so near to his own heart that he does not stand here and the situation there, but he finds himself as one with it. It is his own burden, and he takes the thing in responsibility upon his own shoulders before God in prayer, and prays vicarious prayer over this situation.

From: Nehemiah – A Living Message for God's People Today - Part 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000957.html

September 23

The city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. (Revelation 21:23 NLT)

Light is not a mental thing: that is to say, it is not just a matter of having a store of mental knowledge. That is not light. It is possible to have an enormous amount of doctrine and truth and never be luminaries, that is, never register impact upon darkness. Real light is experimental: that is to say, it is the fruit of experience, the experience of suffering. How have you children of God come to know what you do know of the Lord, that real kind of knowledge of the Lord which is so precious to us, which means so much and which makes you in that measure of value to others? It is through suffering, it is through the difficult way the Lord has led you, it is through the work of the Cross that He has wrought in you. “The Lamb is the lamp” – suffering leading to knowledge, to light, to understanding. It is the only way.

These people at the end will be in the good of a great and wonderful revelation which has come by their fellowship with Christ in His sufferings. It is very true. It may not be too comforting from one standpoint, but it is true; and it ought to help us to realize this: that the Lord, in the way in which He is dealing with us, in the sufferings which He allows to come upon us, is really seeking our education, that we may have a knowledge of Himself which can only come that way, and which is a peculiar kind of knowledge of tremendous value to us and through us to others. We do not learn in any other way. It is the Lamb, always the Lamb-principle, the way of suffering and sacrifice and self-emptying, that brings us into the knowledge of the Lord. “The Lamb is the lamp thereof”; and, just as it is deeper death unto fuller life, so it may often be deeper darkness unto fuller light.

The Lord seems to lead us in a way where we are less and less able naturally to understand Him. He gets us altogether out of our natural capacity, beyond our capacity for interpreting His ways. We just do not know what the Lord is doing, or why He is doing what He is doing; yet it is the way by which we come to a very real kind of inward knowledge of Himself. It may not be capable of explanation in words to anybody, but we know, somehow or other we know, and that is a mighty thing, a mighty power of knowledge. It is light through the Cross.

From: Followers of the Lamb - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000809.html

September 24

Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God! (Acts 7:56 ISV)

One, perhaps supreme, factor in the significance of Stephen was what he saw at the end and said with almost his last breath: “Behold, I see the heavens opened; and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God” (Acts 7:56). Here we have the central and basic reality of true New Testament Christianity, of the Church and the churches – Jesus on the right hand of God. The government, the authority, the headquarters, vested in the ascended Lord, and centered *in heaven*; not in Jerusalem, nor anywhere else on earth.... The Jewish rulers and Stephen’s accusers were quick and shrewd enough to recognize the implications, for they had no less and no other import than that the “Temple made with hands” was finished; the dispensation of the Law was ended. There was an implicit call to the Church of Jesus to leave the Temple and all that went with it and to move into the greater, the fuller, and the abiding reality.

The tragedy is that, with [the book of] “Hebrews” in their hands, responsible leaders of the Church can still adhere to a system and form which is but the extension or carry-over of the Old Testament, with certain changes of phraseology. The *immensity* of the change and gap has certainly not been apprehended. Some of the most terrible things in the whole Bible are contained in that letter in relation to the crisis and the two ways and realms. The issue is no less than that of Life and death. All this has much to say regarding the true nature of the Church and the churches. He that hath eyes to see, let him see!

From: According to Christ - 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000721.html

September 25

I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the One who is the stairway between heaven and earth. (John 1:51 NLT)

No thought that God has ever expressed dies. There is no lapse of any thought that God has expressed. God expressed His thoughts in the very conception and constitution of the Israel of old. They were in all that was said about Israel and in all that was revealed as to God’s purpose in Israel. God expressed His thoughts concerning Israel in a multitude of ways. That Israel failed to answer to the thoughts of God. His thoughts concerning Israel were never fully realized because of their rebellion. So that Israel was passed by, but God’s thoughts were not put aside. All those same thoughts are taken up in a new Israel.

Jesus Himself becomes the inclusive new Israel. You remember that when He referred to Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, He said to Nathanael: “*Ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man*” (John 1:51). So Jesus is the new Israel in person. All the communications of God and Heaven to man are by way of Jesus, the new Israel. All God’s thoughts in the past ages are taken up in the Lord Jesus in the first place. All that was ever intended by God concerning Israel and was lost by them, is carried on in the Lord Jesus, and then transferred by Him to His companions and the companions of the heavenly calling – the new Israel, which is spiritual. This opens up a very big realm for you.

From: The On-High Calling, Volume 2 - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000981.html

September 26

Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:33 NIV)

And that putting first often meant a letting go of everything personal.... What is disappointment to us? Can we always say that disappointment which we think is disappointment with the Lord and over His things is because we did so much want the Lord to have what He wanted irrespective of our interests at all; we were prepared to let everything go, *WE* were not mixed up in this thing somehow? In the Lord getting what He wants, we see ourselves figuring in some way. It has to be a very sharp instrument that gets in between those two things and defines them because they are so mixed up. Is it not true that faith wavers, weakens and oftentimes goes right down and under when in the way of the Lord’s interests *ourselves* are entirely shut out?

What is the key to faith then? The key to faith is this dividing of soul and spirit, or, in other words, it is the complete abnegation of self-interests – not in the Buddhist sense of annihilation, but in the sense of God’s interests becoming positive and predominant. That is where the battle of faith rages; it rages upon that ground always. If we were so utterly – and not one of us really is – if we were so utterly consumed for the Lord’s interests alone that no other interest in our lives had any precedence or power to govern us, we would be in victory all the time. It is this completely disinterested concern for what the Lord wants that is the key to faith. If Israel in the wilderness had taken this attitude – “Well, this is a very difficult experience, but the Lord is after something, the Lord wants something, and He evidently knows that that is the best way to get it; all right, I am with Him, I may lose everything, I may suffer the loss of all things, but it is what the Lord wants that matters. The Lord wants us in that land; well, if it means everything, to be there for the Lord’s pleasure, that is

the thing that matters.” If that had been their attitude, do you think they would have journeyed forty years in the wilderness round and round, do you think at the border of the land they would have been turned back to perish in the wilderness? You can see in the consummation that next generation which did go in, went in on this matter of faith only. The whole story is based upon faith.

From: The Most Difficult Thing in the World
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001254.html

September 27

God places the lonely in families. (Psalm 68:6 NLT)

The higher position of “Ephesians” is this – that now, being quickened and raised together with Christ and seated in the heavenlies is a matter of relatedness to other believers, and in that relatedness, you are going to find your fullness. You are never going to find spiritual enlargement just as an isolated, separate individual, but in relation with other believers. “God setteth the solitary in families” (Ps. 68:6), and there is no doubt about it, whether or not you understand or accept the doctrine of it, you can prove very quickly in experience that our spiritual enlargement does come by way of true spiritual and heavenly relatedness with other believers. That is proved by the fact that it is not always easy for Christians to live together for very long. It sounds a terrible thing to say, but you have a lot of other factors to reckon with.

If you were ordinary people in this world, you *might* get on very well, but being Christians you have to meet the whole force of Satan working upon any little bit of natural life he can find. So he makes for difficulty between Christians that they would not find if they were not in a heavenly position. They are meeting forces in the heavenlies. There are the rub and friction and all the cross currents that try to divide Christians but which do not try to divide other people, because there is so much bound up with true spiritual oneness amongst the Lord’s people – so much for the Lord, and so much against Satan. Satan is going to break up that spiritual oneness if he can. He knows what that means for him, and the Lord knows what that means for Himself – and hence the special and extra difficulties when it is a case of Christians living together, especially for a long time.

Now what is the upshot? When these difficulties arise we must say, “It is evidently necessary for me to get a new spiritual position, to get on top of this. If I am not going to give it up and leave, I must come to some spiritual enlargement; I have to know the Lord in a new way, to have more grace, love and patience.” That is spiritual enlargement, and it comes by relatedness. (Of course, that is only one way; there are many others by

which spiritual enlargement comes by relatedness.) If only we can keep together in prayer, there is spiritual enlargement.

From: A Way of Growth - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001719.html

September 28

At last they understood that He wasn't speaking about the yeast in bread, but about the deceptive teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matthew 16:12 NLT)

There has come into this universe something that disturbs the universe. All these terrible wars, about which you know something, are the result of this disturbing influence which has come into the universe. There is something in this universe that stirs up human nature. Like alcohol, it makes men fight against one another. It keeps the world in unrest. It produces all this excitement of the human evil nature. Then, again, this something that has come into this universe results in an enlargement that is quite unnatural – a false development.... Anything that results in unnatural development and enlargement is evil. The Apostle Paul said, “*Through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*” Anything that makes us unnaturally big is evil, whether it be the individual life, or whether it be what is called the work of God, trying to make it bigger than its real spiritual measure, inflating it beyond its genuine spiritual degree; that is something evil, that is leaven....

Then what about this leaven that makes things appeal to our natural taste? Paul said to Timothy, “The time will come when they will not endure sound teaching; and they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.” And he goes on to say that they will believe the lie instead of the truth. Why is that? Because these teachers appeal to the natural life. These teachers cover over evil. Indeed, they will sometimes call evil good. People do not like the teachers who tell them what is wrong, that this thing and that thing are contrary to God. They like leavened bread, it pleases the flesh... He says there will be leaven, there will be corruption and defilement everywhere, but the teaching of the New Testament is: Keep yourselves pure. See that your garments are not spotted. Walk in this sinful world as those who do not belong to its nature. Although there is leaven everywhere, you be the unleavened bread. But, the world may not like you, the world will not like unleavened bread. It does not please the flesh, but the bread which is pure is pleasing to God.

From: “That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One” - Meeting 30

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001099.html

September 29

*The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God.
(1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV)*

Mental activity, emotional life and the will is exactly that which the New Testament calls the natural man, who as a “soulish” man is incapable of accepting what comes from the Spirit of God. Nearly all so-called revivals have happened on this basis. They were mighty movements for the shaking of emotions: mighty persuasions and argumentations were used to influence the understanding and will. What was the result? The natural man has been maneuvered into Christianity and been made a Christian. We cannot, however, recognize the thoughts of God in this and it has nothing to do with being born again. It may be that “rebirths” have occurred in the revivals mentioned above. But there is a difference between, let us say, a psychological rebirth and a rebirth in the Spirit. The one might temporarily carry all the characteristic features of a real rebirth. And yet all of that does not necessarily have anything to do with the Spirit, and in innumerable cases it has had nothing to do with the Spirit. It is a work of man... Christianity has become a system of human interpretation of the thoughts of God. Spiritual death hovers over it. It is no living testimony for God. God has given us a burden in our hearts concerning His thoughts. We do not speak to criticize. We speak because we have to....

People that stand without reserve for the rights of God will always be considered as enemies by those who reject the thoughts of God.... Wherever a religious system has come to reign, it will always be held against them that it is they who bring the people of God into confusion. This is what makes the ministry so difficult. This is what makes the ministry so costly. Israel was so deceived that it thought it was doing right in its idolatry. This is the highest level of deception, not seeing that everything one does, also that which is sincerely intended, actually serves the devil. The prophet's disagreement is not in the first place with Israel. His battle is with the whole spiritual system into which Israel is entangled. “Religious” people would not even rebel against the ministry of the prophet, if the enemy did not instigate them. So they become instruments of the devil. But the prophet is ready to encounter this. He is misunderstood, he is slandered and seen as an enemy; he is marked as the one who troubles Israel. But he has a vision. He does not serve himself. He knows that his standpoint leaves no room for personal ambition. But he has seen God. He is connected to God. And in the special standing which he has with God, the difference between the godly and the human has been revealed to him. With this vision he has become prepared to carry the cost that the service of God demands.

From: “The Rights of God” - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001794.html

September 30

*The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever. Dear children, this is the last hour.
(1 John 2:17,18 NIV)*

Over wide stretches of the earth the people of God are being driven, scattered, having everything outward taken. The question is: Why does the Lord allow it? Why is it so, if the Lord is wise, and almighty, and gracious? It is to discover how much the Heavenly Christ is to His people, and how much they depend upon the earthly order of things, even the Christian order.

"That which was from the beginning.... Little children, it is the last hour... the one who does the will of God lives forever." Do you see the link? If at the end, at the last hour, it is as it was from the beginning, then it will abide forever, but if it has become something else, it will go. This whole question of heavenly relationship with the Lord is a tremendously searching one, the fact that Christ has transferred everything to heaven and that nothing less than a life in heavenly union with Him will stand the test at any time. We will ask the Lord that He will take this – if it really is the truth – and search us. It may be that some of us will find comfort, because we shall see this is exactly what the Lord is doing with us. Why isolation? Why the testings? Why the loneliness in spiritual life? To save us from things unto Himself, even Christian things, so that God's end that Christ may be all and in all shall be reached; not things, but Christ; not Christianity, but Christ; not Christian work, but Christ.

From: That Which Was From The Beginning - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002953.html

October 1

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. (Romans 8:9 NIV)

Perhaps the major problem of most of the Lord's people is to keep that line of division between what we are in ourselves and what Christ is in us. The great line of attack on the part of the enemy is to bring what we are ourselves continually up into view and occupy us with that, and by so doing obscure Christ. The great object of the Holy Spirit in His opposing of Satan is to bring Christ into view and to occupy us with Him to the obscuring of ourselves. That is where the great difficulty arises for most of the Lord's people. There is always this beat back, this drive back to get us occupied with ourselves, as to what we are, to keep us from being occupied with Christ and what He is; in some way to get that gap, that gulf, that separation filled up, and the line of demarcation obliterated, so that there is

confusion. God begins with the Firstborn. That implies something altogether other than what we are, and it is important to see what God says, and how God views those who are represented as being in Christ, and in whom Christ is....

When Christ is in us, God views us through Christ. Oh, that we might recognize this, that in Christ in us, there is the embodiment of God's thought, and He is able to speak so of us. His activities with us are all in relation to the Christ who is now by the Holy Spirit in us, and in Whom we are. The fact that the Firstborn is invariably connected with death and resurrection is God's way of saying that what we are in ourselves by nature is buried from His standpoint, and it is His Son alone who obtains where we are concerned as a risen One, the only One who lives before Him. All else are dead and buried in the sight of God, and God would have us take that attitude. Remember that we are dead and buried.

From: The Church of the Firstborn - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003328.html

October 2

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son. (Hebrews 1:1,2 ESV)

It says that in times past God spoke “in many ways,” not only in different portions, but in different manners. It would take too long for us to go back to the Old Testament to see all the manners in which God spoke. He spoke by a thousand different means: sometimes by words and sometimes by acts. The manners were indeed “diverse.” However, the statement here is that at the end He speaks in one way, one all-inclusive way, and that is in His Son. God’s Son is His one inclusive way of speaking at the end. On the one side, no one is going to get anything from God apart from Jesus Christ. God will absolutely refuse to speak other than in His Son. If you want to know what God wants to say to you, you have to come to His Son. On the other side, in Jesus Christ we have all that God ever wants to say....

Yes, we have far more of God’s speaking in His Son than we have yet come to understand. We have nothing apart from Jesus Christ, and we need nothing apart from Him. You can read everything that has ever been written on Christian doctrine and still be the same man or woman. God’s ways are very practical, and He teaches us by experience. That experience is sometimes very difficult and is called here “the training of sons.” May the Lord Jesus just impress our hearts again with these things! God is still speaking in His Son, and His speaking is in order to get companions of His Son. Companions of this heavenly calling and of Christ will go into the

hard school and have to learn many hard lessons, but in learning them they will come to understand how great is their inheritance in the Lord Jesus.

From: The On-High Calling - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000970.html

October 3

Let our lives lovingly express truth in all things, speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly. Enfolded in love, let us grow up in every way and in all things into Him. (Ephesians 4:15 AMP)

Any system of religion that just puts on from the outside, and covers over the inner life by mere rite and ritual is false, it is not true. The work of God is to reconstitute human nature. And that, of course, involves two things. On the one side, it involves a breaking down. And if you know anything about God's dealings with lives who come into His hands, there is undoubtedly a large place for that – a progressive breaking down; a getting to the root of things, and undeceiving us. If we have any illusions about ourselves, they will all be gone when God has done with us. If we are governed by any kind of falsehood about ourselves, and our position, and our work, when God has done with us, that will all be gone. He is going to break us down until we see ourselves stark, as an unclean thing, with all our righteousnesses as filthy rags. So He will break us down, and He does.

But there is the other side, of course, all the time, for God is not only, and always negative; there is the constructing, bringing up to the place where anything that is false, anything that is not absolutely transparent and true, straight, clear, is hateful to us. More and more our inner man revolts against our own falsehood. Any exaggerations come back on us at once with conviction of wrong; any false statement hits us hard, and we know that we have not spoken the truth. It is a tremendous thing to get into the hands of the Holy Spirit, until, like God, the one thing that we hate is anything that is false. "I hate," said David, "every false way." We must come there. But we must be lovers of the truth. And this is going to pursue us everywhere; it will pursue us into our own life within ourselves, that we are not deceiving ourselves at all. Before God we know exactly what God thinks about us, and we know where we stand in the light....

And the nearer we come to the Lord, the more meticulous the Holy Spirit is over this matter of truth; the closer are His dealings with us. It is very true, you see, "perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" – perfecting. The nearer we get to the end, the more stringent will be the Lord's dealings with anything false in our lives. It is a time matter, but God is very faithful – He is very faithful; He does not let things pass. Do we want Him to be faithful? Well, it is not comfortable to say, "Yes," but it is good that He

should be faithful with every inconsistency, every contradiction, every falsehood, in the inward parts.

From: Truth in the Inward Parts

www.austin-sparks.net/english/000496.html

October 4

*Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus
so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies.*

(2 Corinthians 4:10 NLT)

There are values in Christ risen for our bodies now. His risen Life can now energize these bodies; not, for the present, to change them into the likeness of His glorious body, but to quicken them for service. There is risen Life for these mortal bodies now, but it has to be deliberately appropriated, chosen, drawn upon. It is useless for me when I am feeling ill and weak to sit down and say, "Oh, Lord, come and pick me up, and put me on my feet, and make me well!" The Lord never does so.

I know this: that in such times of desperate weakness and physical discount, utter inability, any kind of coming in of the Lord has always been introduced by the Lord making me take hold of Him. The Lord has never come in and made me suddenly to feel myself being filled, permeated with Life, and rising up. I have known the moment very often come when the Lord, not in an audible voice but in what is as good, a suggestion, a prompting, has said, "Lay hold of Life; lay hold of Me as your Life!" There were no spoken words, but the intimation was to this effect: The time has come to repudiate this state and lay hold of Christ for Life! And that has been unto a renewal for a further period of service.

The Lord does not take us up like an automaton; He causes us to co-operate with Himself on the basis of His risen Life. All the values of Christ risen are found by our deliberate and definite taking hold of His risen Life. That is but to say, repudiate Adam, whether it be in body, soul or spirit, and stand in Christ for whatever the need may be. Is it for spirit? Is it for mind? Is it for heart? Is it for will? Is it for body? The one essential is to stand definitely in Christ for the situation.... The whole realm and range of Christ for experience is dependent upon His risen Life in us, and our laying hold of it, standing on it. The Lord show us more of what that means.

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002218.html

October 5

I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked... But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will dress you and take you where you don't want to go.
(John 21:18 NLT)

There is no safe place, apart from the constant application of the principle of the Cross. Safety absolutely demands it. Nothing is safe in our hands. The more the Lord blesses, the more peril there is. The greatest peril comes when the Lord begins to use us.... It is a most perilous thing to be entrusted with Divine riches, so far as our flesh is concerned. The only safe place is where the Cross is still at work, touching all that is ourselves, touching all our independence of action.

Take all these Apostles – take Peter, a man who would act so independently, who liked to do things on his own and do what he wanted to do. We find it cropping up constantly. He is the man who acts without stopping to ask anybody. We have no hint that he ever got into fellowship with his brother disciples and said, “I am thinking of doing so and so; I would very much like you to pray with me about it, and to tell me what you think; I have no intention of going on unless there is one mind among us.” Peter never did that sort of thing. He got an idea, and off he went. The Lord summed him up very well when He said: “When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not” (John 21:18). That was Peter before the Cross was in-wrought in him. But see him afterwards... “Peter and John,” “Peter and John,” “Peter and John.”

Well, they are moving together now, there is relatedness. Is it an acknowledgment that Peter felt his need of co-operation and fellowship, that he had seen the perils and disasters into which independent action led him, even when his intentions and motives were of the best? These are just glimpses of how the Cross touches us in our impulsive, independent nature, our self-will, our self-strength.

The Cross has to deal with all that to make things safe for God, and to keep us moving in the way of increasing knowledge of the Lord, which, as we have said, lies behind all our value to the Lord, all our usefulness, all our service.

From: Prophetic Ministry - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001007.html

October 6

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.
(Philippians 2:1,2 NIV)

The fellowship of the *Spirit* is the spirit of fellowship: but, again, it is positive. Fellowship is not a passive thing: it never can be a passive thing, because all the hosts of hell are out against it. If there is one thing that hell is against, it is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the fellowship of the people of God. Unceasingly, by any and every means, those evil powers will seek to destroy that fellowship, because that fellowship spells their final undoing. Therefore fellowship can never be a neutral, passive kind of thing. You have got to fight for it, you have got to stand for it, you have got to be positive about this. Let some rift go on, and just see the havoc that delay over putting that right will work! If you have the *Spirit* – and of course I am addressing those who are supposed to have the *Spirit* – you should know that, if you are out of joint with another member of the Body of Christ to which you belong, it is, as it is with a dislocation in the natural physical body: there is an ache, a perpetual ache....

