



# The Online Library of T. Austin-Sparks

---

Published as a PDF by Austin-Sparks.net  
Email: info@austin-sparks.net

*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 these messages with others, to please respect his wishes and offer them freely - free of any changes, free of any charge (except necessary distribution costs) and with this statement included.*

---

## The Assault on Fellowship

*by T. Austin-Sparks*

*First published in "A Witness and A Testimony" magazine, Jan-Feb 1937, Vol. 16-1.*

There are few matters which go to the heart of the Lord's testimony more than the matter of fellowship between the Lord's people, and especially where there is particular responsibility for His testimony. The drive of the enemy and all his subtle and diabolical wit, as well as his pressure and his misrepresentations, will be directed toward destroying that relationship of fellowship. He will seek somehow to divide believers, and get in between. And if you are not careful you will resolve all such matters into merely natural problems and say: Well, it is incompatibility of temper! So-and-so is made this way, and the other person is made that way; you can never blend people who are so different in temperament and outlook! If you allow a conclusion of that kind your testimony is gone; you may as well abandon your position in the Lord and go and scour the world for people who in everything see eye to eye. Does it mean that the Lord's work, as entrusted to two or three or more together in one place, can only continue in so far as these children of His are able at all times to get on with one another on a natural basis? The Lord help His work if that is what is required. We have to look deeper than that.

This drive on fellowships and relationships is Satanic. There may be ground, there may be human elements, but those concerned should take this attitude toward one another: The Lord's testimony is bound up with our oneness; the Devil will do everything he can to destroy that, and to strike a blow, therefore, at the testimony! You and I are going to be one in the name of the Lord, and stand our ground against the enemy! There we have something altogether different from the attempt to get on with one another on a natural basis, we have a dynamic for fellowship. We have to get on with one another in the name of the Lord, or else the Lord's testimony is not established. There is something much bigger than a natural or human situation to be dealt with, and when we realise that back of what may truly be natural difficulties there is always something else at work, and that therefore we must keep these natural things in the place of the Cross, and stand together against

the enemy, we will get through; but we will never do so by spending a lot of time trying to adjust ourselves to one another, and seeing how far we can work together. Standing shoulder to shoulder against the enemy who is assailing fellowship, we will find the way of triumphant fellowship. Come down on the natural level, and the enemy will soon make terrible havoc of the whole relationship.

Remember, then, that all these things which sometimes seem to be so natural are in principle deeper down, and the activity of the enemy is behind them in his seeking to circumvent that gain, that advance, that increase, that attaining unto dominion, and he must be withstood in these matters.

### **The Calling is Positive**

In every situation and at all times the calling is positive. 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 fulfil 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 specially 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 analyse 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.

### **Today!**

"Today if ye shall hear his voice..." Today, is while there is progress to be made, and while there is opportunity afforded. Progress can yet be made, therefore it is still "today". When the day ends there is no more progress to be made. There is opportunity today. When opportunity ends it will be no longer "today".

The Lord give us a response in our hearts to the call, to the voice, which is, *Today!*