

Anointing

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Much is spoken in modern Spirit-filled/Pentecostal/ Charismatic- type Churches about “The Anointing”. Probably there is a real misunderstanding of the whole subject, as the word is often used to accompany and support the reason for lots of physical feelings, which go together with what is said to be the moving of the Holy Spirit. “I have got the power” is a frequently heard comment when the feeling come on a person who is preaching, prophesying or praying for the sick. We have to be careful not to dismiss such things, in one way, as we should not deny the Lord Jesus’ moving on anyone, but nevertheless we should be aware of false imitations and the use of physical feelings to prove that the Spirit of God is moving.

There are men and sometimes women who appear on TV or take huge meetings and testify that the Holy Spirit is moving in them. There are great shows of energy and style and yet others have concerns that these things are more demonic than Christian in origin and serve to glorify the person ministering rather than the Lord Jesus Himself. Sadly, but often, there are no real lasting results from all the show so we need to ask the question , are these things really of God and is the anointing a godly one or something merely generated by the flesh of man. Would the Lord Jesus have behaved in such a way? Would Peter or Paul have behaved in such a way? They must be our examples and what we don’t want in churches and meetings is a show of the flesh, but rather a true demonstration of Spirit and power. Sometimes it is possible to hear a change in the voice of the so called preacher when they say the anointing is there. There is a rage and a harshness in the voice. Is this The Spirit of God or of demonic origin? Is the voice change a sign of the power of God or of the enemy, of another spirit ,taking over at that time? Would the Lord Jesus have spoken like that?

Paul writing in 1 Corinthians chapter 2 said *“He was among them in much weakness and trembling that this preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom but in the demonstration of Spirit and power”*. How much does that describe the African preacher, or any preacher for that matter, and have some preachers gone away from the work of the Holy Spirit and substituted flesh and show and noise instead. Some of course have not and remain true to the Lord Jesus but others are tempted to draw men after themselves in a show of false power. They call this power “The anointing”, but is it really? Why do we ask such a question? Well the anointing is really an Old Testament word and if these people are really moving with God surely they would be using the right word to describe what is happening to them when they are ministering the word of the Lord.

The word “anointing” is rarely found in the New Testament. But we do need to look at where it comes and what it means, where it comes and why it is so little used in the New Testament.

In Exodus chapter 30 you will read of the anointing oil which was to be used to anoint Aaron and the other priests, and the things for use in the tabernacle. We are told it was not to be poured on flesh. Saul, David and so on were anointed with oil to be Kings of Israel. The oil went on the outside but it did not change their hearts. Saul sinned so much

after he was made king, but we also read in Psalm 51 of David's repentance after his sins of murder and adultery related to Uriah and Bathsheba. David describes his sinful state and asks to be made clean but not to have the Holy Spirit taken away from him. That is the sort of anointing to be found in Old Testament, it was upon those men, and occasionally women, who lived under the Old

Covenant of God however much they served the Lord. These men and women were still unregenerate and this is to show us that in the future, when God brings in the New Covenant anyone who is to be used by the Lord has to be spiritual. (That was the secret of the Lord Jesus' life; He was a life giving spirit). The anointing oil in the Old Testament never changed the nature of the vessel or the person upon which or who it came; but the coming of the Holy Spirit **into** lives does.

Joel tells us in chapter 2 "I will pour my Spirit out on all flesh". Peter uses the prophecy in his preaching on the day of Pentecost to describe what had happened to them all when they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in John 14. "You know Him for He is with you but in that day he shall be **in** you". There is the difference. To those in the Old Testament, to the Jews, it was inconceivable that any anointing would be on flesh. Flesh was unclean. Even Aaron had his mitre on his head and all his garments upon his body when he was anointed. The oil was not to be poured on to flesh. Now suddenly because Jesus has died and risen and His blood really does wash away sin, the Holy Spirit can enter our hearts. He can be poured out on all flesh. It was an amazing change. So all through the Acts we have Peter and others, but Peter especially when he was witnessing to the rulers "being filled with the Holy Spirit". He did not have to wait for some anointing to suddenly arrive, he had the Holy Spirit in His heart and when needed that blessed Spirit filled him. There is no mention of some special anointing when Peter and John prayed for the lame man. They were just men full of the Holy Spirit.