By that inflammation and ache the Holy Spirit is giving a positive witness against this thing. But if you go on long enough, the Holy Spirit will withdraw and leave you to it, just because He is positive. He will not brook persistent negatives on these things; He just will not have it. He is going on and saying: “All right, if you are determined to stay there, you can do so. I am going on.” And there arises a very, very serious situation. That is, of course, grim and terrible. But it all gathers round this truth that the Holy Spirit is positive on the matter of fellowship.... We must challenge our hearts about this. The Holy Spirit, *normally*, is always positive – I could almost say aggressive. He is never negative, He is never neutral. If He has to pause, it means that He is waiting for something; for it is not His nature to do that – He would go on. May the Lord fill us with the mighty energy of His Spirit!

From: The Cup and The Fire - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000763.html

October 7

Though we are many, we all eat from one loaf of bread, showing that we are one body. (1 Corinthians 10:17 NLT)

We do feed upon Christ in prayer. To put that in another way, there is an imparting of Himself to His Own in prayer. We may go to prayer in

weariness, and rise in freshness; we may go to prayer exhausted, and rise renewed. Is it that we have simply uttered some form of prayer, prayed some prayer? We know quite well if that is so we do not get up very much invigorated. Formal praying does not bring very much Life. Going through a form of prayers sometimes only ministers death. But really seeking the Lord, reaching out, taking hold of the Lord, giving ourselves up to the Lord in prayer, never fails to have renewing, uplifting, strengthening results. You say prayer may wear you out? Yes, but there is a wonderful strength that comes by wearing out prayer. There is vitality given to the spiritual life even in prayer that tires us physically, and we go in the strength of it. Yes, prayer is a way in which Christ is ministered to us by the Holy Spirit. Prayer is a way in which we feed upon Christ; He becomes our Life....

We feed upon the Lord, and He becomes our Life when we recognize the Divine order of spiritual fellowship. That is a Divine order. You have it brought in with Acts: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers." There is a tremendous means of grace, a tremendous enrichment of Christ in the fellowship of the Lord's people. I believe the enemy will get believers, when they are together, to talk about anything under the sun rather than about the Lord. It is easy when you meet together with the Lord's people to be carried off with all kinds of matters of interest, and not to begin to talk about the Lord; but if you do there is always an enrichment, always a strengthening, always a building up; it is the Divine way.

Fellowship is a means of imparting Christ to the believer. And wherever spiritual fellowship is possible, you and I ought to seek it, look after it, and cherish it. There are all too many of the Lord's children today, who have no chance of spiritual fellowship, and who would give anything to have it. The Lord would have us at least two together. That is His order, and there is something in ministering Christ to one another. There will be something lost unless that is so. These are ways in which we feed upon the Lord.

From: We Beheld His Glory, Volume 1 - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001510.html

October 8

We, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. (Romans 12:5 ESV)

The word or term "Body" is not mere metaphor. The members of His Body stand in relation to Christ just as our physical bodies stand in relation to our own selves – the means of manifestation, expression, and transaction. This truth is very discriminating, and goes to the root of all matters of life

and service. "Working for the Lord," "praying to the Lord," etc., will be seen to have a deeper law which governs their effectiveness.

We cannot take up work for Christ – plan, scheme, devise, organize or enter upon Christian enterprise – and so command the Divine seal and blessing. We cannot pray as we incline, even though it be to the extent of passion and tears, and so secure the Divine response. Failure to recognize this is bringing multitudes of people to despair because of no seal upon their ardent labors, and no answer to their prayers. In the unfolding of the laws of His own effective life the Master put tremendous emphasis upon the fact that the words that He spoke, and the works that He did, were not of (out from) Himself, it was the Father both speaking the words and doing the works.

So for all the future of His work He prayed that His disciples might abide in Him. Thus the law of effective and fruitful life, service, prayer, etc., is that there shall be such a oneness that we only do – but surely do – what He is doing. We must know in our spirit just what Christ is doing, how He is doing it, the means which He will use, and His time for it. Moreover, our prayers must be the prayers of the Lord Himself prayed in us and through us by the Holy Spirit. This is surely made very clear as being the realm in which the Church in apostolic times lived. This will demand a considerable sifting of all undertakings in the name of Jesus, and will require that nothing is done until the mind of the Lord has been made known. But this will secure a hundred percent effectiveness, and issues which will never perish. For the practical purposes of God in this age Christ is the One Body holding fast the Head, and the business of every member is to realize more and more fully the meaning of this incorporation and oneness of identity.... Ours it is to see that we are utterly in Christ, and living by the Spirit. All the rest will be spontaneous.

From: In Christ - Chapter 1

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000888.html

October 9

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:16 NIV)

There are many ways in our Christian life where we have to get adjusted to the will of the Lord. The will of the Lord is not always an easy thing for our flesh; and so very often, we have to have a real battle to get adjusted to the will of the Lord on some particular matter; and prayer is the time in which that adjustment has to be done. It is just possible that some of us here this evening are having a battle over the will of God on something. Well, this is the time to get through with that issue. Our prayer

times give us the great opportunity of getting right into line with the will of God on all matters....

True prayer is the prayer of confession and humiliation! *True prayer* is the time of absolute committal and surrender and submission to the Lord! *True prayer* is the time for getting right into line with the will of God on all matters! Now these three things, we could call negative things. Of course they are not negative when we have to face them, they are very positive matters. But when we come to the fourth thing, we move over a bit to another side; and I am sure that this first time of prayer in the case of Paul was a time of deep worship. What does worship come out from? What is it that leads us to worship? What is the true nature and spirit of worship? Is it not a deep unspeakable gratitude for the grace of God? We only worship in the measure in which we appreciate the grace of God.... You remember that a favorite way to Paul of opening his letters was with three words: "Grace, mercy, and peace, be unto you." That was the foundation of everything for Paul. Wonderful grace, grace that could never be explained; boundless mercy; and peace with God. That was surely the consciousness of this man during his prayer. It was the prayer of deep worship for the grace of God, and that must have a place in all true prayer.

From: "That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One" - Meeting 41
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001110.html

October 10

My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from Me. Yet I want Your will to be done, not Mine.
(Matthew 26:39 NLT)

We must face the fact and we must seek help from God always to bear in mind that we are going to have a path of suffering if we are in fellowship with the Lord Jesus.... There has to come a point when we sit down and do some calculating and come to a definite conclusion on this matter – that, although very often we may not be able to see that our suffering is because of our relationship to Him (the sufferings are so manifold and diverse, and very often they look as though they have no relationship at all with our Christian life) at the same time, whether we can discern it or not; the fact remains that the pathway of the child of God, of the fellow of Jesus Christ, is the pathway of suffering. I say, postponement or delay in settling that matter keeps us all the time in that state of hoping and waiting for it to be different, and, because the difference does not come, getting downcast and feeling that all is wrong and that the Lord is against us and all that sort of thing, thus giving all the ground that the enemy wants for destroying our testimony.

The very first thing to remember when we take this cup is that while we are taking it as the cup of salvation, while we are remembering the atonement which is in the Blood, and all the wonderful redemption which is ours because of that Blood, the cup does also speak to us of fellowship with His suffering....

Yes, there is something which is going up to His praise and glory as Christ is being formed through the fires of adversity and suffering. It is fellowship with Him in His sufferings, after all, if it is bringing about more Christlikeness. So our first thing is to reckon with this and get it settled. What are you expecting, what are you waiting for, what are you concerned about, what are you pleading and praying for? If you are praying for full and final deliverance from adversity and suffering and difficulty and all that sort of thing, let me tell you your prayer will never be answered. Forms of suffering may change, but in some form or another we are going on to the end in a way of adversity. Satan is not going to become our friend while we are friends of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of Satan is not going to rally to our support while we belong to the kingdom which is opposed to his. Let us settle that. It will get us free, perhaps, from this entanglement.

From: Suffering and Glory
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001664.html

October 11

Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many. (Hebrews 12:15 NLT)

If we consider what were some of the practical factors in Christ's crucifixion we realize that His sufferings were caused by men's fickleness, bigotry, fearfulness, jealousy and treachery. In love He bore all these for us. And these may well be the factors which challenge the reality of our love to God. The fickle crowds so soon forgot the kindness and goodness of the Lord Jesus, allowing themselves to be carried away by base and false accusations, so that they cried out against the one whom they had formerly extolled and praised. The Pharisees were so dominated by a religious bigotry which was cruel in its intolerance and harsh in its legalistic denunciations that they took the lead in causing His sufferings. The disciples, as well as Pilate, were fearful; Judas was treacherous; and Satan was jealous himself and inspired jealousy in the Sadducees and others. But all this concentration of attacks upon love did not turn the Lord away from remaining faithful to the Father's will in every detail. God's love meant more to Him than the bitterness of enemies, the failure of friends, the strength of popular opinion or the matter of His own rights. When He came to rest in the glory of the Father's presence, love had conquered every temptation....

We, too, are confronted by some of the foes which He had to face, for we have been called to bear the Cross after Him. The fickleness of friends and fellow-workers, the bigoted criticism of those who claim to be God's servants, the fear-inspiring pressure of popular opinion, the misunderstanding and jealousy which Satan himself inspires – these are some of the tests put to our love. We can never hope to overcome them unless we remember that there is in the presence of God for us a Savior who suffered the full agony of these things, but accepted them as part of the cup which the Father had given Him to drink. It was love for the Father which enabled Him always to choose the Father's will, and the outcome of His triumph is that "we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love." There is a sense in which God is seeking to undo in us all that failure of love which we inherit from Adam. He exposes us to the painfulness of the Cross, not in some capricious or unsympathetic way, but because He aims to reproduce in us that love in fulfillment of His will which Christ already presents to Him on our behalf.

From: The Fulfilled Law

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001153.html

October 12

The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

(2 Timothy 2:2,3 NIV)

We may have our different aspects of work. There are those Levites whose ministry is, shall I say, more essentially spiritual; it may belong to the vessels of the sanctuary. There are others whose work is in another direction. Mine it may be to mainly minister in the Word of the Lord, what a lot of people would call "the spiritual ministry," (I repudiate that suggestion that spiritual ministry is bound up with people who preach – that is not spiritual ministry only). There may be others who minister in other spheres such as business life or household work. The Levites were divided into sections of different kinds of work. Some had the rougher work, the heavy bars and boards of the tabernacle, more physically strenuous than the carrying of the pots and the pans and the golden vessels and implements; but it was all Levitical work, they were all one people, one tribe. Responsibility rested upon all equally, for all these parts made one ministry. And so your sphere, your work and mine may differ, but it is one ministry, one calling, one responsibility, one testimony. This emphasis is upon taking it, assuming it, regarding ourselves as being responsible people in the testimony of the Lord.

I am sure the Lord's heart must long for that. I am sure that often He has had, in looking at me, to say, "Oh, I wish I could trust him more! I

wish he were more reliable, more responsible!" And I know that as I have looked at many of the Lord's people I have said, "I wish that they did not need so much looking after; if only they would begin to stand on their own feet, and take responsibility, so that we need not worry about them anymore, because we know that they can be trusted!" They need urging and encouraging; and all the time following up and putting right, because they have taken offence, and so on. If only they would take the responsibility and go right on in these things and not need to be looked after. How much more progress the testimony would make! Now may the Lord give us the grace to take our share in the sufferings as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, to be strengthened with the grace that is in Christ Jesus, to bear the testimony of the Lord.

From: The Place and Work of the Levites
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002103.html

October 13

Under the custody and charge of the sons of Merari shall be the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars. (Numbers 3:36)

I am glad the bars are mentioned as well as the boards. The bars are the things that unite the whole, and if those things are kept always under your eye you will not move in cliques, and you will not have personal preferences, and ones and twos moving off on their own because they get on together. We have to remember that in the body of Christ there is nothing clannish, nothing that is merely of human preference, but all the members are held together in oneness. That is a responsibility. How much damage has been done by preferences, by human affinities having a place among the Lord's people! There must be a personal care, there must be a watching over the bars, all maintained together. It is what the apostle means when he says, "*Give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit.*" We shall never keep the unity of the Spirit by taking sides with one against another. We may think that is care for the one. Oh, but what about the other? The bars will be a corrective, will keep the balance, and will give due regard to every member. Then there are the pillars. Here we have each one's responsibility, for something hangs upon them, and we have to help one another in our responsibility before God, for each one is called to carry a responsibility, to carry a weight from God. It is bearing one another's burdens.... There must be mutuality in this responsibility, each one carrying his own weight before the Lord, and yet all one.

The peril is that we should begin to make our ministry something that is watertight.... Draw in your mind's eye three squares, separate, standing each alone, and you will have what represents a very great deal of the nature of work for the Lord in our day from time to time. "Oh, this is my work, this is my department, this is my line; I am called to be this, I am

called to do that! You have your work, you have your particular line, and I have mine! You go on with yours, and I will get on with mine, and don't let us get overlapping!" That is where the breakdown comes. "I am an evangelist, not a teacher! You get on with your teaching, and I will get on with my evangelism; don't let us interfere with one another!" That is putting responsibility into watertight compartments. The result is always loss.... It is a blessed calling, but it is a responsible one, it is a solemn one. Oh, that today you and I might find adjustment to this. The test is as to whether it is the Lord Himself to whom we are devoted, or whether it is to some personal thing.

From: The Church of the Firstborn - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003332.html

October 14

*We were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.
(2 Corinthians 1:8,9)*

It is a part of the nature of things that we never learn in a vital way by information. We really only come into the good of things by being "pressed out of measure." So the Lord has to take much time to make spiritual history. When at length our eyes are open, we cry, "Oh, why did I not see it before!" But everything else had to prove insufficient before we could really be shown, and that takes time. Thus it was that we were turned in that dark hour to Romans chapter six, and, almost as though He spoke in audible language, the Lord said: "When I died, you died. When I went to the Cross I not only took your sins, but I took *you*. When I took you, I not only took you as the sinner that you might regard yourself to be, but I took you as being all that you are by nature; your good (?) as your bad; your abilities as well as your disabilities; yes, every resource of yours. I took you as a 'worker,' a 'preacher,' an organizer! My Cross means that *not even for Me can you be or do anything out from yourself*, but if there is to be anything at all it must be out from Me, and that means a life of absolute dependence and faith."

At this point, therefore, we awoke to the fundamental principle of our Lord's own life while here, and it became the law of everything for us from that time. That principle was: "nothing of (out from) Himself," but "all things of (out from) God." "*The Son can do nothing of (out from) Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing: for what things soever He doeth, then the Son also doeth in like manner*" (John 5:19). Such a revelation, if it is to be a staggering and breaking thing, so that there is no strength left in us, requires a background of much vain effort. But then, it carries with it a great implication. While an end is written large in the Cross, and while that

end is to be accepted as *our* end indeed, so that there *can* be no more of *anything* so far as *we* are concerned, Jesus lives! And that means boundless possibilities.

From: Explanation of the Nature and History of "This Ministry"

www.austin-sparks.net/english/000535.html

October 15

*I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel.
(Galatians 2:2 NIV)*

How important it is that every fresh undertaking in work for God should come by revelation to those chosen for it. Because God has so spoken and given revelation to some chosen instrument and a truly spiritual work has been done, others have taken it as a model and have sought to imitate it in other places. The result has been, and is, that they are called upon to take responsibility for it – find the resources of workers, funds and general support. This, in turn, issues in many sad and pathetic, if not evil and worldly, methods and means being employed, and those concerned find themselves in a false position. Conception, not imitation, is the Divine law of reproduction. Anointing, not human selection, is the Divine law of succession. The fact is that the work of God has become a sphere for so many *natural* elements to find expression and gratification. Man *must* do something, see something, have something. Ambition, acquisition, achievement, etc., have found their way over to Christian enterprise, and so, very often (let us be quite frank) things have become “ours” – “*our work*,” “*our mission*,” “*our field*,” “*our clientele*"; and jealousies, rivalries, bitterness and many other things of the flesh abound.

It is a very difficult thing, a crucifixion indeed, for the natural man to do nothing and have nothing, and especially to *know* nothing. But in the case of His most greatly used instruments, God has made this a very real part of their training and preparation. The utter emptying of all self-resource is the only way to have “*all* things of (out from) God” (2 Cor. 5:18). On this basis, even Christ elected to live. We need not remind you of Moses’ “I am not eloquent” (Exo. 4:10), and Jeremiah’s “I am a child” (Jer. 1:6), and Paul’s “that we should not trust in ourselves” (2 Cor. 1:9). These were of a school in which the great lesson of the difference between natural and spiritual was taught experimentally.

From: What is Man? - Chapter 5

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001341.html

October 16

*For the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God.
(Matthew 15:6 ESV)*

This revelation of Christ in us, when it is a true, real, living revelation, not only leads to and makes for stability and assurance and confidence, wonder and freshness and Life, but it leads to loneliness, and I should be false to you if I did not say so, and indicate what that means; because the majority even of Christians are still hide-bound by tradition. They are still all of that other kind: what they have received they have received through men or from a man; they have taken on an already completed, rounded-off system of truth and teaching called Christianity. They have entered into it and taken it up, and they cannot see beyond it.

You do not question their sincerity, nor do you doubt their earnestness, but there is that about all they have which is so second-hand. It is something which has existed through the Christian centuries, developed by this one and that one, shaped, formed and phrased by different teachers. It has become the evangel, evangelical Christianity in all its set terms, phraseology and forms. They do not see beyond it. And when one moves out of that realm into a personal, direct knowledge of the Lord through what we often term an open heaven – but not, mark you, through a new or different revelation of Christ that is something apart from the Scriptures – into that experience, where we can say, “It pleased God to reveal His Son in me, and with me it is so real that sometimes I wonder if anyone has such a knowledge, such an experience”; when we move that way, we move into a lonely realm. The majority cannot follow, cannot go with us, and cannot understand.

It does seem to me that there was something of that about Paul, that even other apostles were not able to grasp or apprehend Paul. He seemed to be very much one by himself. Yet here too we see the wonderful grace of God.... It does seem that even Paul, surrounded though he was by all the other apostles, had to go a lonely way, because this revelation was to him something so personal. It does mean that: understand that; and probably some of you do understand it in your experience. It will put you very largely into a lonely position, so far as the majority of other Christians are concerned, if you are going this way.

From: The Fight of the Faith - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001954.html

October 17

*It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
(1 Corinthians 4:2)*

I believe that the greatest virtue in the eyes of God is faithfulness; it embraces everything. Faithfulness is after God's own heart. Take a passing glance at this steward – Paul the Apostle. “Demas forsook me...” (2 Tim. 4:10); “...all that are in Asia turned away from me...” (2 Tim. 1:15). Look at him when everything which would inspire to faithfulness is breaking down. He is left practically alone. He has more enemies than ever. And now the tragedy, the pathos is that so many of his enemies are those to whom he has been most used.

While there were enemies without it was not so difficult, but now the very people for whom he has spent himself have become his enemies. But there is no thought, no hint, no suggestion of giving up. His word is, “...faithful unto death....” This steward was faithful. You cannot say that, when he died, the situation outwardly testified to tremendous success. It did not look like that at all. Paul’s life was not vindicated up to the hilt. No! He died largely a lonely man, but faithful, “...it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” But what enrichment of others may follow from the meeting of that requirement, costly as it is. Paul is not dead! I only hope that Paul knows of all that has sprung from his ministry, all that his ministry means to us. The Lord has met us through His servant, and we never, never get to the depths or anywhere near the bottom of the fullness of Christ that has come through Paul. We shall go on, and, if we live twice or three times the length of our present life, we shall still be making discoveries of what we owe to Paul’s faithfulness as a steward. That has been going on century after century. That is faithful stewardship, and although the steward may be called away from his earthly stewardship, the stewardship goes on. Faithfulness is always rewarded beyond our wildest dreams. May the Lord maintain us in faithfulness, even though that faithfulness may sometimes involve us in an appearance of utter failure. The Lord make us good stewards.

From: The More Excellent Ministry - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001201.html

October 18

*I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.
(2 Corinthians 2:10,11 NIV)*

Perhaps one of the most significant things to any who are “not ignorant of his (Satan’s) devices” is that there never has been a specially

spiritual movement of God in the earth, calculated to serve Him in a particularly useful way, but what Satan's animosity thereto has been manifested along the line of division, schism, discord, separation, and a breaking down of fellowship. And how often has the real sting and stigma been modified by a feigning love unbroken and preserved, when the divided parties should have no association with each other in the things of God. Love, let us again say emphatically, is incumbent upon the Lord's people toward "all men," whether of the "household" or otherwise (Gal. 6:10), but fellowship is something more. It is the most spiritual things which suffer the greatest shocks in this matter, and again we say this carries its own satanic significance.

The methods of the enemy are numberless, the "wiles" unfathomable by human wit. A suggestion of suspicion, if it finds lodgment, is enough to completely paralyze the work of God and spiritual progress. Have a doubt and you are done. There never was a time when positive spiritual work was more jeopardized by suspicion than now. It would seem that hell is largely employed in issuing forth smoke, clouds, vapors, mists of suspicion, question, reservation, in order to infect with uncertainty, mystification, prejudice, fear, discrediting, distrust, aloofness. It is in the "heavenlies" that this is most registered; that is, the higher ranges of spiritual things. It is an *atmosphere*, and it is everywhere. You sense it wherever you go. In some places it is stifling – there is no clear breath of the Spirit, and a word of Life is almost choked back. Of course, this is no new thing, although now so intensified. The New Testament is full of it. The Lord Jesus met it – not in spiritual people, only in religious people. John met it. Paul met it in every direction. It was made to circle round his person, his methods, his character, and his message.

From: God's Reactions to Man's Defections - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000848.html

October 19

I love you with an everlasting love. (Jeremiah 31:3 GW)

"I have borne with you all this time because I love you; anything could have happened to you, but I have not let it, I have shown you infinite longsuffering and patience, and earnest solicitude for your eternal well-being: because I love you, I have kept you alive, and have brought you to this time and to this place; I have not let you go." Oh, that this might come home to us! We may, all unconsciously, be hearing this message now simply because of this infinite love of God which has been preserving us unto this hour to let us know it.

You may think it is quite fortuitous that you are hearing it – just one of the chance happenings of life; but if you knew the truth it is this infinite

love of God which has held you to this time in relation to the infinite purposes of that love to let you know it. There is nothing casual about it, there is sovereign love here. “Because I have so loved, because, self-sufficient as I am, I cannot do without you” – oh, mystery of Divine love! – “because I so much wanted you I created you, and now at this moment I am drawing you.” We cannot take that in, but that is the teaching of the Word of God.... God does not want that kind of love that is not love at all because it gets everything that it wants to satiate its own lusts. That is not love. This love of God must make us like itself, it must be after its own kind. And so, strangely enough, many have come to find the love of God through the dark way of suffering – to discover that God was not their enemy but their friend, when they thought that He was pursuing with the object of destroying them.... Listen again, whoever you may be. If you know yourself only a little you must be amazed at this statement, but if it does not come to you as the most wonderful thing that ever was or could be, there is something grievously the matter with you; that such a One should say to such as *WE*, “*I have loved THEE, with an everlasting love.*” May God Himself bring that home to us with something of its implication, something of its meaning and value, its glory, its wonder. If He should graciously do that, we shall be worshippers for the rest of our lives; there will be something about us that is in the nature of awe and wonder and we shall go softly. The realization of it will smite all our pride to the dust. There is no room for pride here. This will remove all those horrible things – pride, avarice, covetousness, self-interest, worldly ambition – and we shall be very humble, very grateful people, full of a great longing somehow to requite that love, somehow to win for that One His rights.

From: “His Great Love” - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001272.html

October 20

I have told you all this so that you may find your peace in Me. You will find trouble in the world – but, never lose heart, I have conquered the world! (John 16:33 Phillips)

When the *spiritual* stands to confront the merely formal, traditional, nominal and “natural,” then there is going to be trouble. This is not now merely the reaction from the world: it is the reaction from religion. I would go further, and say it may be the reaction from Christianity. There is a very great difference between formal, traditional, nominal, “natural” Christianity, on the one side, and spiritual Christianity, on the other; a great deal of difference. So much so, that this also becomes a battlefield – the battlefield of a lot of trouble.

Leave formalism alone, and everything will go on quite quietly. Leave traditionalism alone – that is, the set order of things as it has always

been; that framework of things as it has been constituted and set up and established by man; that Christianity which is the fixed, accepted system of things – and you will escape a great deal of trouble. But seek to bring in a truly spiritual order of things, and trouble arises at once. And *YOU* are the trouble maker! The truth is that the trouble lies in the existing condition, the situation, the state; but it is only brought out by your action. And so spiritual men and women, and spiritual ministry, are called “trouble makers,” because the two things cannot go on together. That is where Israel was. They had the traditions, they had the oracles, they had the ordinances, they had the testimonies; they had the forms, they had the system – they had it all; *but*, in the days of the prophets, there was ever this vast gap between the “externals” and “internals” of life in relation with God. The heart is far removed from the lips. The spiritual reality is not found in the formal. You may have it all – but then bring in the truly spiritual meaning of things, and trouble begins in that very realm. It is the trouble which arises when what is external and traditional comes into conflict with something which is truly spiritual.

From: Jealousy for God

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001248.html

October 21

*The Most High doesn't live in temples made by human hands.
(Acts 7:48 NLT)*

Christendom is largely constituted by this [aesthetic] sense – its architecture, its ritual, its music, its adornment, its lighting (or lack of it), its tone, its atmosphere, its vestments and so forth. All are of the soul.... Spiritual death marks that realm, and while there may be intense emotions which make for resolves, “high” thoughts and desires, there is no genuine change in the nature of those concerned, and repeated doses of this must be taken to maintain any measure of soul-self-satisfaction which makes them feel good. All religions have this soulish feature in common, more or less, and it is here that the fatal blunder has been made by many *religious* people who contend that other religions, which are undoubtedly devout and sincere, should not be interfered with, but the good in them should be recognized and accepted. It is the confusing of religion with what the Bible means by being spiritual. Religion can rise to high levels and sink to terrible depths. It is the *same thing* which does both. But that thing never rises above the human level; it never really reaches God. Religion can be the greatest enemy of God's true thought, because it is Satan's best deception. Asceticism is no more truly spiritual than aestheticism. There is no more a brief with God for rigors, denials, fastings, puritanic iciness, etc., as such, than for the opposite. Simplicity may give God a chance, but it is not necessarily spiritual. It may be a matter of taste....

How near to the truth in perception and interpretation can the mystical go! What wonderful things can the imagination see, even in the Bible! What thrills of awe, amazement, ecstasy, can be shot through an audience or congregation by a master soul! But it may all be a false world with no Divine and eternal issues. It may all go to make up this life here, and relieve it of its drabness, but it ends there.

What an artificial world we live in! When the music is progressing and the romantic elements are in evidence – the dress and tinsel – and human personalities are parading, see how pride and rivalry assert themselves, and what a power of make believe enters the atmosphere! Yes, an artificial world.... The tragedy in this melodrama is that it is “real life” to so many. This soul-world is the devil’s imitation. It is all false, wherever we may find it, whether associated with religion or not.... “The Christian Faith” embraced as a religion, a philosophy, or as a system of truth and a moral or ethical doctrine, may carry the temporary stimulus of a great ideal; but this will not result in the regeneration of the life, or the new birth of the spirit. There are multitudes of such “Christians” in the world today, but their spiritual effectiveness is nil.

From: What is Man? - Chapter 5

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001341.html

October 22

Come out of her, My people, so that you don't participate in her sins and also suffer from her diseases. (Revelation 18:4 ISV)

What is the spiritual life in the matter of worship? Oh, it is not ecclesiastical architecture, it is not vestments, it is not ordinances, and it is not rites. They pass out with Calvary; the perpetuating of anything like that is a contradiction of Calvary. See where we are today. The maintenance of that sort of thing is because of a failure to perceive what the Lord Jesus has brought in.... Why, then, perpetuate a thing which God has dismissed in the Cross and, by keeping to the lower, fail to reach the higher? Do you see where things are astray today?

I know how sweeping this is, but all this has to do with worship. Now note that when there is a failure to recognize the spiritual meaning of all this and to enter into it... and a maintaining of the old thing... you are still on a soul level, and you are open to deception; the whole thing may be a ghastly deception. And how does that deception work? In this way: that so many good Christian people are absolutely in bondage to a traditional system which is cutting clean across Divine revelation for them. It is their traditional system which is simply barring the way to spiritual revelation, whereas the Cross of the Lord Jesus represents the liberty in the spirit for God to lead into the fullness of His Life and Light.

That is the whole purpose of the Letter to the Hebrews. It was for that very purpose. Here were a people that had received light concerning the true nature of fellowship with God in Christ – that the Lord Jesus had taken the place of the Temple and the priesthood and the sacrifices and the ordinances... and even the Sabbath. Now it is no longer a matter of form, ceremony, external rites, buildings, priests, sacrifices; it is all Christ. They had seen that. The writer had called upon them to go outside the religious, formal, historic, traditional camp, and that brought persecution, ostracism, isolation, loneliness, and all manner of things. The official religious people made it very hard for them because of that. The price to be paid for what is truly spiritual and heavenly was... and is... great, and they were dangerously in peril of going back to the old thing. The Letter to the Hebrews was written just to save them from that peril and to tell them more fully about the great change that had come about in the Cross – the work of the Lord Jesus... to tell them that one system, the earthly representation, had passed and the other, the heavenly reality, had come in.... To know the Lord in Life, we must be free from the grave clothes of outward systems. Why, then, perpetuate a system? The Lord Jesus put all that away in His Cross; it is all gone.

From: Christ the Power of God - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002159.html

October 23

This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. (1 John 5:11 NIV)

It entirely depends upon our apprehension of the Lord as to what our testimony is. If we are turning to teaching, to tradition, to interpretations, to human associations, to Christianity, we are going to miss something, but if we are turning to the living God, in the realization that He is the living God, we are going to come into Life; everything is going to be all living in our experience right from the beginning. It is not unnecessary to say a thing like that. We said at the outset we wake up, and some of us awoke too late. The thing that kept us asleep – though we did not know we were asleep, except that there was a restlessness, a sense of dissatisfaction, a turning from side to side, and a sighing and groaning – was the fact that we had been associated with Christianity and the things of the people of God from so early in our lives. Our Christianity and our relationship with the Lord was something into which we were brought in infancy, and it had all become a matter of a system of the things of the Lord around us, with which we were quite familiar. We had been taught to say prayers, and go to meetings, and so on. One day we awoke to the fact that this God was a living God. We had been associated with Him in a way for a long time, but He was not personal to us, not a living God.

Forgive me for going back to such an elementary stage, if it is necessary to ask forgiveness, for it is just possible there are some among us whose relationship is of that kind. Maybe you are associated with things related to the Lord, but what about this question of your own personal, inward enjoyment of the living God, of His really being to you a living Person? We must begin back there, and all this is nothing to you unless the Holy Spirit has made it real, or does make it real, in your experience. I do know that it is true to fact in the life of a great many, that the day comes when, though they have been associated with the things of the Lord for a long time, they suddenly wake up to the fact that the Lord is a living Person. That contains so much for us as we come to realize it. It means everything to us from every point of view. We are the Lord's now! We know the Lord!

From: The Living God

www.austin-sparks.net/english/002994.html

October 24

The disciples came to Him and asked, “Do You realize You offended the Pharisees by what You just said?” Jesus replied, “Every plant not planted by My heavenly Father will be uprooted.”

(Matthew 15:12,13 NLT)

Organized Christianity as it is today cannot understand anything that is not organized, that is not advertised, that is not run. It must have names that carry weight, that mean influence. If you can get people with some title, you are going to have the guarantee of success for your Christian enterprise. And so the letters and the titles strung on are a necessary requisite for the success of the Lord's work. You must write it up in the press, you must give a report of it, you must be able to make some kind of return that people can read, and say, "This is a successful thing." If you cannot do that, the whole thing is doomed to failure. They say, "You must advertise, you must have publicity, you must organize, you must bring in all these things to support it, to carry it on." If you did none of those; if you were never heard of in the press; if you never had a report; if you never had any names; if there was nothing at all that came out in a public way for people to take account of, what is the verdict of organized Christianity? "Nothing is being done. You are doing nothing. It is a-hole-in-a-corner sort of thing." Is that true? What must we say about that?

There was a striking absence of all that in the beginning, and a marvelous manifestation of power, of progress, of effectiveness, so that nothing could stand in the way. We must only conclude, we are driven to this extremity, that the Lord can do His own work. Evidently the risen Lord is able to carry on His own work; the Holy Ghost knows how to manage things. What a surprising discovery! Forgive my irony. I say, this is that

upon which Hebrews 12:26-28 is fixed. “I will shake the earth and the heavens”; that which can be shaken will be shaken; that which cannot be shaken will remain; and what is that? It is what God has done. “Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever.” What God does is done in a spiritual way; it is spiritual, it is heavenly, it is eternal.

That may leave you perhaps in a vague, perplexed position, not knowing where you are, but I have no doubt about the truth of the message. If you do not feel you can accept it; if you disagree; if you revolt; if you feel it cuts clean across all your training, all your acceptance; if you feel that it runs counter to all that you know, all I ask of you is honesty with God. I ask you to come and ask Him to open to you the meaning of the letter to the Hebrews, why it was written, what its significance is, why God has preserved it, what its application is now. Have honest dealings with the Lord. Please do not go away hot in spirit, antagonistic; do not lay this at the door of any man. At least give God a chance.... May the Lord give us His own interpretation, give us honesty of heart, and show us His meaning in having brought us to this consideration.

From: The Kingdom That Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002065.html

October 25

*Why do You show me iniquity, and cause me to see trouble?
(Habakkuk 1:3)*

The prophetic function is brought into operation at a time when things are not well with the people and work of God, when declension has set in; when things have lost their distinctive Divine character; when there is a falling short or an accretion of features which were never intended by God. The Prophet in principle is one who represents – in himself and his vision – God’s reaction to either a dangerous tendency or a positive deviation. He stands on God’s full ground and the trend breaks on him. That which constitutes this prophetic function is spiritual perception, discernment, and insight. The Prophet *sees*, and he sees what others are not seeing. It is *vision*, and this vision is not just of an enterprise, a “work,” a venture; it is a *state*, a condition. It is not for the work as such that he is concerned, but for the spiritual state that dishonors and grieves the Lord.

This faculty of spiritual discernment makes the Prophet a very lonely man, and brings upon him all the charges of being singular, extreme, idealistic, unbalanced, spiritually proud, and even schismatic. He makes many enemies for himself. Sometimes he is not vindicated until after he has left the earthly scene of his testimony. Nevertheless, the Prophet is the instrument of keeping the Lord’s full thought alive, and of maintaining vision without which the people are doomed to disintegration.... The Lord

needs that which really does represent His fullest possible thought, and not those who are just doing a good work. But it costs; and this is the "burden of the valley of vision."

From: "The Burden of the Valley of Vision"
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000493.html

October 26

He came to a cave, where he spent the night. But the Lord said to him, What are you doing here, Elijah? (1 Kings 19:9 NLT)

"You have no business to be here" – that is what it means. Yes, prophets and apostles could make mistakes, and they did; but there is this about it – because they had seen, and were utterly abandoned to that which they had seen of the Lord's mind, the Lord was abundantly able to come in on their mistakes and sovereignly overrule them and teach His servants something more of Himself and His ways. Now, you never find that with people who are indefinite. The indefinite people, those who are not meaning business, who are not abandoned, never do learn anything of the Lord. It is the people who commit themselves, who let go and go right out in the direction of whatever measure of light the Lord has given them, who, on the one hand, find their mistakes – the mistakes of their very zeal – taken hold of by Divine sovereignty and overruled; and, on the other hand, are taught by the Lord through their very mistakes what His thoughts are, how He does things, and how He does not do them. If we are going to wait in indefiniteness and uncertainty and do nothing until we know it all, we shall learn nothing.

Have you not noticed that it is the men and women whose hearts are aflame for God, who have seen something truly from the Lord and have been mightily gripped by what they have seen, who are the people that are learning? The Lord is teaching them; He does not allow their blunders and their mistakes to engulf them in destruction. He sovereignly overrules, and in the long run they are able to say, "Well, I made some awful blunders, but the Lord marvelously took hold of them and turned them to good account." To be like this, with vision which gathers up our whole being and masters us, provides the Lord with the ground for looking after us even when we make mistakes – because His interests are at stake, His interests and not our own are the concern of our heart. The prophets and the apostles learned to know the Lord in wonderful ways by their very mistakes, for they were the mistakes, not of their own stubborn self-will, but of a real passion for God and for what He had shown them as to His purpose.

From: Prophetic Ministry - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001005.html

October 27

*We are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.
(Ephesians 2:10 NLT)*

You look back on your life. You may be disappointed in many ways with your part in the business. You may be able to see many falterings and blunderings and mistakes that you on your side made. You may have sometimes felt that you were not the person for that job; God had made a mistake. Some of us have felt like that. And yet, as we look more deeply into God's ways with us and know God's principles, we see a wonderful logic in it all. You and I are called for something, laid hold of by God for something, put by God into something, and we feel God has made a mistake: "I am not the person for this, I ought never to have come into this, I have no qualifications for this, I am altogether the wrong peg here!" And yet, somehow or other, God does it. He enables you, He carries you through, He accomplishes the work to your own surprise and wonder. As you lay hold of the Holy Spirit, it is done – that is, if you do not sink down into yourself and give up and draw out because of what you are – but you lay hold of the Holy Spirit and you get through and marvel that you have got through, that the Lord has done this thing through you, through me. That is very consistent with God's principles, that is no contradiction. It is most consistent with the deepest principles of God. No flesh shall glory in His presence. It is all coming back to Him. God – mark you – elected "the foolish things of the world... the weak things... the things that are not" (1 Cor. 1:27,28). It is the same word; He has elected. It is quite consistent. Yes, His ways are past finding out. "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform," but He is consistent with His principles.

A life in the Spirit is one succession of confirmations that God is working out a plan. Only rebellion, stubbornness, self-assertiveness and all forms of self-life will hinder or arrest; but a life in the Spirit will be a constant succession of proofs, of evidences, that you were chosen for something. God is not dealing with you just from hand to mouth, piecemeal. It is all worked out. Good works foreordained, "afore prepared, that we should walk in them." If we walk in the Spirit, we walk in afore prepared works; whether we see it or not, it is a fact. But it comes out, wonderfully so, and we have to go down and say, "Well, Lord, forgive us for arguing, forgive us for discussing the matter, forgive us for putting over our minds and what we think about it against You: You are wonderful, Lord." And we worship, and that is the proof of election, and you do not want better proof than that. It is all inside of Christ by the Holy Spirit.

From: Union with Christ - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001312.html

October 28

You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people. (1 Peter 2:9)

“You are a *holy nation*,” a nation separated from this world unto God. New birth means that, oh, that that was made clear to all right there at the beginning how utter this thing is. The Lord Jesus left people in no doubt about this; a cleavage utter and absolute. He would take risks with people, you would probably say: “Oh, why put them off, why run the risk of offending them, why discourage them saying ‘except, except, except’ all the time?” Ah, He was taking all the risks necessary about this because the reality, the awful reality of this: you CANNOT, you *cannot* inherit the kingdom of heaven while you cling to this kingdom inimical to God, in any way.... How much the New Testament has to say about this, a walk in holiness that is separate unto God in heart, in spirit, in life, from this world. And if we knew it, a very large degree of our education, our spiritual education and our discipline in the Christian life under the hand of the HOLY Spirit, has to do with those things in us which are mixed up....

The Lord calls for distinctiveness of life and testimony, real distinctiveness of life and testimony. Is our life, dear friends, is your life and my life in this world in our connections and associations and so on, quite distinct, no mistaking to what realm we belong, to Whom we belong? No mistaking it? Or are we mixed in, compromising, keeping on good terms with this world and its people under the devil’s hand? If so, we stand to lose terribly....

Is there something quite distinctive about our lives that says that man, that woman, that young man, that young woman is utterly for God, there’s no doubt about it, you see it all the time, they are *utter* for God; they are not playing at things, there’s no compromise with them. Now this sounds hard, but it’s necessary. Do you see what’s involved? Dear friends, the secret of power is holiness! It is. The secret of power is holiness.

If our lives are powerless it may be due to this lack somewhere, somehow, of this utterness for God, this separation unto God, of some kind of compromise somehow, somewhere, with the prince of this world who’s robbing us of our spiritual power and vitality on his own ground. The secret of power is holiness; whatever you forget, remember that!

From: A Holy Nation
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001423.html

October 29

From Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! (Romans 11:36 NIV)

It is necessary that we should be quite clear that, in the Bible, there are not two distinct things, as represented by the two Testaments, the Old and the New, or even more, if the Old Testament is subdivided into eras. There may be two, or more, methods of expression, but throughout the Bible, from its beginning to its close, there is only one thing expressed. Our habit of handling the Bible by dispensations, and emphasizing the different characteristics of different times, may have had the effect of making us mechanically minded, just as can a preoccupation with typology and symbolism. I want, therefore, to underline this anew: that, in these several and varied forms of expression, God is actuated, from beginning to end, by one thought, and one thought alone: *that everything throughout, at all times, shall express and be subservient to His Son.*

HE governs everything, in the realities of His Person and of His redemptive and perfecting work. It is one Person and one Work, from the first book of the Bible to the last. The change from the Old Testament to the New is simply and only the change from the indirect to the direct; from the symbolic to that which is symbolized; from the temporal representation to the spiritual reality. That is all. It is not a change of purpose or object, not a change of basis or foundation; it represents no change of principle in any way.

Perhaps you feel you know all that; but there is very much more in it than any of us have yet realized. For example, all God's dealings with the patriarchs were, in principle, as much upon the basis of His Son as are His dealings with you and me. That was true also of Israel. Israel in the Old Testament was dealt with as much upon the basis of God's Son as we are in this dispensation. God has never, at any time, by any means, worked on any other ground than that of His Son. His creative activities were on the ground of His Son. "In Him, through Him, by Him, unto Him, were all things created" (Col. 1:16); and from then everything has proceeded on that basis, and will be consummated in Christ. By whatever means, in whatever way God has worked, His ground has always been the same. And on into the ages to come, that ground will be unchanging. It is the ground of Christ. It is very important that we should remember this and be quite clear about it.

From: The Israel of God - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000897.html

October 30

Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. But the man who loves God is known by God. (1 Corinthians 8:1-3 NIV)

The fact is this, that we may advance a long way in spiritual knowledge (I mean in information, the knowledge of the truth) beyond our own real measure, and then have the shock, under terrible conditions, of discovering that all that we have accumulated through the years does not help us. We are right up against things and have to say, "I have not got the realities I thought I had, they are not helping me; I am being brought right back to foundations in my real, personal, living knowledge of the Lord Himself." The peril then, of course, is to jettison all the teaching we have had and to say that it is a valueless thing. It is not valueless; but we must recognize that there is all the difference between knowing the thoughts of God in our minds, and the Holy Spirit's using that knowledge to accomplish God's ends. Thus we have to come back with every fragment and have very real dealings with the Lord. Our attitude every time must be, "Lord, do save me from ever coming to the time when what I have heard proves only to have been a thing heard; make it a basis of Holy Spirit activity to reach the Divine end."

Now, if you can grasp this, it is going to be a great deliverance. Why are the people of God suffering? That they may be conformed to the image of His Son. Of course, we may not need a world upheaval to do that, but God is going to use all conditions to that end, and, tragically enough, there are multitudes of the Lord's people who do need a world shaking. They are so bound up with the externalities of Christianity, with its whole structure and system, that nothing but that which will overthrow, disintegrate, destroy, and raise tremendous questions about the whole business, will bring them to the place where the Spirit of God can begin really to do the work which He has come to do in them.

From: Conformed to the Image of His Son
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001589.html

October 31

*How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.
(1 Kings 18:21 ESV)*

That word was never addressed to the unsaved. It was never intended for them. It is only rarely that the unsaved are in the position of two opinions. More often than not they are of no opinion. This is what the prophet really said to the people: "How long limp ye from one side to

another?" He viewed them as lame, and lamed by uncertainty, lamed by indecision, paralyzed by an unsettled issue. Oh, how an unsettled issue does paralyze the life. Have a controversy with the Lord, an unsettled issue with the Lord, and your whole life is lamed, is paralyzed; you are limping first one way and then the other; there is no sense of stability about your way.

So the prophet called for the issue to be settled. How long limp ye from one side to the other? Settle this issue one way or the other. If Jehovah be God, let Him have His place, His full rights; settle it once and for all. If Baal is god, well then let us be settled. But until that is done you are crippled, you are paralyzed, and the whole secret of your being in that weak, indefinite, unstable, uncertain place is that God is not having His full rights; there is a dividedness in your life, a dividedness in your own soul, because other interests and considerations are in view. The dividedness may be in your home life, where you have power, authority and influence, and you are not standing one hundred percent for the Lord's interests there. It may be working in other directions, but wherever it is present the result is that deep down in your being you are not satisfied, you are not at rest. You may be busy, you may be occupied, you may be rushing hither and thither in the Lord's name, but you know that deep down there is a lack, an uncertainty, an unsettled state; your spiritual life is limited and paralyzed. It will always be so until the issue is settled and God has His place in fullness in every part and relationship of your life. It is a question of zeal for the Lord, jealousy for the Lord.

From: The Zeal of the Lord - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001803.html

November 1

Their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. (2 Corinthians 3:14)

It is no small thing to have true spiritual sight. It represents a mighty victory. It is not going to come to you by just sitting passively and opening your mouths for it to arrive. There has to be exercise about this matter. You are right up against the full force of the god of this age when you are really out for spiritual understanding. It is a supernatural battle. So every bit of ministry that is going to be a ministry of true revelation will be surrounded by conflict. Conflict will go before, conflict will go on at the time, and conflict may follow after. It is like that. Herein, then, is the need for you to be exercised about light, that, while you hear the thing, you shall not take it for granted that, having heard it, you have got it; that you should afterward have very definite dealings with the Lord, that what He is seeking to break through to you shall indeed be entered into, and that you are not going to

delude yourself by assuming that you know now merely because you have heard it in its terms. You may not know it. It may not yet be delivering light; there may be a battle necessary in this matter.

If we did but know it, a very great deal of the conflict which arises in our lives is because God is seeking to bring us further on the road, to open our eyes to Himself, to bring us into the light of His Son. God is seeking to broaden our spiritual horizon, and the enemy is out against that, and he is not going to have it if he can help it. Conflict arises. We may not understand it, but very, very often, more often than not, it is just that, namely, that the Lord is after something, and Satan says, "They shall not see that if I can help it!" So there arises a mighty warfare. This blindness is supernatural, just as enlightenment is supernatural.

From: Spiritual Sight - Chapter 5

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001063.html

November 2

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh accomplishes nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. (John 6:63 ISV)

Do you notice that whenever the Spirit is mentioned the Spirit is related to Life? Life, then, is a matter of righteousness. The "ministration of righteousness" means the ministration of Life, or the standing in Life with an unveiled face, without fear of condemnation, or judgment. It is most important to recognize this truth. It is elementary. It is one of the first things of our faith. It may sound technical, but the Lord's people need instruction. It is good to have exhortation; it is good that we should have testimony; it is good that from time to time the Word of the Lord should come to us in the fullness of a proclamation, but as the Lord's people we also need sound instruction, foundation in the truth.

There are today a great number of the Lord's people who are finding it well nigh impossible to stand their ground because their foundation is not solid. After all, their relationship to the Lord has been very largely an emotional one, one of ecstasy, and when it comes to sounding the foundation of truth, they are not well grounded; when the enemy comes, and the storms beat upon them, they do not know where they are. When the ecstasies and the emotions and all the more superficial elements in our salvation are brought under the stress of terrific opposition; when in addition to that the enemy lays on his accusations, then the foundations are discovered, and many, many breakdown. It is not that they are lost, if they have trusted the Lord, but, so far as their enjoyment of their salvation is concerned, they lose it. So it is necessary for us to be thoroughly instructed in the Word, and this is one of the things about which we must be perfectly clear in heart and mind, and assured in spirit, that Life, with all that it

means – the Life of an unveiled fellowship with the Lord, the Life which in itself sets forth victory over death and the abolishing of condemnation – that Life is rooted in righteousness, a ministration of righteousness. It must be possible for us to say with perfect assurance and confidence before God: “Lord, what I am as apart from Christ is one thing; what I am by faith’s union with Christ is that I am righteous with Thine own righteousness; I cannot be destroyed, I cannot come under condemnation!” You can challenge God on that ground, if we may so speak. God invites us to test Him on that ground.

From: Spiritual Ministry - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003257.html

November 3

*God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish.
(1 Corinthians 1:20 NLT)*

It is true that we may have a tremendous amount of knowledge and information as this world can give it, and yet the wisest, the wealthiest in knowledge or in any other way, coming into Christ has got to learn the ABC in spiritual things.... It will not be long before we are made to know that we do not know anything. The Lord said: “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God!” I think if He had been in another world from the one in which He was at the time, if He had been in the Western world He would probably have said: “How hardly shall they that have knowledge enter the Kingdom.” The boasted knowledge, wisdom, and intellect of the Western world is the great obstruction to the Kingdom. It is not prepared to know anything. When Paul got outside of the Jewish world, that was the kind of thing he was saying all the time, that the wisdom of this world was the great hindrance. With the Jews, gain along the line of wealth; to the Gentiles, gain along the line of knowledge was the hindrance, and anything that appertains to nature has to be set aside. It is a hindrance to our coming into the Kingdom.

The longer we live in relationship to the Lord the more we know that we know nothing. One piece of knowledge we have is that we do not know anything at all, and we are just longing all the time to get some knowledge. There is no royal road to spiritual knowledge, we have to start right at the beginning and learn the things of the Lord as we go along. When we start as young Christians we do think that we know something. But, of course, that is the folly of youth. We are learning everything all over anew. With all the knowledge that we might have naturally, if it should be anything, it does not count here. Spiritual knowledge is a different thing. We have started all over again, but when we accept that place: “Now I have everything to learn, I am open and eager to learn, I know nothing,” then the Lord can teach. It is the proud one that never learns anything. The Lord

show us what it means to begin, what the meaning of the Cross is in our end to the old and beginning to the new.

From: Foundations - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002124.html

November 4

Let us go on and get past the elementary stage in the teachings and doctrine of Christ, advancing steadily toward the completeness and perfection that belong to spiritual maturity. (Hebrews 6:1 AMP)

Do not let us stay with our beginnings, but let us go on. Now what does going on mean? Well, of course, for us it is a going on in a spiritual way. We are in a new dispensation, and this is a spiritual dispensation. But there is one thing that I want to suggest to you as meaning our going on. It is true of Israel in the wilderness, although it was an earthly thing with them, the same thing is true with us in a spiritual way. If you look again into this letter to the Hebrews, you will discover this, *that going on spiritually is a matter of putting into practice what the Lord has said*. Do you realize that we never go on by being told things by the Lord? Now that sounds like a very strange thing to say. The Lord can speak to us Himself. We may have His word, we may have all the teaching that He can give us, we may know all the truth of God, we may have had it all for many years, and yet, although we may have had it all, we may be standing still. No, it is not a matter of knowing what the Lord has said. It is a matter of putting that into practice. Doing what the Lord has said, that is the only way of going on.

How are we to go on then? We are to sit down quietly and say, "Now what has the Lord said to us?" Perhaps it may be over these past four or five weeks, or it may be over years past.... Now through the reading of His Word you may have a great mountain of truth, and yet you may not be going on, and the Lord may not be with us, as He wants to be with us. The Presence of the Lord is power, the Presence of the Lord is Life, the Presence of the Lord is holiness. Oh, the Presence of the Lord means much, but it is all very practical. The Lord does not believe in theory. He does not believe even in textbooks. The Lord is a very practical Lord. And His attitude toward us is this: Look here, I have said this to you, you have heard it. Perhaps you have rejoiced in it. Perhaps you have believed it to be true. Perhaps you thank the Lord for it. But what have we done about it?

From: "That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One" - Meeting 34

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001103.html

November 5

*Don't say that the things which God has made clean
are impure. (Acts 10:15 GW)*

"Who was I that I could withstand God?" Now what we have here is that, over against the sovereignty of the Spirit, was the fixed tradition of Peter in the one case, and the same in the case of those at Jerusalem who "contended with him" for doing what he did. On a later occasion Peter fell into the same old traditional snare and Paul had to contend with him very strongly about it. The point is that the Lord was making for spiritual increase, but an obstacle encountered was this unpreparedness to leave room for the sovereignty of the Spirit. If a child or servant of God in his or her secret walk and history with God is led to move in a way that is not according to the recognized and established system, but new and different, and seemingly in violation of all the accepted and fixed conventions or associations, there is all too often a repetition of what took place in Jerusalem; a suspicion, a contention, and an opposition.

Now, dear friends, look here: we have got to take ourselves honestly in hand over this or we may be found to be "withstanding God" and "limiting the Holy One." Read the Gospels and the Acts again, and ask the question as you proceed, "How can *this*, and *that*, and *that* be interpreted or construed as doing violence to an accepted and long established Divine order?" You will not get far before you are in the company of those who opposed Christ at every step, and of the Judaizers who pursued Paul across the world with the one object of making his ministry impossible. They were very jealous and zealous for the divinely established order – as they believed it to be.

Do you not recognize that every movement of God down the ages has been in conflict with something that men believed to be the Divine order, and those concerned have been regarded as doing the devil's work? It was so with Christ, and it was so with the apostles. It has been so again and again when God has moved to enlarge His people by ignoring their fixed framework of custom. It is so easy to use thoughtless and misapplied slogans, or apply fragments of Scripture wrongly (such as, "By their fruits ye shall know them"). Very often such damaging dagger-thrusts are only because of a failure to give the Lord room and right to take some of His children by a way that is new, unusual, or very strange.... So we see that for all enlargement and increase we must leave room for God to do *new* things, strange things, things that we cannot understand for the moment. We only put ourselves outside of His intention to enlarge spiritually if we bind Him to our own fixed judgments.

From: Hindrances to Fullness of Life
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000521.html

November 6

I have made You known to them, and will continue to make You known in order that the love You have for Me may be in them and that I Myself may be in them. (John 17:26 NIV)

Perhaps you have been amazed sometimes, and perplexed and bewildered, why God should use that, and that and that; and such and such persons. You have been inclined to say: “It is all contrary to what I believe to be necessary to God for His work. I see that the Bible says that instruments have got to be according to God’s mind in order to be used.” But history does not bear that out. As I say, He has used the devil, and the devil is not according to God’s mind. There is a sovereignty of God spread over in relation to His end. But when you have said that, it is a frightening fact when you come to the work of God. I mean this – that we may be working for God, and doing many mighty things as employees of the Kingdom of God, the rule of God, and then, in the end, be cast away! In the end, we ourselves might just go to pieces. Here it is – this strange thing, that these men went out, twelve and seventy, with this “delegated authority” – this *delegated* authority – and exercised it, and mighty things resulted; and then these same people are found, after the Cross, with their faith shattered; nothing to rest upon. What does it say?

Thank God, the book of the Acts transforms the whole situation! Because the book of the Acts brings in this mighty new factor: that Christ, Who had delegated the authority, is now indwelling as the authority Himself. And the works now are mighty works, but they are not just works *FOR* the Lord – they are the works *OF* the Lord. It all goes to prove this tremendous fact: that it is “Christ *IN* you” that is the indispensable necessity for Life and for work.... What a marvelous thing it is that we are in the dispensation when the one thing, above all others, that God will make true, is “Christ in you” – Christ *IN* you!

From: According to Christ - 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000720.html

November 7

The anointing you received from Him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit – just as it has taught you, remain in Him. (1 John 2:27 NIV)

The School of Christ; that is, the School where Christ is the great Lesson and the Spirit the great Teacher; in the School where the teaching is not objective, but subjective; where the teaching is not of things, but an inward making of Christ a part of us by experience – that is the nature of

this School. “Ye shall see the heaven opened.” “He saw the heavens opened and the Spirit of God descending upon Him.” What is the meaning of the anointing of the Holy Spirit? It is nothing less and nothing other than the Holy Spirit taking His place as absolute Lord. The anointing carries with it the absolute Lordship of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit as Lord. That means that all other lordships have been deposed and set aside; the lordship of our own lives; the lordship of our own minds, our own wills, our own desires; the lordship of others. The lordship of every interest and every influence is regarded as having given place to the undivided and unreserved Lordship of the Holy Spirit, and the anointing can never be known or enjoyed, unless that has taken place....

Do you ask for the anointing of the Holy Spirit? Why do you ask for the anointing of the Holy Spirit? Is the anointing something that you crave? To what end? That you may be used, may have power, may have influence, may be able to do a lot of wonderful things? The first and preeminent thing the anointing means is that we can do *nothing* but what the anointing teaches and leads to do. The anointing takes everything out of our hands. The anointing takes charge of the reputation. The anointing takes charge of the very purpose of God. The anointing takes complete control of everything and all is from that moment in the hands of the Holy Spirit, and we must remember that if we are going to learn Christ, that learning Christ is by the Holy Spirit’s dealing with us, and that means that we have to go exactly the same way as Christ went in principle and in law....

“The Son can do nothing out from Himself.” You see, there is the negative side of the anointing; while the positive side can be summed up in one word – the Father only. Perhaps that is a little different idea of the anointing from what we have had, “Oh, to be anointed of the Holy Spirit! What wonders will follow; how wonderful that life will be!” The first and the abiding thing about the anointing is that we are imprisoned into the Lordship of the Spirit of God, so that there can be nothing if He does not do it. Nothing!

From: The School of Christ - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001039.html

November 8

*Gone is the distinction between Jew and Greek, slave and free man, male and female – you are all one in Christ Jesus.
(Galatians 3:28 Phillips)*

In this dispensation God is not meeting Jews as Jews, and Gentiles as Gentiles, and a great many are making the mistake of thinking that He is. His Word to the Jew is: “You must leave your Jewish ground, and stand before God, not as a Jew, but as a man, and until you take that ground God

has nothing to say to you; you will not have any light whilst you persist in coming before God on your own ground.” The same has to be said to everyone else. We have to leave our own ground in every way. As that applies in these directions nationally, it applies in every other thing. Are you going to answer the Lord back: But I am this or that, or something else; or, But I am not this or that. It is not what you are, but what the Son is, that is of account. Come on to His ground. The Lord will not meet you on the ground of what you are, whether it be good or bad; He will meet you on the ground of the Heavenly Man. Do you answer back, “I am so weak!” The Lord is not going to meet you on that ground; He will meet you on the ground of His Son. That is what the Holy Spirit means by such words as He speaks through Paul: “...be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:1). God hears us exclaim, “But I am so weak, Lord!” but He does not pay any heed to what we mean to indicate by that confession, which is: “Come down on to the ground of my weakness and pick me up!” He says, “You forsake that ground, and come on to the ground of My Son, and you will find strength there.” “I am so foolish, Lord!” The Lord says: “You will remain foolish until you get on to the ground of My Son, Who is made unto you wisdom.”

That applies all the way along. We take our own ground before the Lord and are surprised that the Lord does not lift us right out of our own ground and put us into a better position, but He never does. We shall stay there forever, if that is our attitude. The Lord’s word to us is: “Forsake your own ground and come on to My ground. I have provided a Heavenly Man Who is full of all that you need; now come on to that ground.” It does not matter what you are, or what you are not. There everything is adjusted and made good.

From: The Stewardship of the Mystery, Volume 1 - Chapter 12
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001389.html

November 9

The true Jew is one who belongs to God in heart, a man whose circumcision is not just an outward physical affair but is a God-made sign upon the heart and soul, and results in a life lived not for the approval of man, but for the approval of God. (Romans 2:29 Phillips)

The Cross, as the instrument of spiritual circumcision, has to be applied to this self-life deeper and ever more deeply, because there seems to be no end to it. But that is the painful side, the dark side. What is happening on the other side? Is it not that room is being made for Christ? The real seed, the seed of Christ, is growing, becoming more and more manifest. The opposite of the characteristics which we have been considering – strength of intellect or emotion or will – is meekness. He said: “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly

in heart” (Matt. 11:29). Pursue this right through, and you cannot fail to recognize that there was something radically different in the very depths of His being.

I have said that we cannot calculate the whole range of this self-principle, in its myriad forms of self-expression and self-occupation and self-attention and self-pity and self-consciousness and self-satisfaction. Even in our Christian life, in our devotion to the Lord, we are so happy that other people see how devoted we are, and how humble we are! And it is the self, the wretched – may I use the word? – the stinking self, coming up all the time. For a true child of God is oblivious of himself, has lost consciousness of himself in every way. If other people point out something good about them, they had not realized it, they were not aware of it. They are surprised that anyone could say anything good about them; they are not conscious of that. And on the other side, should people be critical and point out failings, well, they only say, “Yes, I know: I had that out with the Lord,” or “I have got that before the Lord right now. I am not deceiving myself about that.” This is the true child of Heaven.

From: The Israel of God - Chapter 5

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000897.html

November 10

I urge you... to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. (Romans 12:1 NIV)

You have a life, and that life is a great trust, a great responsibility. It can stay in its own ambitions, its own interests, its own worldly concerns and considerations, it can stay by itself. Will you give your life to God, will you let it go to Him, will you put it on the altar and let the knife be taken that God may have it utterly? If you will, God will multiply your life, God will extend your life, God will make much more of it than ever it would have been if you had kept it in your own hands. Have you got something in your life that you are holding on to as a Christian; you are not letting that go to the Lord? You know what it is. I should miss it if I tried to catalog the things it might be. You know you have something where you are not letting go to the Lord. The Lord has put His finger on something, and you are holding on. You have an argument which you think is a very good argument. You have a reason you think perfectly good, so you are holding on. Deep down the truth is you are not prepared to let that go....

There are times when, in recognition that a certain course is the Lord’s way, we have to wait for the Lord’s time and see to it that our strength of will coming into alliance with some purpose of God is not jeopardizing the fruitfulness of that thing, and doing other people harm and making other people suffer. There are times when we have to come back to

the Lord and say, “Lord, You have shown me that is Your way for me, but I can see that it is going to involve others in a great deal of suffering. I do want to be sure of Your time in this, and that I am not taking hold of it; it is not my strength of will to do Your will. I want to do this thing in self-sacrificing love, so that the least loss shall be suffered by others.”

We have seen people who are right as to their objective, right as to what the Lord wants, but the way in which they do it often spoils the whole thing. They take hold of Divine things, and while the thing is right, they are spoiling it by bringing their own strength of will into alliance with it. This applies in many ways. We must be circumcised in heart to do the will of God, ready to let go and let God determine the way to accomplish it. May the Lord interpret His Word and make it fruitful. I know it is challenging. It searches us all; we shall all come up against it. But oh, see what happened in heaven, and see that He desires that as it is in heaven, so it shall be on earth.

From: The Pathway of the Heavenly Vision - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003377.html

November 11

Don't let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know Me and understand that I am the Lord. (Jeremiah 9:23,24 NLT)

Why does not the Lord do this and that, which we think He ought to do? It is simply this soul-craving to have proof and demonstration; and this is why, if there is anything built up in Christian work which is obvious, big, impressive, where there is a great thing being organized and a great movement on foot and all is in the realm of something that can be seen, crowds of Christians flock after it; or if there are manifestations, things that seem to be clear proofs, the crowds will be found there. The enemy can carry away multitudes by imitation works of the Holy Ghost in the realm of demonstrations and proofs. We are so impressionable, we must possess; and that is exactly the same principle as that which governed the rulers. They were not prepared for the principle of the Cross to be applied in this way – an utter self-emptying, being brought to an end of everything but the Lord Himself.... What was the one thing the prophets were always talking about? It was about *knowing the Lord*. The thing that was lacking amongst the Lord's people in the days of the prophets was the knowledge of the Lord. There were plenty of people who were prepared to have the Lord for what He could do for them, but as for the Lord Himself... ah, that was another matter. What is the Lord after with you and with me? Is He first of all wanting us to do things? The idea of what is of God today is chiefly associated with the things which are being done for Him, the work we are

engaged in, and so on – that is, with what is objective and outward. But the Lord is not first of all concerned about how much we do. He is far more concerned that, whether we do little or much, every bit of it should come out of a knowledge of Himself. Any amount can be done for the Lord in Christian work and activities, just as you do other work, but it may not proceed from your own deep knowledge of God. The Lord is concerned above all else that we should know Him.

From: Prophetic Ministry - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001007.html

November 12

Be ready to spread the word whether or not the time is right. Point out errors, warn people, and encourage them. (2 Timothy 4:2 GW)

Even good people who have been blessed of the Lord, to whom He has shown His favor and whom He has used very greatly, may in the end be involved in spiritual tragedy if for some reason compromise has entered in. It may have come in because of policy. What a snare policy is! We tell ourselves we must be very careful that we do not do this or that because it may have such and such a result. It is all policy and diplomacy. “We must be careful to avoid...” – what? Just what we seek to avoid betrays the whole case. Are we afraid of losing prestige with men, support, friends, position, opportunity? Do these things weigh with us as over against implicit obedience to the Lord? If so, there is divided loyalty; and if we allow it, we may at the end pass into terrible tragedy; the tragedy that always follows compromise....

If spiritual fullness is to be reached, we have to be governed by Divine and heavenly principles, and not by human considerations. Divine principles; not, “What will the consequences be?” not, “What shall we lose?” not even, “What will the Lord lose?” because that is a very subtle argument. The Lord does not ask us to reason this thing out on that level at all. He says, “What is the Divine principle? Let that principle govern and guide.” You may not see at all how it is going to work out. If you are governed by Divine principles you may seem to lose a lot here; you may, for a time, have to go out with David and wait. But in the end the principles will be vindicated. You have to recognize that compromise on principle only brings disaster. You see it everywhere.... We must say, “What has the Lord revealed? It will mean this, it will cost that, it will involve me thus; but that is not the point. I am not going to be influenced or governed by consequences at all. Policy must have no place with me. What God has revealed – that is the only argument for me.”

From: The Peril of Divided Loyalties
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001715.html

November 13

*When one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
(2 Corinthians 3:16,17)*

Liberty from what? Well, if we turn to the Lord, and are occupied with Him in the way we have indicated, the Holy Spirit sets us free. It may be you are struggling, striving, fighting, wrestling, praying, pleading, longing, yearning, asking the Lord to set you free from condemnation, free from fear, from those paralyzing bonds in which Israel was when the glory appeared. Do you want to be free from fear, from dread, from terror, from condemnation? What are you doing to get free? There is one simple, direct way, namely, to be occupied with the Lord, to turn to the Lord. Get Christ as God's satisfaction in your view, and cease trying to satisfy God yourself. Faith in Christ is all God's requirement.

How deeply true were His words, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing." "Abide in Me. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." That is only figurative language, which means be occupied with Him, set your mind on Him, dwell in Him, rest in Him, abide in Him; or, as Paul would say, "Gaze on Him, behold Him," let Him be the object of your occupation, and the Spirit will make you free.

More than that, this beholding of Christ means that the Holy Spirit changes you into God's likeness: "Beholding... we are changed." It is not said, "Beholding, we begin to change ourselves," and we embark upon self-transformation with all its struggle, and conflict, and battle. We are changed by the Lord the Spirit. Be occupied with Christ, and the Spirit takes up the matter of transforming into His image. Be occupied with yourself, and you will see that the law of conformity to type operates. If you are the type, then you will conform to that type. If Christ is the type, then the Holy Spirit will conform to His likeness. Then this being occupied with Christ means that the Holy Spirit makes us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant. I do not think that ministry is such an onerous thing after all. We need to come back to the simplicity and the spontaneity of ministry. Be occupied with Christ, and the Holy Spirit will show you more and more in Christ with which to be occupied, and as He makes that livingly real, you will have something to give to others.

From: Spiritual Ministry - Chapter 3

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003256.html

November 14

I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ. (Philippians 3:8 NIV)

Man has constructed his own interpretations of Christianity and of truth, brought in his own systems and has confused things so much that you really do not know, unless you have clear discernment such as Nehemiah had, what is of God and what is not of God. There are multitudes of good, honest, sincere Christian people who really are in the most awful fog as to what is of God and what is not of God religiously. Man's religious systems have brought about that confusion and multitudes of honest people believe with all their heart that the thing that they are in is of God, and it is just possible for them to get such an awakening to see the whole thing was man-made and not of God at all; "...much rubbish."

Paul was one of those. Reflect upon his past life, privileges, and inheritances which he at one time believed were so utterly and absolutely of God for him, and that he really was in God's will. He came to a time when he said: "The things which were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ... for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ"; and yet he was so devoted to all that as a traditional religious system in which he at one time was living as out from God, which had now become merely an outward thing of forms and external laws. He believed, nevertheless, that it was all of God until the light shone, until he saw that in comparison with the fullness of Christ it was refuse. It is a strong word that he uses; the word he uses is "stuff to be flung to the dogs." Saul of Tarsus throwing his Judaism to the dogs! He did it when he saw Christ. You can never come out of the rubbish until you see Christ. Ask the Lord to reveal to you the fullness of Christ and you will find things which have gripped and held you become as mere refuse, stuff to be flung to the dogs. There was much rubbish in the place which once represented a clear line of division between what was of God and what was not of God; confusion, mixture. I shall not attempt to apply that more thoroughly. The Lord will have to show us by revelation what the rubbish is, but there is the simple statement and it contains a truth, and you and I will really have to ask the Lord to show us even in religious matters, where man ends and God begins, or where God ends and man begins, so that we shall be delivered from everything that man has imposed or added upon what is of God, and we shall be able to get right down to foundations, the rubbish being removed: and there is a very great deal of ecclesiastical rubbish about in these days that must go. That is a real difficulty in recovering the full testimony of the Lord Jesus.

From: Concerning Jerusalem
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001600.html

November 15

*To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna to eat.
(Revelation 2:17)*

God always keeps the revelation of Himself in Christ bound up with practical situations. You and I can never get revelation other than in connection with some necessity. We cannot get it simply as a matter of information. That is information, that is not revelation. We cannot get it by studying. When the Lord gave the manna in the wilderness (a type of Christ as the Bread from heaven), He stipulated very strongly that not one fragment more than the day's need was to be gathered, and that if they went beyond the measure of immediate need, disease and death would break out and overtake them. The principle, the law, of the manna, is that God keeps revelation of Himself in Christ bound up with practical situations of necessity, and we are not going to have revelation as mere teaching, doctrine, interpretation, theory, or anything as a thing, which means that God is going to put you and me into situations where only the revelation of Christ can help us and save us....

Now then, that is why the Lord would keep us in situations which are acute, real. The Lord is against our getting out on theoretical lines with truth, out on technical lines. Oh, let us shun technique as a thing in itself and recognize this, that, although the New Testament has in it a technique, we cannot merely extract the technique and apply it. We have to come into New Testament situations to get a revelation of Christ to meet that situation. So that the Holy Spirit's way with us is to bring us into living, actual conditions and situations, and needs, in which only some fresh knowledge of the Lord Jesus can be our deliverance, our salvation, our life, and then to give us, not a revelation of truth, but a revelation of the Person, new knowledge of the Person, that we come to see Christ in some way that just meets our need. We are not drawing upon an "it," but upon a "Him."

From: The School of Christ - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001035.html

November 16

Let us then be eager to know this rest for ourselves, and let us beware that no one misses it through falling into the same kind of unbelief as those we have mentioned. (Hebrews 4:11 Phillips)

Why all these exhortations in the New Testament to go on? Why is the New Testament just made up of exhortations and encouragements and warnings to the people of God about going on? And why is the New Testament such a practical Book? Because real spiritual progress and the Presence of the Lord depends upon bringing everything that we know right

up to date. I wonder if you could tell me the number of times in the New Testament that that one thing occurs. It is a quotation from Israel's life in the wilderness. And it is this: "Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart." Again and again, those words are put in the New Testament. Today! Today! Today! You see, all this has got to be brought into *NOW*. All our progress for the future depends upon what we are doing with what we know *NOW*. So the Lord says to us, "I am with you if you are going on. And going on means putting into practice and effect all that I have said to you." Our growing knowledge of the Lord depends entirely upon our daily obedience to the light which we have....

So when the Lord speaks, and we bring that which He has said, and we say: "There is something to be done about this. I do not just put that into the store of my knowledge. I do not just add that to all that I know. I look to see what that requires of me in a practical way. And when I see what that means, then I get to the Lord to have that made real and living in my life." Brethren, the people who do that will be going on. They will be entering the Promised Land. They will be entering into His Rest. They will be entering into the joy of the Lord. Because that is what the Lord wants – people who take hold of everything that the Lord says, and make it practical. So the writer of the Hebrews says, "Let us go on." In what other way can we go on? We are not on a literal journey on this earth. Our Promised Land is not somewhere on this earth, in this world. No. Christ is our Promised Land. Christ is God's fullness of purpose for us. So, we have got to take everything that has been said to us about Christ, and put it into practical effect. That is what it means to go on. And that is what it means to have the Lord fully with us!

From: "That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One" - Meeting 34
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001103.html

November 17

We know that for those who love God, that is, for those who are called according to His purpose, all things are working together for good.
(Romans 8:28 ISV)

Go back to the place where, for the time being, the Lord has put you, where He has called you to live your life and do your work in all the trial and difficulty and suffering of it, and do not strain to get out of it. Do not lose the present value of it by always living mentally or hopefully in a time when you will be out of it, but go back there and recognize that if you are the Lord's, if you love God and are called according to purpose (as you are if you are in Christ), God is seeking to do something with you and in you by means of the conditions of your present situation. You will only defeat God's end if you try to get out and will fail to recognize and accept what He is seeking to do. I can think of few things more regrettable and grievous

than that we should look back upon any part of our life and have to say, "I might have realized some great purpose of God in that period of my life if only I had taken another attitude toward it than the one I did take; I was chafing, impatient, all the time looking for a way of escape; I was rebellious, living in another mental world of my own creating, in which I would do and be this and that; and I missed all that God intended at that time." I say, there can be few things more grievous than that.

So we must go back to the sphere and conditions in which the Lord has placed us, with this attitude – God has a thought which relates to me as one of His Own; and that thought is, that through the conditions and sufferings of my life He should develop in me the features of His Son. On the one hand, the features of the old creation may be seen to be more and more terrible and horrible, as I recognize them in myself; but over against that God is doing something which is other than myself, not me at all. He is bringing into being Another, altogether other, and that is His Son. Slowly, all too slowly; nevertheless something is happening. That sonship is not very much manifested yet, but it is going to be manifested. What God has been doing will come out into the light eventually – conformity to the image of His Son; "that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." So we look out upon the people of God on the earth amongst whom we are included, and we have to adjust our ideas as to why we are here. There may be things to do, but God is far more concerned with the being than with the doing, and we have to learn all over again what service is.

From: Conformed to the Image of His Son
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001589.html

November 18

*Through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us, carefully guard the precious truth that has been entrusted to you.
(2 Timothy 1:14 NLT)*

How much have you to dispense? Are you sure that you are dispensing what you have? The Lord did not lead you through that trial, through that darkness, through that strange experience, just for your own sake. The Lord has not dealt with you as He has, in order that you should be shut up to yourself, to enjoy the result alone. He has done that to constitute you a steward. If you and I will only allow that fact to govern us in the days of difficulty and trial, it will help us through. We should hold fast to the fact that the trial is to mean enrichment for the Lord's people, and an increase of equipment and qualification for stewardship.... Ask the Lord to release you into your stewardship within your measure. We are not speaking of an official, organized service for God, where you have to be continually ministering to others, whether you have the resources with

which to do it or not. That is all false, and puts strain upon you; you may well revolt against that kind of thing.

We simply have in mind the way in which the Lord creates living contacts. Children of God may cross your path in dire need, and may all the time be looking for the person who can help them. They have been crying to the Lord to meet the need, and have been watching to see how the Lord would answer. They may cross your path, and you talk upon all sorts of ordinary things; they pass on their way, and you have failed in your stewardship. They have not received that for which they have been asking, and the steward has disappointed the Lord, and those who were looking to the Lord. Let us ask the Lord to give us release from our tied-up state, to fulfill this stewardship. The Lord's Word is: "...it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," not eloquent, intellectual, or with a strong personality; none of those things. What is your mental conception of a steward? One who has a great facility of speech, who finds no difficulty in talking? No! "...it is required in stewards, that a man be found *FAITHFUL*."

From: The More Excellent Ministry - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001201.html

November 19

All of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" (2 Corinthians 1:20)

What are the promises for? The promises were never intended to be a matter of personal pleasure, either in the case of Israel or in our case.... As the Lord's children we are often found in situations of personal embarrassment, personal difficulty, personal suffering, in a place where things for us are hard. At such times we are apt to take hold of some portion of the Word of God, and take that to the Lord and claim it for our deliverance.

That may sometimes be all right, and yet if the motive should ever be definitely a purely personal one, we can take it for granted that the promise will have no fulfillment. How many have found that that is how it works. In a certain situation, by reason of some difficulty, trial, suffering, some adversity, you have gone to the Lord, taking His Word and pleading it before Him for a change of the situation, a deliverance, the bringing to pass or the removing of something, and you have found that you were up against a stone wall. You have discovered that you were knocking yourself to pieces, and you came to a standstill; you could get no further. It seemed that the heaven was closed, that there was no way through, no answering voice, no sense of a listening ear; and with deep heart exercise about the matter you have been tempted to doubt the promise, question the faithfulness of God, raise questions as to the truth of His Word. But in the

final issue the Lord has shown you that something needed to be done in you. You were reaching after some object that you wanted, which you thought was necessary and very important, but somewhere there was a secret personal interest, personal concern – unconscious perhaps, but in God's sight very real – which was making it impossible for you to accept that situation. You have come to see at length that your seeking of the Lord was not altogether because of the Divine interests bound up with the situation, but, at bottom, because of the way in which it affected yourself. The Lord had to bring a crisis in your experience, where you were perfectly willing to accept that trial in the will of God; that if so be the Lord wished it then you gave your full consent, and said: "Well, Lord, if this is Your will for me I accept it wholly and fully. All that I ask is to know that it is Your will, and, given that, then I accept it from my heart." In such experiences we learn that the promises are not for us as things for our personal interest, but wholly and utterly for the glory of Christ, to bring about a greater measure of the fullness of Christ in us. Thus, once more, through an ordeal, we have come to the place where it is "no longer I, but Christ."

From: Partnership with Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003395.html

November 20

After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. (1 Peter 5:10 ESV)

Something has got to be done in us as well as *for* us. We want to proceed on the line of having things done *for* us, heaven intervening *for* us, our difficulties removed *for* us, having a straight path made *for* us. Heaven may be ready to come in, the Lord may be prepared to work for us, but it is not sufficient for Him – and it would not prove good enough for us – if that were all. The very principle of spiritual growth and maturity demands that He keeps the objective and the subjective balanced; that is, that something is done *in* us as well as *for* us. It is the principle of the Cross again. He died for us – that is the objective. We died in Him – that is the subjective. Here are two sides in spiritual experience. He keeps the balance of things.

We have to have this balance wrought in us, and to be delivered from this tendency of allowing our problems to obscure the Lord, this inveterate habit of ours of viewing the position merely objectively instead of saying, "What does the Lord want to teach us about this? What does He want to do in us in this matter? There is something He is after in us." He has something to do *in* us before He can do it *for* us. How often we have found that when we have come to a new position with the Lord, when the thing has been done in us, then there has been outward movement. So the

mention of the subjective exercise suggests that we have to take this matter to our own hearts as something which requires a change in us.

From: The Problem of the Stone
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002118.html

November 21

All of us reflect the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, we are becoming more like Him with ever-increasing glory by the Lord's Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18 ISV)

I believe that if we are living in the radiance of Divine Life, there will be something of it betrayed by our faces. At any rate, the world will know something if we are really living in touch with the Lord, and there will be a language which only the spiritual can enjoy and understand. There will be those spiritual counterparts of the seed of Abraham, a people different from all the rest. Now the tragedy of what is called "the Church" has so often been, and perhaps is more today than ever, that that distinctiveness is being lost. It seems today as if a set is being made in some way to remove all the offence and all the difference, and to get us near to people without anything that clashes, in the hope of winning them. Yes, that is what is going on in the religious world around; it is a conforming to this age. But what came in at Pentecost is fundamentally this, that this people of the Spirit are so utterly different in the very center of their being, different altogether from all other peoples, and their power and influence lie in that fact. You cannot fit them in with other things, and it is not because they are awkward and difficult and deliberately irritate people, but there is that which by reason of their spiritual constitution marks them off; and if they did but know it, this is the secret of their influence in the world.

The progress and increase of spiritual Life means this, that the gap widens all the time between the children of God and those in the world who are not such. That is not to be taken literally in this sense, that we begin a mistaken system of hiving off, shutting ourselves up, getting out of touch. That is a wrong application of the principle. The Lord Jesus is preeminently our example in that He could move in any circle, and He did so deliberately, publicans and sinners, all classes, He moved amongst them, but His power over them was in His basic difference from them. Let us be careful how we are caught in this great movement of conforming to this age. To conform is to lose spiritual power.

From: Government by the Holy Spirit
www.austin-sparks.net/english/000428.html

November 22

All the believers were one in heart and soul. (Acts 4:32 ISV)

The Lord must have a company in the earth who, in every respect, are a heavenly people. Their spiritual resources of life, power, wisdom, knowledge, and purpose must be heavenly and by mediation of the Holy Spirit alone. Their means and methods must be Divinely supplied and dictated. Their energy must be directly Divine energy; which means that they must have been separated from their own. The spiritual relationships and associations must be heavenly. It was the resolving into an earthly institution and system which cost the Church its Throne power at the beginning, and there can be no recovery without a clear position as to traditional relationships. There will need to be a purely heavenly position as to the really heavenly nature of the Body of Christ – the Church, without any contradictions in earthly orders. We have heard it said that at a certain gathering of servants of the Lord “it was like a touch of heaven; everyone dropped – for the time being – their differences of denomination and earthly divisions.” This speaks for itself. But why go back to them?

“They were of one mind and one soul.” We can never arrange this, or decide to do this heavenly business to any consequence (except failure) unless each one concerned is in it by revelation of the Holy Spirit, and is born into it through spiritual travail. We shall be wasting our time if we expect, try, or even pray for anything really effective apart from this essentially heavenly and therefore anointed ground. There is no royal road or short cut to the Throne or to Throne power; it will cost us everything here. We have known more than one to be faced with this issue, and – in trying to keep something here – miss the Lord’s highest and best, and later in life to know that it was so. Will you go to the Lord and ask Him to do that deep work by His Cross in the hands of the Holy Spirit which will result in your being brought into the place where His authority is exercised through you, and His rule is registered in the realm where things matter most, through your heavenly union with Him?

From: “For Such a Time as This”

www.austin-sparks.net/english/002101.html

November 23

May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love... that you may really come to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge without experience. (Ephesians 3:17,19 AMP)

The Holy Spirit, with all that the gift of the Spirit means of endowment and endowment and instruction and strengthening, is not a

substitute for experience. We are very often found asking that certain things shall be done for us by the Holy Spirit which the Holy Spirit will never do. He has to lead us into experience. It is the only way in which He can answer our prayers. Many prayers are answered through experience. You ask the Lord to do something, and He takes you through experience, and you arrive at the answer in that way. You had not meant that, of course: you wanted the Lord to do the thing there and then as a gift, as an act; but that would have been merely objective, something given, whereas He wants to make it a part of yourself, and so He answers prayer by some experience. "Steadfastness worketh experience," and if there is no experience, what is the good of anybody or anything?

So then, experience is of greater importance than being delivered from tribulation. "Tribulation worketh experience." Oh, how often we have asked the Lord why He allowed this and that, or why He did not do this or that. Why did He not hinder Adam from sinning? Why has He not stopped the world in so many things that have had most terrible results? Experience is very largely the answer. Experience is very important because, after all, it is the very quality of service. When we come to real life, and we are really up against things and the issues are of the greatest consequence, we do not want just information, we want experience, and we go where experience can help us. Is that not so? Thus experience is the very body and quality of service and usefulness to the Lord.

From: The Importance and Value of Experience
www.austin-sparks.net/english/001978.html

November 24

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes.

(Ephesians 1:3,4 NLT)

That which has been chosen before the foundation of the world and which has been foreordained unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, has been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavens. That is the fullness of God's thought for His own, as a full, comprehensive, utter thought. We have not yet come into all those blessings, not because God has not given them, but because we have not grown up into them. We have not grown up into Him in all things. That is the point of our word, the urge to come to God's thought, the measure of Christ.

What is God's thought? The full measure of Christ, the fullness of the stature of Christ. That is God's thought for us. Let us lay hold of God's thoughts; let us by faith appropriate those thoughts, let us believe in God's

thoughts, let us seek to get into line with those thoughts, and take the Holy Spirit and His energies to form us, and constitute us, that God's thoughts may become living expressions in us. That is His purpose: to bring us to the full measure of Christ. All that we need to do is to state that as a definite fact, but, mark you, it represents a tremendous responsibility. We cannot talk, and hear about things like that without coming under tremendous responsibility. If this is the revelation of God from heaven in Christ through His Word and to our hearts by the Holy Spirit, then it involves us in very great responsibility. Is it necessary to speak about responsibility? Ought not God's thought for us really draw out our hearts in unspeakable gratitude and worship? Ought we not to recognize these other words here associated with the calling: "*according to the good pleasure of His will,*" the Lord's delight? You remember what Joshua and Caleb said when they reported on the land: "If the Lord delight in us He will bring us in." That is only what we have here. Christ is the Land of God's fullness, and it is according to the good pleasure of His will that we should come into that fullness.

From: The Church of the Firstborn - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003331.html

November 25

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know... His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength He exerted when He raised

Christ from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 1:18-20 NIV)

Resurrection is the paramount miracle. Death is the greatest power against God's work, God's likeness, God's purpose. Death is the greatest power in this universe against man; his labors, his hopes, his wellbeing. Death is the last word in the creation as it is. Outside of God there is no power in this universe as great as death. When it has intervened and done its work there is *nothing* that can reverse or destroy it. In the realm of evil there is no power that exceeds the power of death. This is why, in referring to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, the words are used: "*the exceeding greatness of His power*" (Eph. 1:19). When death has exceeded every other evil power – sin, suffering, sorrow, and destruction, then God's unique and exclusive answer is the only hope, and the one answer.

More importance and glory is placed upon resurrection in the New Testament than upon any other matter. Indeed, everything else is declared to be in vain and worthless until resurrection is established. Resurrection is stated to give the value to every testimony and every work. Death, spiritual death (not cessation of being) – of which the physical is only one small aspect – is Satan's horizon. Resurrection is God's horizon *in Christ*.

Resurrection, we repeat, is the answer to death in all its forms and aspects: God's answer in His Son, Jesus Christ. Having said that, let us proceed to note that the next thing revealed in the New Testament is that this supreme truth in Jesus Christ is the birthright of every one born into God's spiritual family; the heritage of every truly born-again child of God. But the point for special realization is that we must not make the mistake that Martha of Bethany made, when she received such a revealing correction. She said, concerning her brother: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection." It is not something in the future for believers, but for the moment when they believe on the Lord Jesus and receive Him. The order now is first the resurrection of the human spirit and at last the resurrection body. This, for any born-anew Christian needs no stating, although the meaning may take years to learn.

From: Horizoned by Resurrection - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001899.html

November 26

Whoever speaks on their own does so to gain personal glory, but he who seeks the glory of the One who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. (John 7:18 NIV)

You and I are going to face God sometime. We are going to come face to face with God literally in eternity and then the question is going to arise, has God at any point failed us? Shall we be able, on any detail, to say, "Lord, You failed me, You were not true to Your word"? Such a position is unthinkable, that ever any being should be able to lay a charge like that at God's door, to have any question as to God's truth, reality, and faithfulness. The Holy Spirit has been sent as the Spirit of truth to guide us into all the truth, so that there shall be no shadow whatever between God and ourselves as to His absolute faithfulness, His truth to Himself, and to all His word. The Holy Spirit has come for that. If that is true, then the Holy Spirit will deal with all disciples in the School of Christ to undercut everything that is not true, that is not genuine, to make every such disciple to stand upon a foundation which can abide before God in the day of His absolute and utter vindication. But in order that this may be so, you and I, under the Holy Spirit's teaching, have to be dealt with very faithfully, and have to come to the place where we are perfectly adjustable before God, where there is all responsiveness to the Holy Spirit, and nothing in us that resists or refuses the Holy Spirit, but where we are perfectly open and ready for the biggest consequence of the Holy Spirit putting His finger upon anything in our lives needing to be dealt with and adjusted. He is here for that.

The alternative to such a work of the Holy Spirit being allowed to be done in us is that we shall find ourselves in a false position, and it is far, far

too costly to find ourselves in a false position, even though it only be on certain points. This is a false world we are living in, a world that is carried on upon lies. The whole constitution of this world is a lie, and it is in the very nature of man, though multitudes do not know it, but think they are true. They are trying to build the world on a false foundation. The Kingdom of God is altogether other. It is built upon Jesus Christ, the Truth.

From: The School of Christ - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001034.html

November 27

All the people saw him walking and praising God. (Acts 3:9)

“In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk”; and he leapt. Simple in its terms, but very, very drastic and very utter in its action. Immediately the man in himself knew the glory of God. He, leaping up, praised and glorified God. He had got it in his own heart, in his own soul. He knew he was changed, he was in the good of God’s rest....

This man was a testimony which was the answer to every argument. Seeing the man there in the midst whole, they had to shut their mouths. There was no argument. It is all argument if it is doctrine, theory, teaching, interpretation of truth, but a living witness – you cannot argue against that. Your mouth is shut when you have a living person standing there right in the good of things. Are we closing the mouths of people? We shall not do it by the truth that we hold, teach, interpret, but we can do it by what we are, by being in possession of the goods. Are we that? Are you that? Are you going to be that? A real answer to every argument so that people say, “Well, look here, it is not the teaching they have taken on, the associations they have made: no, no, look at them; you know what they were, you know how little they counted, you know what cripples they were spiritually, you know what liabilities they were, you know how much they were without rest: but look now; they have the goods, they are in the good of things, they are counting, they mean something, and they are in rest, they are in joy, they are in satisfaction, they themselves are changed!” What can you say to that? You cannot say anything to that if you are going to be honest.

Oh, dear friends, we are not to go out to try and pass over some teaching, some truth, to people. That will never convince. You and I are to be here as those who in themselves convince others because we embody His rest, we embody His peace, we embody His strength, and we count for something. We are responsible people, we are positive factors, we are assets, and the Lord is getting something by reason of us. That is how it must be. Is it like that? All this can be if we will go the way of this man, and say, “Yes, this has gone on long enough and it has to end, and to end, so far as my giving diligence is concerned, at once, and I do most truly by

the grace of God take a deliberate and definite faith attitude toward the Lord Jesus for my complete deliverance and the setting of me upon my feet for His glory, for His praise!" I think there will be an issue, and I think it will be – "he, leaping up, stood upon his feet, praising and glorifying God." May it be so with every one of us.

From: From the Wilderness to the Land - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000814.html

November 28

*If anyone wants to follow in My footsteps, he must give up all right to himself, carry his cross every day and keep close behind Me.
(Luke 9:23 Phillips)*

The Cross is applied according to every man's make-up. What would be the Cross to me would never be the Cross to you, and the Cross may mean something different for every one of us. But it is universal. That is the point – central and universal. It touches us all perhaps in a different way, and it raises questions and issues for each one of us peculiarly. That is our challenge of the Cross, and then it is a matter of whether we, in what we are, will come and allow the Cross to deal with us. It is no use our saying, "What shall this man do?" the Lord will at once answer, "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me." There is a personal, individual, shall I say, private application of the Cross to every one of us, and our spiritual growth depends entirely upon the Cross doing its work in us, and our response to it personally.

So, you see, it is very necessary that we should recognize that this cannot be taken as a kind of a general thing. It has to become peculiar to each one of us. Oh, beloved, do believe that this is not just teaching, or doctrine. It is of *very* great importance. But I would beg you not to accept it merely because I am saying it and emphasizing it, nor even because I tell you that so far as some of us are concerned, it is a proved thing. I would ask you for one thing only, namely, not to close your heart to it, not to say, "That is a teaching!" but just to ask the Lord, "Is this right?" taking an attitude simply and honestly before the Lord, even should you feel it is not true, and so leaving room for the possibility that the prejudice may, after all, spring from yourself, from something in your constitution or in your upbringing.

Will you go to the Lord with this and say, "Lord I do not see, it is difficult for me to believe it; but, if it is true, then, Lord, I am open to the truth, and I want You to take me definitely in hand on the ground of the truth." There is not one of us, I am sure, who wants to stand in the presence of the Lord later on, and for the Lord to say, "My child, I would have led you into something very much fuller if only you had given Me the chance."

Will you take a very honest and open-hearted attitude toward the Lord in the matter?

From: The Lamb in the Midst of the Throne - Chapter 7

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003651.html

November 29

From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another. (John 1:16 NIV)

When the Lord has blessed and prospered, how many people have not themselves become something? Here is a successful movement! Here is my chance! There is a laying hold of that work, and a turning of it to personal account. That is the history of things. The most dangerous time for the work of God is the time of blessing. You will always find people coming in when there is blessing, not because they have God's end in view, but because a realm of blessing means personal good....

The Lord is calling us on to the fullness of Christ, and sometimes on the way He may let us see the working of His power, that He is with us. The world may be against us, the devil may be withstanding, and the Lord lets us see in some little way that He is with us. And then alongside of that there comes the most awful peril, in that we snap our fingers at everything and everybody, and at the devil himself. We are supported by the Lord in the position we have taken! We are vindicated! That is a perilous position. The Lord may have to say, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven! Do not find any personal gratification in the fact that the demons are subject unto you!" It is all in the same realm as glorying in a wrong way in the blessings of the Lord. We have to go on steadily, and take our encouragements when they come, thank the Lord quietly for them, and get on with the main business, not staying to gloat over the fruits of the Lord's blessing in a personal way.

There is a great deal of ground covered by that. It is often a source of so much gratification if only you can tell people of the success that is coming to you in the work of the Lord, how many people are coming, how many souls are being saved, how you are being used, how the Lord's seal is upon you. All unconsciously we take hold of the honor for our own flesh. The Lord has to hide so much from us, because it is dangerous for us; our flesh makes it dangerous. We shall be tried by blessing as well as by adversity. The keenest fires of trial are often those of success or prosperity. Such tests discover whether our hearts are fixed upon the Lord or upon things.

From: Partnership with Christ - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003396.html

November 30

From the time of John the Baptizer until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful people have been seizing it.
(Matthew 11:12 GW)

The Kingdom is so much bigger than conversion. Of course, if you are going to be saved at all – I mean saved initially – you will have to mean business for that. You will have to make it a desperate matter, because there will be everything to stop you. But the Kingdom means a very great deal more than merely getting into it, far more than being converted. There is a great deal more in the purpose of God for our lives than we have ever imagined, and if we are to enter into that, violence has to characterize us. We must desperately mean business, and come to the place where we say: “Lord, I am set upon all that Thou dost mean in Christ. I am set upon that, and I am not going to allow other people’s prejudices or suspicions or criticisms to get in the way; I am not going to allow any man-made system to hinder me; I am going right on with Thee for all Thy purpose. I am going to do violence to everything that would get in the way.” It calls for violence, and we have to do a lot of violence to get all that God wills for us.

Oh, how easily many lives are side-tracked, simply because they are not desperate enough! They are caught in things which limit – things which may be good, that may have something of God in them, but which none the less are limiting things, and do not represent a wide open way to all God’s purpose. The only way for us to come into all that the Lord means – not only into what we have seen but into all that He has purposed – is to be desperate, to be men of violence; to be men who say, “By God’s grace, nothing and no one, however good, is going to stand in my way; I am going on with God.” Have that position with the Lord, and you will find that God meets you on that ground. No men – not even Paul himself – knew all that they were going to know. Paul was constantly getting fuller unveilings of that unto which he was called. He received something fairly strong and rich at the beginning; then, later, he was shown unspeakable things (2 Corinthians 12:4). He was growing in apprehension. But why? Because he was a man of violence. God meets us like that. “With the perverse Thou wilt show Thyself froward” (Psalm 18:26). That, in principle, means that God will be to you what you are to Him. He will mean business if you mean business. There is a vast amount in the Kingdom that we have never suspected. Do believe that.

From: Prophetic Ministry - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001008.html

December 1

The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

Here truly will be found such as are sinners manifest to all; here heathens who are often referred to by the “civilized” (?) as “sitting in darkness” (what a false comparison!), but here also are included the *most* enlightened by the light of civilization as such. Here are some of the greatest brains the world has known. Here are multitudes of the most scholarly and learned. Here are even many whose researches have led them far into the realms of theology and theosophy. Yes, they include many who have held place in ministry and office in what is called “The Church.” Many of these live lives which from man's point of view are morally almost flawless. And yet, and yet, with all they do not know in that realm and in that vital way which is “Life,” eternal Life, because Divine and not human life. Look again! What is their description? “The natural man receiveth not... neither *can* he know the things of the Spirit of God.”

It should be well known by now that that word “natural” in the Greek is psychical. Perhaps the faulty translation is not altogether unfortunate for the natural man is the psychical man, and the psychical man is the natural man. He is a different species – so to speak – from the spiritual man. As the word implies the psychical man is entirely governed and bound by reason, feeling, volition, within a world of sense. But the things of the Spirit of God are not in that realm in the first instance. True, spiritual forces can and do register themselves upon psychical apparatus, but the psychical apparatus does not *know* them (hence the delusion and deception of spiritism), and this is true to the absolute in the matter of the things of God. Not only the delusion of spiritism has its ground in the psychical as a registering apparatus, but the entire counterfeit of the truly spiritual or divinely spiritual is in this realm. Evangelism, “Apostolic” teaching and practice (?), “Pentecostal” experience (?), prayer force, and even exorcism *can* all be merely psychical. Signs, sensations, impacts, can be psychically produced by the use of the most orthodox New Testament language and doctrine, even the Name and the Blood of Jesus may be employed in terms and language. There is only one sure safeguard against the colossal delusion by which *multitudes* will be carried away in the latter days, and that is a clear apprehension of the teaching of the Holy Spirit concerning soul and spirit and the continual operation of the Cross in the realm of the “natural” man. No, the *natural* man CANNOT! He may be full of religious knowledge, emotions or feelings, and activities, but if the Bible thunders more than speaks on any matter, it is this: that such can be the most mistaken and deceived. The highest reach of genius comes far short of the lowest degree of Divine inspiration and revelation.

From: The Spiritual Clinic - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003697.html

December 2

Wherever two or three are gathered (drawn together as My followers) into My name, there I AM in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:20 AMP)

Jesus, as the Truth, is contrasted with Satan, the liar. But He is also contrasted with all representations, types, symbols, outward forms, etc., which were – and are – not the true, or the real. When our Lord spoke of His body as the Temple, deliberately refraining from the fuller explanation because of the fixed prejudice of His hearers, He introduced the great truth of the transition from one dispensation to another, and the complete change in the nature of the temple and worship. It was because Stephen saw this and declared it that he was murdered by these very people. Said he: “The Most High dwelleth not in houses made with hands” (Acts 7:48). Paul said the same to the Athenians (Acts 17:24). This does not mean that God never came into representations when they wholly corresponded with His thought. Both the Tabernacle and the Temple were “made with hands” and God came into them in power and glory, but not to commit Himself to the *thing*. The time came when He forsook both and He was no longer found there. They were only temporary representations and His presence was conditional.

The “true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man” (Hebrews 8:2) is “not of this creation.” The whole Letter to the Hebrews has to do with this change from the earthly and temporal to the heavenly and spiritual. Hence, He is no longer in “temples made with hands.” To come right to the point: the New Testament teaches that the Temple in this dispensation is a Person, and persons incorporated into Him through death, burial and resurrection, and “baptized into one body by one Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:13).

We must also remember that Jesus foretold the passing away of that entire temporal system, with Jerusalem as its center and representation. With His foreknowledge of the passing of the earthly, temporal and material things; places, systems, fixed locations, and outward forms, the Lord Jesus put the whole matter of survival upon Himself as the constituent of a spiritual structure against which the very powers of hell would not prevail. Against fixed localizing and systematizing of Himself and His presence He was emphatic, and history is evidence of how right He was. If, according to John 3:16, salvation is a matter of “whosoever,” the Lord’s presence and true worship, according to Matthew 18:20, is “wheresoever.”

From: The Dispensation of the Holy Spirit - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001837.html

December 3

I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light.

(Revelation 21:22,23 NLT)

Is it not very clear that from God's standpoint, in God's mind, everything is intended to be related to heaven and governed from heaven? Heavenly fullness is His objective with His people: to make them a heavenly people and to fill with His heavenly fullness. And right at the end we see the New Jerusalem – not the old one, but the New Jerusalem – coming down from God out of heaven, in great heavenly fullness. It is something immense, is that Jerusalem – twelve thousand furlongs in every direction (Revelation 21:16). There is great fullness here. All the nations are going to derive their resource from it. The fruit of its Tree of Life, the waters of its River of Life, are for all the nations. Its light is for all the nations. "The nations shall walk amidst the light thereof" (Rev. 21:24). This is heavenly fullness, the thing to which the Lord has been working all the time.

He is working now in you and me. I sometimes think that we are two persons, one here and one in heaven. Naturally we are here, but there is something of ourselves "going up" all the time, when the Lord is getting in us something more of heaven. It is being stored up there. Is not that perhaps what the Lord meant, when He referred to Himself as "the Son of man, who is in heaven" (John 3:13), even while He is on earth? There is an aspect of us that is growing in heaven. Do not think of heaven as some remote planet. We are growing in that heavenly thought of things. Something of us is "going up." Do you say your situation is too difficult to bring heaven in? Well, there are difficult situations. Daniel's was a difficult situation – his three companions were in a difficult situation; but they brought heaven in. A grand phrase in the book of Daniel is – "the heavens do rule" (4:26). And they proved it. Headquarters is in heaven: not in Babylon, not in Rome, not in Jerusalem or anywhere else, but in heaven. The Lord help us to live up to and out from heaven.

From: Pioneers of the Heavenly Way - Chapter 8
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000994.html

December 4

You are the light of the world – like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. (Matthew 5:14 NLT)

In speaking of the light of the Lord's heavenly people we are touching again a very solemn, and serious, and important feature,

something which has a tremendous history associated with it. The entire history of the Lord's people, and of the spiritual life, is one of light and darkness, of truth and falsehood, of purity and adulteration or mixture, of clearness and cloudiness, of openness and secretiveness.... Truth may be in word, in doctrine, but there has to be a corresponding truth in heart, truth in life. Light may be a matter of doctrine, but there has to be a corresponding state of light in the heart. The enemy will not object to us having plenty of the former kind of light and truth, but, if he can, he will seek to destroy its real value by introducing a lie over against it, a contradiction....

Remember that God never builds in the dark; that is, there can be no constructiveness where there is not light. Before ever God would bring this world back into order and fruitfulness He said: "Let there be light." God is out for the *manifestation* of the truth. God's works are never darkness, and we can never know constructiveness and progress unless there is absolute light. You know quite well that you cannot go on with people who are not straight, people who are crooked, people who are all the time furtive, not open, not frank, who have somewhere in the background a secretiveness. You have to say, "I cannot go on with that one." God is like that. He would say to any one of us who might be there, "I cannot go on with you until you are absolutely out in the open, until you have come to a place where you are going to be perfectly honest." Reality is God's demand for any kind of work that He will do. There may be many weaknesses, many imperfections, but if there is genuineness, reality, and openness before God, where the spirit is clear and pure, God can go on with His work. But immediately we begin to lock something up inside, hold something back, cease to be perfectly open before God, the work stops. Light in the sense of clearness is an essential for the building of the city of God, because the ultimate purpose for that city is to shine forth with that glory of God in character. With Him there is no variableness, neither shadow cast by turning. That means that God can be relied upon. The Lord make us like that.

From: The City Which Hath Foundations - Chapter 8
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001568.html

December 5

*Let us go out to Him, outside the camp, and bear the disgrace He bore.
(Hebrews 13:13 NLT)*

We can organize our movements, lay our plans, and draft our schemes. We can lay it all out according to the New Testament and it can be dead, ineffective.... You see the difference between a traditional system, whether it be Judaism or Christianity, and a living thing coming all the time in a living way out from the Christ Himself by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit Himself doing it. Well, this is going to cost something. See

what it meant for these people. At the end of this letter you come on this: "Wherefore, Christ also... suffered without the camp. Let us therefore go to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." The camp was Judaism, and He suffered without the camp because He repudiated Judaism and stood for the realization of all God's thoughts as in Himself personally. He gathered up everything into His own person, "I am." It is the Christ who is the full sum and embodiment of all God's thoughts and ways, and that takes the place of Judaism, and He, therefore, repudiated Judaism and suffered without the camp. "Let us go to Him without the camp."

What is the issue? If you are going to take this line you are going to repudiate organized Christianity, going to repudiate Christendom as a traditional system, going to repudiate that order of things which is made, and going, therefore, to suffer reproach and be outside of the camp suffering His reproach. In other words, we are immediately going to come up against that force of antagonism to stop what has come in through the death and resurrection and exaltation of the Lord Jesus, the heavenly thing. Is it not sad that these people met it through God's historic people, the people who claimed to have the oracles, to be the elect, to be the favored of the Lord? It is always like that. "A man's foes shall be those of his own household." Do not narrow that down to the limits of a family where one is a Christian and all the rest are not. That is not the point at all. It is his own household, the Christian household. You will meet the antagonism to what has come in from heaven as a heavenly thing; you will meet the antagonism amongst those who are the traditional people of God in this dispensation. That is how it will be. That is going to be the cost of a walk in Life with the Lord and not with man, knowing the Lord for yourself.

From: The Kingdom That Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002065.html

December 6

You have NOT come to the mountain that may be touched... BUT you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. (Hebrews 12:18,22)

"But we are come," and do you mean to say that the "but" is less real than the "not"? Do you mean to say that this that we are come to is abstract, while that was concrete? Oh, no, I am sure that this is even more real, after its own kind, in its own realm; and, dear friends, that is the point upon which we must focus everything: the reality of what we are come to. When you go on and break this all up into its details, if you are in your own senses, senses of mind and soul, you are just completely baffled. It seems so idealistic or imaginary, so ethereal, so unreal. See, to the natural, the spiritual is unreal. To the natural man, the man of soul, what is essentially and intrinsically spiritual is unreal. Their reaction is "Oh, let us

be practical, let us come down to earth, let us get out of the clouds and get our feet solidly on the terra firma, let us get down to things that are more real." That is the reaction of the natural man to the spiritual. But to the spiritual man, spiritual things are far more real than the tangible. And this that we are come to, to say the very least, is as real as what they came to at Sinai, even though after a different order. Now I want you to note the tense of the verb, because it is very important to get the tense: "*we are come to Mount Zion.*" Not we are coming, not we are going, not we shall then arrive at Zion. No, "*we are, we are come.*" I know you will go on singing, "We Are Marching Upward to Zion." We know what you mean, but we are not marching upward to Zion. The Word says: "*But ye are come to Zion,*" present tense. We are supposed to be at Zion now. Have you got that? There is here, of course, a contrast between Sinai and Zion, but it is not only contrast here, but note, in keeping with what I have just said, it is more than contrast, it is consummation!

From: But Ye Are Come Unto Mount Zion - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001418.html

December 7

The Holy Spirit points out that the way into the true Holy of Holies is not yet thrown open as long as the former tabernacle remains a recognized institution and is still standing.... For Christ (the Messiah) has not entered into a sanctuary made with human hands, only a copy and pattern and type of the true one, but He has entered into heaven itself. (Hebrews 9:8,24 AMP)

Fellowship with God must be of that kind, that whether we can go to meetings or not, we still have the Lord; whether we have nice soulish music or not, we still have the Lord. You are not in that realm: "Neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem...." Bricks and mortar cannot communicate with spirit. Man's soul can communicate with God only through the vehicle of his spirit in union with God. That is what Calvary has done. You can understand now, of course, why the message of the Cross is unacceptable... and that, because of this strong cleaving to a historic, traditional inheritance, you will be outside the camp if you are going to proclaim it and stand for it. And, too, the awful thing is this – that Satan has taken hold of the Divine representation, or typical system, to appropriate it, when God has done away with it, and that what God brought in for a temporary purpose he has captured for himself in order to obscure the real nature of fellowship with God.

Now no one will think that I am saying that there are no spiritual people in that system of things. I am not saying that; but I am saying that if that represents for them their spiritual life – if they must have that, if that is the realm in which they live... that they do not see beyond that and are not

free from that as a thing in itself – then they have missed the meaning of Calvary, and they are bound to miss all the meaning of Christ crucified – the wisdom and the power of God. Wrestling with principalities and powers wants something more than a system of external things. You see, we are up against a terrific business; we are up against a spiritual opposition which is colossal, and only a spiritual position is adequate to that – nothing less. We do not want to be in any position less than the Lord's first and best for us. The toys, the picture books, the illustrations, the symbols, the types are for children who have little intelligence; they are taken away at a certain time when God is out to have, not children but sons; and there is all the difference between the two. And so Calvary dismisses the kindergarten of external things in relation to God and brings in the fullness of heavenly order so as to make of us full-grown sons of God. May we be so!

From: Christ the Power of God - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002159.html

December 8

When God speaks of a new covenant or agreement, He makes the first one obsolete (out of use). And what is obsolete (out of use and annulled because of age) is ripe for disappearance and to be dispensed with altogether. (Hebrews 8:13 AMP)

This letter to the Hebrews sets forth the all-inclusive revolution or reconstitution which God made when He brought His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world – that is, the religious revolution. This revolution, which was rejected by Judaism, has been almost entirely overlooked or lost sight of by Christendom since Apostolic times. The entire present system of Christianity as generally accepted would be impossible if the meaning of this letter were received as a heavenly revelation in the power of the Holy Spirit. That is – if it came into the heart by the Spirit's power with the effect of a revelation in the same way as the Apostle Paul came to see who “Jesus of Nazareth” is, then a Christian-Judaism, or Judaistic-Christianity (which Christendom so largely is) would be impossible; as it became in his own case. The Letter to the Hebrews is only one other aspect of the battle fought out in the Letters to the Romans and Galatians.

In the light of such a spiritual eye-opening a whole lot of things would go: but being a “heavenly vision,” there would be no tears, no sense of loss, and no fond farewells. The gain and joy would rather put all such things into the category of a worn-out and no-longer-to-be-desired suit of clothes. In saying this we are only contemplating the full-tide of spiritual life known before any of these things came into being. These things only came in when the fullness of the Spirit had gone out, and, being an artificial substitute, they can never but be limiting things in the realm of

Divine purpose. And yet, behold how these things have become the very nature of traditional and organized Christianity! So much so that to touch them in any way which threatens their existence is to meet something more bitter and formidable than any persecution from the world. This is not said carelessly. Religion can be, and is very largely, a terrible force; and Christianity has become a religion. There are very few communities of Christians – even the most evangelical, and spiritual – who wholly escape the tendency or propensity to persecute or ostracize other bodies of Christians who might be regarded as rivals in their field of activity... “God... hath at the end of these days spoken... in His Son.” But the new era and new order had brought out a new and mightier-than-ever conflict.

From: “God Hath Spoken” - Chapter 1

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000821.html

December 9

“Do you understand all these things?” “Yes,” they said, “we do.”

Then He added, “Every teacher of religious law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a homeowner who brings from his storeroom new gems of truth as well as old.”

(Matthew 13:51,52 NLT)

Have you got a heart for the Lord? Have you got a heart for the Kingdom of God? Really, is this a heart matter? The Lord says that if you really have a heart, that is going to mean *spiritual understanding*.... There are people whose good hearts are not rebellious to the Lord. They are not the people who say, “I will not have the Lord’s Words.” They make a response to the Lord, and it comes from their hearts. But some good people have reservations. Some very good people say, “Now if I go all out for the Lord, you know what my friends will think of me? Do you know what the people in my church would say about me? And you know, perhaps my position in business will be interfered with. I must be very careful. I must not lose my influence with others. I must think about what other people will think and say. Now, my committee expects this of me. If I really go all out for the Lord, my committee will be very angry. Perhaps they will ask me to resign.” Do you see what I mean? Very good people, but they are influenced by policy.

I was talking to a man once, and as I talked to him, he saw what I was meaning. And when I was finished, this is what he said. “Yes, Mr. Sparks, you are quite right. I quite agree with you. But if I was to go the way that you are going, I should offend all my friends. And in my work for the Lord, people would begin to withdraw their support with money. So I must think about my people and about the Lord’s work.” Very good people, very devoted to the Lord. There is no doubt about it that they love the Lord, but

you see these reservations. It says about Caleb of the Old Testament, that he had another spirit, and he *wholly followed the Lord*....

I say to you: *have you understood all these things?* I have much more to say to you about spiritual understanding. But, oh, how important it is that I should have eyes to see, to see behind the things that are said and done, and see the *meaning* of the Lord. These people only heard His Words, and saw His works, but they did not understand the meaning. And they lost so much. Ask the Lord to give you spiritual understanding. And *if* you don't understand, don't say, "I don't understand." Go to the Lord and say, "Lord, make me understand. Open the eyes of my heart." That will show that you mean business with the Lord, and if you mean business with the Lord, the Lord will mean business with you.

From: "That They May All Be One, Even As We Are One" - Meeting 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001073.html

December 10

*If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts share its suffering.
(1 Corinthians 12:26 GW)*

But that is not on the earth. I may be going through a very great deal of suffering without you knowing anything about it so far as the natural life is concerned, you are not affected by it, but beloved, there is a realm where if one member spiritually suffers the whole Body is involved in that suffering, which shows this Body is a heavenly thing and its relationships are not natural, they are spiritual, and that the unifying factor of the Holy Spirit operates apart from the natural consciousness....

You see what is involved, you see what a motive we have in our relationships for keeping them on a high level. If there comes between those in these relationships, these strains, these cross-purposes, these cross-currents, this being offended and upset, this breach of true love, our attitude must be, not just that this is a miserable unhappy thing, and the sooner we make it up the better; our attitude must be, this thing out in the realm of spiritual intelligences is working against the glory of Christ, this is working against Him as the Head because all these relationships are joined so vitally to the Head; this is working against the Holy Spirit as the unifying power of the whole Body, this is doing damage, and therefore, inasmuch as we are so minutely related to all the members by the Holy Spirit, what one does must somehow, all beyond our realization or consciousness, touch Christ, touch the Holy Spirit, and therefore, all other members. It is doing that.

That is the revelation here, that is the nature of the Body. You see why we should see to these relationships and lift them up out of the earthlies. I think that is something to think more about. Relativity is the

law of the Body of Christ. Relativity is holding fast the Head; and let us beware of trying to maintain the Body in its oneness along the horizontal line. You cannot do it. It is a hopeless thing, and we shall always be running round and making apologies. On the horizontal we cannot do it, but if we hold fast the Head, we shall find our gravitation is together. We cannot give Christ His place fully and absolutely and be at cross-purposes with another believer. Christ must have His place so that we do everything unto Him, all for Him, all for His sake.

From: The Church Which is His Body - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000755.html

December 11

The heavens do rule. (Daniel 4:26)

There is a great need today that there should be the rule of the Heavens. But the Holy Spirit has got to do it, and we have got to come to recognize the fact that what we see in organized Christianity is not it. The spiritual people of God are more and more feeling separated from the old system of Christianity and churches and ecclesiastical systems. People are recognizing a deep dissatisfaction with what has held the ground so long, and there is a cry for spiritual reality. Many sermons are clever and full of mental ability, but they are starvation to the spirit. There is all the activity, but it is not spiritual Life, and I believe the Lord is going to show us the nature of the thing that is in the heavens. The thing that man has brought down on to the earth and taken up and perpetuated is only at best a poor imitation of things in the heavens, but in a very large realm it is a caricature of heavenly things.

Man has taken hold of heavenly things and brought them down to earth and made them earthly things. That is where things all went wrong at the beginning. At the first, things were of the Spirit. The people gathered in their homes or anywhere. It was not the place. It was not the ministry. It was the Lord, and they were circled around Him. But then the day came when they said, "We must have public buildings," and then the architecture became a factor, and so things developed, and they became something on the earth for men to take note of. They wanted man to be attracted, and that was the first step in one of the greatest perils that has overtaken the church. For prestige, recognition, the world to be attracted, there is the result that you get the mixed multitudes in the church. If you can attach some big names to it, you can attract the people, and one of the devil's greatest measures has been popularizing the church.

The preeminent thing is lost, that the church and Christ is a mystery to the natural man and that it is no use to expect the natural man to appreciate it. The church is essentially a spiritual thing according to the

mind of God. What really governs everything is God's conception of things, not ours, and if we are going on with the Lord there is going to be a whole system of change and we are going more and more to view things from the heavenly standpoint. You have got to get into the heavenly system to get heavenly results.

From: The Heavens Do Rule - Chapter 2
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003467.html

December 12

In Him the whole structure is joined (bound, welded) together harmoniously. (Ephesians 2:21 AMP)

You find a company or lives welded together in an indissoluble, indestructible oneness and you will find there the love of God wrought very deeply into the heart. "That they may be one," one by the giving love of God through the Son transmitted to the seed. Yes, this matter of Divine love touches so many points all the way round, and why is there such a passion in our hearts as we do speak in these days about this matter? For this very reason: that tragically, grievously, on this earth so very many of those who bear the name of Christian are drawing to themselves, are standing for their own rights, are jealous, envious, divided. And it is just the contradiction of the Divine thought to have a heavenly people on this earth of this kind; the reproduction of this seed which is Christ, which is the embodiment of this love that lets go, this love that knows how to yield, this love that is all the time giving. That is what the Lord is after. It represents a deep work of the Cross within, but surely we can accept nothing less than this?

I do feel that we need so much more of this grace of our Lord Jesus, this love of God, that gets us out of the picture. So often, as you look at people, you can almost see them occupied with themselves, turned in upon themselves. They are just individuals in themselves, tied up. The love of God should release us from all that sort of thing, to say nothing of worse traits of spitefulness and criticism and hurting one another with words. The Lord's love deliver us from all and make of us part of this heavenly seed, this heavenly people, really expressing the giving, letting go love of God which comes back a thousand-fold. And do not let us do it for that, to get, but to glorify the Lord. The Lord give us grace!

From: The Pathway of the Heavenly Vision - Chapter 7
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003377.html

December 13

*I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened.
(Ephesians 1:18 NIV)*

"The eyes of your heart enlightened..." discerning love. Love is as far removed from blindness as heaven from earth. "Love is blind"? No – not true love. The fact is that true love sees everything, but transcends everything. The love of Christ for His disciples was not blind love that did not know His men, love that was duped, deceived, misled, but eventually found out that they were not the men He thought they were. No, "*He... knew what was in man*" (John 2:24). His love saw everything, and could tell them beforehand exactly what they would do; but love persisted in face of it all. Love is a great seeing thing.

If you are consumed with a burning love for the Lord, you will be very quick of scent as to what is doubtful and questionable. You will not need to be frequently and continuously told when a thing is not right. No, love for the Lord will bring you quickly to see and to sense there is something that needs to be adjusted. You may not know what it is at the time, but you have a sense that all is not well. Love will do it. All the instruction in the world will not bring you to it. You may have the Word of God brought to you on all such points, and you might even say, "All right, because you say so, because it is in the Bible, I will do it, I will be obedient." Do you think that is good enough? Such a thing has never come to you through the eyes of your heart.

But, mark you, if this love, this discerning love, has really filled your heart by all the intelligence of the Holy Spirit indwelling you, you will sense it without being told; or if it should be brought to you from the Word, that within you will say, "Yes, I know that is right, the Lord tells me that is right." Do you not think that is the kind of Christian that is needed, and what the Lord needs at the end? That is what He has had in mind from the beginning and He calls that first love that is quick of scent to see what needs to be cut off or added, what adjustments are necessary, and does accordingly. You do not have to follow round and say, "Please do this; have you never taken note that you might be helpful in this way?" You do not have to do that where there is devotion, love watchful all the time, aliveness, alertness, perception, readiness to do without being all the time told to do it. Real devotion to the Lord is something that far outreaches legality. First love is discerning love.

From: "His Great Love" - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001273.html

December 14

Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the Head. (Ephesians 4:15 ESV)

Things may be taking a new and different shape, but the purpose of God is the same. We may be presented with His vision in new and further-on aspects, but it is only what He originally meant. Can we adjust? Can we leave “the things that are behind”? Without raising any questions as to the right or wrong of what has been, can we “go on” and “grow up,” “attain”? God-given vision makes men of prayer. This is almost too obvious when we remember the men of the Bible. It was vision that got them away from the trivial and petty. It requires vision to get prayer on to the major lines and to make it real travail. What a bound and range those prophets had in prayer! But what immense issues were precipitated. It is not *our* vision for God, but His vision in us that will be dynamic, and that will determine value.

I cannot conclude without pointing out that what could be voluntary with much gain has often to be made compulsory with much loss. This is because we do not stand back from time to time and in detachment and waiting upon the Lord give Him an opportunity of enlarging vision. Many a work which has mightily served the Lord and been a great spiritual testimony has lost its former glory, purity, and impact because it has become a “Work,” a “Movement,” an Organization, and its ramifications and responsibilities have become such as to completely rule out any such “retreat” with God, where *that* work is put back and a real openness to the Lord for anything else, more or other, is enquired after. The Lord might send prophetic vision by ministry to lead into His fuller meanings if there was a way for it, but *we are too busy*. What tragedy is related to such preoccupation!

From: Vision and Vocation
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002082.html

December 15

*Solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.
(Hebrews 5:14)*

In our natural, physical man we have five senses. We have our sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Those are the five senses of our physical natural life. But there is also an inner man called the “hidden man of the heart,” and that inward man has what corresponds to the outer man’s five senses. There is a faculty of spiritual sight, of spiritual hearing, of spiritual smelling or sensing, of spiritual taste and spiritual touch, and these senses

are very important to the life of the inward man – yes, more important even than the senses of the physical man. We know how we feel the tragedy of people who have lost any of those outward senses. It is a great loss; it is an imperfect life, a life of limitation. But it is equally true of the inward man. To be without spiritual sight is a tragic loss and a terrible limitation; or without spiritual hearing, that capacity for answering to the Spirit – “he that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith”: if there is no capacity for hearing, that is a desperate situation. What loss there is if there is no sensing – sensing as in the matter of smell, so that you at once scent things.

I know how wrongly that has been used, in an everlasting attempt to scent heresy and fault and wrong, but there is a right faculty of spiritual scent which is very important. I believe it was to that that reference was made concerning our Lord – “His scent shall be in the fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11:3, A.R.M.) – quick of scent, right on the mark in scenting what the Lord wanted. And how true it was of His heavenly life: what it saved Him to scent the enemy and what the enemy was up to, to scent what the Father wanted and when He did not want things. It is important to be quick of scent. And so with our taste and with our touch – our contact, and what we register by contact. This is a very real inward man, and these are the senses which form the basis of spiritual capacity: these are the things to be exercised, to be “put through it” for increase and development.

From: Spiritual Exercise

www.austin-sparks.net/english/001972.html

December 16

Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born from above he cannot see. (John 3:3 ISV)

This is something very searching for us as to our being children of God, being the spiritual children of the travail of Christ. This is not something that is extra to the Christian life, or for those who advance to certain heights and degrees. Right from our new birth, you and I, every one of us, ought to have a faculty of spiritual understanding and perception and knowledge that is possessed by no other person outside this Kingdom! We could spend much time in pointing out the tragedies that have come into Christianity because of failure to recognize or live up to this. I would go so far as to say that the largest proportion of all the trouble between Christians is due to either a lack of, or a failure to live on, the basis of spiritual understanding, spiritual discernment, spiritual perception, spiritual knowledge. There is any amount of natural knowledge in the Christian world: Bible knowledge, prophetic knowledge, and what not. But spiritual knowledge is a rare commodity; and yet it is supposed to be a constituent of our new birth from above, a faculty that we ought to have.

Now, if you are thinking: “Then woe is me – I don’t know much about that!” the Lord is simply saying to you: “Look here, this is yours by rights. It is not some extra thing to which you attain by struggle and effort, or by years of laborious Christian living, or by some specific act, some terrific upheaval in your spiritual life. It is a *birth* thing, it is a *birth* right: you have a *right* to this!” But it may be that, after all, you *do* know in this way, although you do not know that you know! You have a new sense, a new faculty, a new “something” in you, that causes you to know – in some measure at least – what is of the Lord and what is not, what is spiritual and what is not. But oh for the increase of that! It is the development of *that*, the increase of *that*, which is the apprenticeship in the school of Christ. We learn by mistakes, we learn by blunders, but the thing that we are learning is not something objective. We are learning inwardly that such and such is not the way of Life and we should do well to avoid it; and that such and such *IS* the way of Life, and that is the way for us to go. We learn it inwardly. It is a new kind of knowledge.

From: The Israel of God - Chapter 6
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000898.html

December 17

*He said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.”
So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of
Christ can work through me. (2 Corinthians 12:9 NIV)*

What is your idea of power? What is your mentality concerning power? Are you clamoring for power, wanting power? Well, it all works out this way. True power from God’s standpoint is Calvary power. Christ crucified is the power of God. What is Calvary power? Well, it is emptiness of self, you and I being emptied of self – and truly, that is easier said than endured! Oh, how very much there is of this self about us still! How we hate – how we suffer – being emptied of ourselves! What a terrible thing it is to feel our inability – to know that we do not count in ourselves. Oh, to be ABLE! And yet have we not proved, again and again, that our times of greatest emptiness and weakness have been the times when God has done most, and got glory by what He has done? Yes, it has been true.

We have learnt it along various lines and different ways, but God has been working right into the very inside of us, so that the thing is done – it becomes a part of us. He does not have to maintain it by external conditions. But He frequently uses such – very often physical – conditions, to bring us to that place of utter dependence upon Himself. It is really not good enough, is it, to be forced to it, compelled to it? That is God’s way of education, but it would be very much better for us to be fit and well and as dependent upon God as ever. So it all resolves itself into the need, in the

first place, for what is meant by being born from above: an entirely new nature and disposition, to begin with, and then a letting God do His work of conforming us to the image of His Son. I am not saying that works and words do not come in, but it is a heartbreaking business to be working and speaking with no power, and no registration of heaven. The Lord give us light as to what He means by this.

From: The Significance of Christ - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000840.html

December 18

*You who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus....
(Hebrews 3:1 ESV)*

That heavenly calling is never negative, never neutral, never passive, but always positive. You may not have very much in your daily life to make the calling seem positive. It may be you go to business in the morning and fulfill your daily work, the trivial round, the common task, as we say, with very little variety entering into it. It is the same round day after day, week after week, month after month; the same people, the same surroundings, the same activities very largely. Only on the rarest occasion does something especially interesting come into the daily course. It would be so easy in a situation like that to say: "Well, in my sphere of life there is not much of the glamour of a heavenly calling! My work is plain and simple. I have just to get on with it every day, and I see very little else beyond it." Remember that *at all times, in all circumstances, the calling is positive.*

Every day will provide some opportunity for you to learn spiritual ascendancy; some occasion for you to bring in the value of your relationship with the Lord; to put to the test the resources which you have in Christ; to grow in grace; to know victories. How do you know but that in that very uninteresting, perhaps unpromising sphere of life you are on test on some of those great matters, such as faith, patience, or patient endurance? It would be interesting to know exactly what the throne of the Lord is made of. When we come to that throne, I wonder whether we shall find a throne of gold in a literal sense, or whether we shall find it made up of many things? When we come to analyze the throne we may find that it is made up of patience, faith, endurance, and all such moral elements, and that these elements constitute the power by which He governs. It is sharing the patience of Jesus Christ which is sharing the throne. There is something mighty in the ultimate outworking of the patience of Jesus, the faith of Jesus Christ, the endurance. These are the constituents of His throne. He is working throne elements into us now in the drab, uninteresting life day by day. You may be on test for the throne. There may be bound up with the least interesting course of life some very, very real intention of the Lord.

Let us remember that the heavenly calling is always positive, in all circumstances, in all places. We are on test for the throne, as to whether it shall function through us both here and hereafter.

From: Partnership with Christ - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003397.html

December 19

In the morning, long before sunrise, Jesus went to a place where He could be alone to pray. (Mark 1:35 GW)

I am quite sure that I have the agreement of most of the Lord's people when I say that one of the most difficult things, if not *the* most difficult thing, is to be able to get to prayer and give ourselves to prayer. When we contemplate prayer we meet a host of unsuspected and unforeseen difficulties which suddenly rise up as ambush forces breaking out upon us. Anything to prevent prayer! I am not saying something that you do not know, but I am saying it in order that you may recognize it clearly, definitely and deliberately, and face the fact that it is not just ordinary circumstances, but a designed, well-laid scheme of the enemy to prevent prayer. The enemy, instead of objecting, will promote occupation with a thousand and one things for the Lord if thereby he can crowd out prayer. He does not mind how busy we are in the Lord's work, nor how often we are found preaching, conducting meetings, and doing the many-sided work of the Lord, as we may call it. He knows quite well that all the work for the Lord which is not founded upon triumphant spiritual prayer will count for little or nothing in the long run and will break down. I say that he does not mind you working. Work for the Lord as hard as you can, but if you leave out prayer you will not accomplish very much. One of the subtleties of the enemy is to get us so busy, so occupied, so much on the go and on the rush with – as we think – things for the Lord and the work of the Lord, that our prayer is cramped and pushed up into a corner and limited, if not almost entirely ruled out; and the Lord will never accept the excuse: "Lord, I am too much engaged in Your interests to pray." The Lord never favors an attitude like that....

Immediately you begin to contemplate or purpose a fuller prayer-life, the enemy launches a new scheme for keeping you more busy and occupied, heaping up the work and crowding in demands so that you will have no time or opportunity for prayer.... But we must recognize this: that the enemy will construct his best arguments about responsibility, duty and conscience to stop us praying, and there is a place where, if we see prayer is utterly ruled out, or brought down to such a limited place that it is completely inadequate for a life of spiritual ascendancy and victory, we have to say: "Lord, I am going to trust the responsibility with You while I pray, that You will not allow my breaking away for this time to have

detrimental results, and that You will protect this prayer-time – which I seek for Your glory – from the inroads of the enemy.”

From: In Touch with the Throne - Chapter 2

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001707.html

December 20

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, as you go, disciple people in all nations. (Matthew 28:18,19 ISV)

But who is to go? It is the Church, and His irreducible nucleus of the Church is two. It is a corporate thing, the bringing of the significance of the Body into view. When there is a functioning in the Spirit, it is nothing less than Christ risen, ascended and exalted, going on with His work through His Body, with all those limitations dismissed. That is tremendous! It is either true, or it is not true. If it is true, it is an immense thing. If it is not, well, what fools we are! But here it is, and, oh! that the Church might learn more of what it means to be in living union with a risen Christ! That there should be a company, two or three or more, though limited physically here on this earth by time and space, yet really functioning in the Holy Spirit, so that the universal Christ – all that it means that He is there at God’s right hand – is having some expression! *I would to God that this could come home to you by the Spirit and that you could grasp it*, for what differences it would make! We have a long way to go yet before this is appreciated adequately. But it is true!

When you touch these things, human language is a vain instrument for expression. “The exceeding greatness of His power” – the superlatives in this realm! Oh, for this enlargement by a new apprehension of the greatness of Christ in His Person, in His death, in His resurrection! Well, then, the supreme thing the New Testament shows is that the Church on its true, spiritual basis corresponds to Christ risen. Not “the Church” that we know here on earth, for it does not. But God’s thought about the Church is not an impossible and merely idealistic one. It is a practical thing. Two saints, simple, humble and unimportant in this world, but really meeting together in the Spirit, can be a functioning instrument of Him to whom has been committed all authority in heaven and on earth. With them all these old limitations can be dismissed and they can at one moment touch all the ends of the earth. Do you believe that? That is really the meaning of our glorying in Christ risen. It has to be something more than emotion, and more than glorious doctrine; yes, more than a truth to which we give some assent.... If it is true that we are one with a risen, enthroned Lord, it ought to have tremendous repercussions. *May it be so!*

From: Four Greatnesses of Divine Revelation - Chapter 6

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002021.html

December 21

His name is the Word of God. (Revelation 19:13)

There is one all-governing fact which runs right through the ages. It is that Christ is in all the thoughts and ways of God. That is a statement that is comprehensive. Through all the ages, in all the thoughts of God, and in all the ways of God, Christ is central, Christ is supreme. Everything relates to Him, and everything connects with Him; Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning. If we could stand by the side of God and see through God's eyes, and become governed by God's mentality, we should recognize that God has but one thought and that one thought is influencing Him in every one of His dealings with men, with nations, and with the world throughout all the ages. That one thought centers in His Son, Jesus Christ, and therefore the very essence of revelation, and the very heart of spiritual enlightenment is that you see Christ in all those thoughts and ways of God as they are expressed in His Word and in His activities.

If you ask: "What is revelation, what is it to have spiritual enlightenment?" The answer is this: that you are able to see in a living and ever-growing way God's thoughts as centered in Christ. We could put that in another way, and say that you are growingly able to see Christ and His place and His meaning in this universe, that this universe is interpreted and explained in the light of Christ, and that everything in our own lives in God's dealings with us, is connected with Christ in some way. If that is true universally, and if that is true sovereignly and providentially; if that is true not only in the whole history of things in this universe, but true in a special way in human life, it is true, perhaps, in the most essential way in the Word of God as the expression of God's thought. So that revelation, spiritual illumination, is to see Christ in all the Word of God; not truths, not doctrines, but Christ.... The question then, that we ever need to ask, is: In what way does this or that lead us to Christ? In what way does this mean an increase of Christ, a knowledge of Him in a living and experimental way? We are looking for what is of Christ.

From: The Church of the Firstborn - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/003328.html

December 22

It pleased God... to reveal His Son in me. (Galatians 1:15,16)

It is always futile and dangerous to advise people to leave one thing until they have a revelation of the fuller, and only such a revelation will accomplish the true emancipation.... It may not be applicable to many of us, but the principle is what I want you to recognize. You may not need to be emancipated from anything like Judaism or legalism, but the principle is

this, that for all increase, progress, enlargement, growth, and maturity, it is essential that there should be in the heart a continuous unveiling of Jesus Christ, and you and I will never get to the end of that unveiling. It is possible for some of us to say with truth that this year we have seen more of the meaning of the Lord Jesus than in all the previous years of our lives. Can you say that?

It is the most blessed and most wonderful thing to be able to recognize that there is a growing revelation of Jesus Christ within; you see more and more of what He means from God's standpoint, and as that is so, there comes this increase of the Lord Jesus... the fruit of the Spirit – love. An increase of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the heart is an increase of the love of the Lord Jesus, the fruit of the Spirit. You are conscious that your heart is coming more and more under the constraint of His love and that unloveliness is becoming subordinate to His love. There is more joy in the Lord Jesus today than ever, because you are seeing more of what He is. It is practical. That is spiritual growth: "It pleased God... to reveal His Son in me...." It is so important that there should be this continual, living unveiling of Christ in the heart if we are to reach God's full end.

From: Spiritual Maturity - Chapter 6

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001055.html

December 23

They were longing for a better country – a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:16 NIV)

The implications of any movement of God are not always recognized at the beginning, but if we go on with Him we shall find that much that is done here and is of time is – and has to be – left behind. The spiritual and the heavenly is pressing for a larger place and becoming absolutely imperative to the very life of the instrumentality and those concerned. It is spontaneous, and just happens. We wake up to realize that we have moved into a new realm or position, and no amount of additional earthly resource can meet the need. It is not only something more that is demanded, but something different. This is a crisis, and it will only be safely passed if there is vision of God's ultimate object. This demands spiritual mindedness, capacity for grasping *heavenly* things. One world may be tumbling to pieces, but the full and final is the explanation.

The great pity is that so many just will cling to the old framework or partial vision. God presents His *heavenly* pattern in greater fullness and demands adjustment. He does it with foreknowledge, knowing of a day which is imminent when this vision alone will save. But, because it is "revolutionary" or not "what has been in the blessing of God" etc., etc., it

is rejected and put aside. Then the foreseen day comes and all sorts of expedients have to be resorted to, to save the ship.... God is never on the line of reduction, or limitation. It may look like that, but it is not so. If we really had His vision, that which looks like trimming and reduction is His way of enlargement, but *spiritual* and *heavenly* enlargement.... God in sovereignty will run the risk of shattering, or allow the shattering, of so much that He has used of scaffolding or framework in order to realize the fuller purpose. It is not that it was wrong, but now He wants something more. We thank God forever that He took Paul away from his travelling ministry and let him be shut up in prison. It was then that the full, glorious vision and revelation of the “heavenlies” and the “eternal” was given to eclipse all the earthly and temporal. It was worth it, and was no tragedy! The Holy Spirit is the custodian of the *full* purpose of God, and under His government the Church and the individual believer will move ever on and up.

From: Vision and Vocation
www.austin-sparks.net/english/002082.html

December 24

The gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:11,12 NIV)

I wonder what Paul would think... were he to come back today and look over the literature of the past many centuries upon his letters, the systems of truth, of doctrine, the wonderful organizations men have made of the things which he said in a moment of inspiration and need – I wonder what he would say. I think he would look at it with blank amazement, and say, “Well, that ever they could have made that out of what I said! That ever that could have resulted!” I am not sure that he would recognize his own teaching. I am quite sure that he would be very doubtful as to whether it was the right outworking of what he said. I simply raise that as a question, and yet include it as something upon which to reflect.

Does not a systematizing of truth result in limitation, in a setness which breathes death? The New Testament themes are far, far too big for our molds. You cannot systematize the Cross of the Lord Jesus, you can only go on your knees and worship, conscious that you see something really far beyond your power to compass. But immediately you have boxed it in a system of truth, you have reduced it from its Divine and eternal dimensions, and robbed it of its power, and brought it into a realm of death in that measure. The Person of Christ, the resurrection of Christ – take any one of the great themes of the New Testament – when you have so wonderfully brought together all the fragments and organized them, and put them into a manual, a textbook, you have killed the thing....

When the Lord Jesus came, and in Himself gave some interpretation to the law, some light upon the law, which did not fall within the compass of their system, there was no room for Him, there was no room for God in His own law. *There must be room left for God!*

From: The Risen Lord and the Things Which Cannot be Shaken - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002216.html

December 25

God... who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3)

The object of our meditation is: Jesus Christ in heaven as our Sufficiency.... Our Lord Jesus' resources came from His Father when He was here on this earth. He voluntarily lived in a state of absolute dependence on Him. He willed it to be so. He refused to have anything in Himself. Everything He needed He drew from heaven; He received it from above. When we are in resurrection-union with Christ, the Holy Spirit brings us into oneness with Him who is in heaven for us. That means: all the resources upon which the Lord Jesus lived are at our disposal.

These resources were secret resources, that is, they were unknown to the world. The people around Him were absolutely in the dark as to the source of His power. There was a secret relationship between Him and His Father which impressed them. They saw that there was something in the background of His life, a mysterious power and knowledge, which was not ordinary to man. He had a whole set of resources at His command which no one possessed. He had a knowledge which was far beyond man's understanding. And because He lived a secret life, a life in His Father, His resources were mysterious and wonderful to men.

If we live in heavenly union with Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, the same resources are at our disposal. Let us remind ourselves of the Word which is at the basis of our meditation: "*The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ.*" That means that all the resources which are in Christ are available for us. But we have to learn to live in such close fellowship with Him as He lived with His Father in the days of His flesh.

From: Christ Our All - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002936.html

December 26

Each person must be careful how he builds. (1 Corinthians 3:10 GW)

In other words, that which is of supreme importance is not Christian doctrine, mentally appraised and apprehended, but a living and clear spiritual apprehension of Christ. That is the work. What are you building? Are you, through a living, clear, inward, experimental relationship with the Lord Jesus, building a structure which comes out of that inward spiritual knowledge? Is it by that you are growing? Or are you growing by things said and mentally judged, appraised, dissected, accepted, and assented to? What is the nature of the building? The work in which we are engaged, to which this phrase “each man’s work” applies, is the building of Christ livingly into the very substance of our being, into the very fabric of our lives. It is not a question of getting to know a great deal about Christianity. Let us note that. The heart of the whole matter is the difference between the philosophy of Christianity, of Christian doctrine and the spiritual knowledge of Christ.

The Lord would teach us – and this is the lesson that my heart is bent upon learning, and that I would urge upon you to make your quest also – that the ground of assurance is not in our having decided for Christ, nor that we persist in the Christian life, nor that we feel strong, nor that we have certain ability as Christians and are able to do this or that. It is not the measure of our activity in the work of the Lord, nor any one of these things which constitutes our Christian life. These are simply the outworkings. The thing which constitutes us is that Christ is the foundation, and that we are inseparably linked with Him by faith. Everything else can be suspended as a secondary consideration until that is settled.

It is as though God, if we may put it this way to try to simplify the truth, had given us His Son and had said to us: “In Him you have everything, and the first thing is not what you are, what you can do, or anything to do with you; *it is what He is!*” If only in the face of all you may see of a multitude of contradictions in your own life in weaknesses, and imperfections, and lack of attainment, you will persistently believe in Him as having it in Himself to bring you through to the end, you will go through in spite of all. We begin to take stock of ourselves, measure ourselves up, and say: “I am not this, and I am not that, and I am not something else; or else, I am this, and I am that, and all this goes against me.” Nothing of all this is to the point at all. The totality of every Divine requirement in us is in Christ.

From: Glorifying in the Lord - Chapter 3
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000818.html

December 27

God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6 NIV)

The principle of the New Covenant is a first-hand individual revelation of Christ as the knowledge of God in terms of glory in the heart of the believer. Every individual believer only comes into true Christianity by a revelation of Christ in his or her heart, so that the knowledge of Christ is all their own, and as real as when God commanded light to shine in darkness. But that is not all. That shining must be progressive. Christ is far too vast to be seen in more than minute degrees at any one time. The bulk of the New Testament is taken up with getting Christians to see what an immense realm it is into which they have come, and how they must go on.... Christianity can only be kept living and fresh and full of impact as Christians are living in an ever-growing apprehension of Christ as the Holy Spirit reveals Him in the heart.

This apprehension may only come as necessity is laid upon us by reason of suffering and trial. Capacity will increase by the stretching of suffering (see Hebrews 12, and read “child-training” for “chastening”). There is no succession in Christianity other than that of the revelation of Christ to the heart by the Holy Spirit. It is not a system to be perpetuated, but a Life to be possessed. The value of the Scriptures is that they contain depths and fullnesses which have never yet been fathomed; and when we speak of “revelation” we do not mean anything extra to them, but of that which is in them, but only known by the inward “writing” and “shining” of the Holy Spirit.... A thing can be in the Bible, and we can have read it a thousand times, but until the Holy Spirit makes it Life to us it will be unfruitful. Hence, there is a place and need for an inward revelation of the Word of God, and this is the only true succession. Nothing can be preserved alive through generations save as everyone entering its realm does so on the basis of such a personal, inward, living, and growing revelation of the truth, so that the *origin* and *beginning* is constantly repeated in experience.

From: “God Hath Spoken” - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/000824.html

December 28

For to me to live is Christ. (Philippians 1:21)

That is the good news of the all-captivating Christ. When Christ really captivates, everything happens and anything can happen. That is how it was with Paul and with these people. Christ had just captivated

them. They had no other thought in life than Christ. They may have had their businesses, their trades, their professions, their different walks of life and occupations in the world, but they had one all-dominating thought, concern and interest – Christ. Christ rested, for them, upon everything. There is no other word for it. He just captivated them. And I see, dear friends, that that – simple as it may sound – explains everything. It explains Paul... it explains these believers, it explains their mutual love. It solved all their problems, cleared up all their difficulties. Oh, this is what we need! If only you and I were like this, if we really after all were captivated by Christ! I cannot convey that to you, but as I have looked at that truth – looked at it, read it, thought about it – I have felt something moved in me, something inexplicable. After all, nine-tenths of all our troubles can be traced to the fact that we have other personal interests influencing us, governing us and controlling us – other aspects of life than Christ. If only it could be true that Christ had captured and captivated and mastered us, and become – yes, I will use the word – an obsession, a glorious obsession!

When it is like that, we are filled with joy. There are no regrets at having to “give up” things. We are filled with joy, filled with victory. There is no spirit of defeatism at all. It is the joy of a great triumph. It is the triumph of Christ over the life. Yes, it has been, and because it has been, it can be again. But this needs something more than just a kind of mental appraisement. We can so easily miss the point. We may admire the words, the ideas; we may fall to it as a beautiful presentation; but, oh, we need the *captivating* to wipe out our *selves* – our reputations, everything that is associated with us and our own glory – that the One who captivates may be the only One in view, the only One with a reputation, and we at His feet. This is the gospel, the good news – that when Christ really captivates, the kind of thing that is in this letter happens, it really happens. Shall we ask the Lord for that life captivity of His beloved Son?

From: The Gospel According to Paul - Chapter 5
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001671.html

December 29

Christ is all and in all. (Colossians 3:11)

I wonder, dear friends, what you covet and pray for more than anything else. For my own part, my coveting, my praying is more than for anything else, a fresh and mighty captivity of the Lord Jesus, *a captivation of Christ*. Oh, it is quite true, and we know it, that He is our Life, He is our Savior, He is so much to us and we are right when we say that we could not live without Him. And yet, is there not some margin between that and what I am calling an absolute captivity with Christ? That He is a *passion* in our lives, that He is a *dominating* power in our lives. Language fails... that He has just so captured us, so utterly captured

us, that not only is He our Life in the sense that we couldn't get on without Him, but that He is a passion for living. This man who wrote these words, just look at him in this way: somehow he had *seen Christ* at the beginning and through his long years he had seen more and more of Christ, until in prison – with all those terrible sufferings and afflictions and adversities and sorrows and disappointments that had come upon him through those years, his catalog of adversities right at the end; Christ is more than everything. Christ is in the ascendant, it is “Christ will be All, and in all.” Now I say, language fails, I cannot put into words what I mean, but oh, for the positiveness of this passion of Christ....

Such a seeing, a grasping, an apprehending and being mastered by the Greatness of the One to Whom, by the grace of God, we have been united, called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ. May it be more than a mental grasping of Christ; that we know He is Great, we believe He is great, we have experienced something of His Greatness. May our hearts, more than even our minds, be mastered by this Man Jesus Christ and we be His abject slaves in worship and adoration. He is so great!

From: God's Supreme Interest in Man - Chapter 4
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002929.html

December 30

I saw a door standing open in heaven, and... the voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you....” (Revelation 4:1 NLT)

My aim, in co-operation with the Lord, is to make everything preeminently practical; and so we apply the challenge immediately, and I ask you, is the Holy Spirit within you presenting God's fullness in His Son in an ever-growing way? Is that the nature of your spiritual life? If not, then you must have some definite exercise before the Lord about it; there is something wrong. The anointing means that, and if that is not the nature of your spiritual life, there is something wrong in your case in relation to the anointing. To Nathanael the Lord Jesus said, “Henceforth” (our old English word is “hereafter,” but I think many people have mistakenly thought that means the “after life”) “ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” Hereafter, of course, was the immediate hereafter, the days of the Holy Spirit which were coming so soon. With an open heaven you see, and you see God's meaning concerning His Son.

That open heaven for the Lord Jesus was the anointing. The Spirit descended and lighted upon Him. It was the anointing, and it is the same for us. The open heaven is the anointing of the Spirit from the day of Pentecost onward upon Christ within us. That open heaven means a continually growing revelation of Christ.

Oh, let me urge this. I am brought back to urge this.... The open heaven at once brings God's revelation in Christ to your very door, makes it available to you, so that you are not dependent in the first place upon libraries, books, addresses or anything else. It is there for you. However much the Lord may see good to use these other things for your help and enrichment, you have your own open heaven, your own clear way through, and no closed dome over your head. The Lord Jesus is becoming more and ever more wonderful in your own heart, because "God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness" hath "shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

From: The School of Christ - Chapter 1
www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/001033.html

December 31

I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the One who is the stairway between heaven and earth. (John 1:51 NLT)

Christ risen means an open heaven. The Spirit of the Anointing comes upon us because the crucified One is risen. He comes to us out of an open heaven which the Son of God has opened for us.... The Lord Jesus said: "*When He, the Spirit... is come, He shall guide you into all the truth.*" And John confirms this in saying: "*The anointing which ye received... teaches you concerning all things.*" That is represented by the angels ascending and descending. The Holy Spirit is communicating with us, but Christ is the ladder, reaching from earth to heaven. Where is that ladder? It is not in the world. The ladder is set up in our hearts. It is Christ in our hearts. There is an open way from heaven in our hearts, Christ Himself, leading us into the very presence of God. The Holy Spirit moves in relation to Christ to bring us into communion with Christ, just as Christ is in communion with His Father.

The all-sufficiency of Christ is secured for us on that basis. We are in the heavenlies, because Christ is in us. If joined to His person the limitations are gone. There is a direct and immediate communion with God, and the Holy Spirit can reveal to us heavenly things. Thus we understand what it means to receive everything directly from God in Christ. Christ in us means an inward knowledge of God, a heart-relationship with Him. It is an inward Life from God, an inward power of God. But that is a mystery which the world does not and cannot know. It cannot understand that our Lord Jesus was willing to accept exactly the same basis of life with its limitation in which we live, although without sin. Yet, in fellowship with His Father, He continually broke through these limitations, and overcame them in drawing all His provision, all the fullness from His Father alone. His sufficiency was in His Father.

So we are called to live, by the Spirit, a life triumphant over all our weaknesses, a life where Christ is everything, and where His victory is our victory. The work of the Cross is finished. The veil is rent. The way is open. Thus Christ risen in heaven means for us an open heaven where everything is possible for us in Christ, that we may glorify Him!

From: Christ Our All - Chapter 4

www.austin-sparks.net/english/books/002936.html



Read Daily Open Windows messages online:

www.austin-sparks.net/openwindows

Books and Pamphlets are free upon
request by writing to:

EMMANUEL CHURCH
12,000 East 14th Street
Tulsa, OK 74128-5016 USA

Telephone: 918-437-7064
If no answer call: 918-838-1385
Fax: 918-836-5376
Email: echurchtulsa@yahoo.com

T. Austin-Sparks cassette tapes
or MP3 compatible CDs
are available free upon request
by writing to:

EMMANUEL CHURCH
12,000 East 14th Street
Tulsa, OK 74128-5016 USA
Fax: 918-836-5376

The Online Library
of
T. Austin-Sparks
is available at
www.austin-sparks.net
Email: info@austin-sparks.net