If we look in 1 John chapter 2 the word anointing is used twice. In verse 20 the word unction in the King James Bible is the word anointing, the same word as in verse 27. The word means to rub in. So In 27 the anointing which you have received of Him abides in you. In other words it remains, it does not go away. This anointing is the truth and not a liar. This relates to the Spirit of Truth which the Lord Jesus taught His disciples about in John 16 when they were told they would receive another Comforter in chapter 14. Chapters 14, 15 and 16 all fit together as Jesus' teaching on the Holy Spirit's coming. "If I don't go away He can't come" said the Lord Jesus. In Galatians chapter 3 we read that the promise made even to Abraham was that the Holy Spirit should come in the Gentiles, on you and me, Hallelujah. That is how important the Spirit being poured out on all flesh is. So we see in 1 John 2.27 the anointing remains in us and teaches us all things. We need not to be taught of man. That does not mean that there is not a place for teachers in the church of Jesus Christ but that ultimately even through such teaching it is the Holy Spirit who teaches us in our hearts. Only He is able to minister truth in our spirits, it is beyond the power of human teachers. Jesus said "He will lead you into all truth" This agrees with Hebrews 8 and the statement of the New Covenant where we are told "we no longer need to be taught by our neighbour to know the Lord". The Bible tells us "*All shall know me from the least unto the greatest*". The apostle John, as we have seen, says the same thing. This is a New Covenant, the anointing is not like that in the

Old Testament but abides with us. The Holy Spirit teaches us all things leading us into all truth and in every heart, not just the Bishop or pastor or apostle; the word is "All shall know me". Hence we are told we have an unction/anointing from the Holy One and you know all things. You know God. Jesus said in John 14 in that day you shall know that I am in My Father and you in me and I in you. Wonderful. The whole truth of our place in God through the Lord Jesus opens up to us.

So we are to abide in Christ that is what the anointing teaches us. Abide in Him. Jesus said abide in me and I in you. This is the life of constant fellowship with the Lord. "*Christ lives in me*" says Paul. We don't need to look for an anointing, all the time, for each special occasion but rather just let the Spirit of God rise within our hearts. Jesus said out of your belly, your heart is what He meant, will flow rivers of living water. You can feel dreadful and still be filled with the Spirit. Being filled does not depend on feelings but on the faithfulness of God and the abiding Holy Spirit who remains in us. It is all a matter of faith, not flesh and feelings.

Old Testament kings etc. were anointed as were priests and prophets. It is right that the Lord Jesus as the great prophet, priest and king for Israel should be anointed for His work. In Isaiah 61 and Luke 4 can be read about this anointing. However Paul says he was "called" to be an apostle etc. so it seems as if in the New Testament for apostles, prophets etc. and the power of the Lord moving in them, it was all to do with the call of being an apostle. Paul talked about the "signs of an apostle" being worked through him. But it is by their fruits you will know them. It is not just miracles, as they can be false, but a holy life free from fornication and greed and pride and selfishness. The word in Acts 13 is separate Barnabas and Saul for the work unto which I have called them. So God separates a man to the work He has called him to do. He does it by the word of God. It is an act involving submission and obedience to the Lord rather than lots of titles and name giving and physical feelings. Anointing did not come in waves and at times, but the authority and ability and grace and patience etc. was always there in the lives of the early men of the church of Jesus Christ. It was there as a fruit of the Spirit, as an outworking of the power of the life of God within them. Ephesians 4 tells us that Jesus gave gifts unto men, He gave apostles, and pastors and teachers. Jesus' gifts to the church, no mention of anointing. These men were to serve the church and build up the Body of Christ.

In Acts 26; 16 to 19, everything that was needed was provided by the Holy Spirit in the lives of the early Christian when there was a true call of God. Obviously there is a requirement for every true man of God, as with Paul, to be faithful to the heavenly vision, not to sin, not to seek for reputation and money but to remain humble and lowly in heart. Then the blessing will not stop. To go after the things the world finds important will stop the blessing. Ephesians 4 says "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God".

Paul talks in 2 Corinthians 1. 21. "*Of being established with them, and anointed with them by God, who has also sealed them and given them the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*". That

really is another way of saying they had received the Holy Spirit. The establishing, anointing, sealing and giving of the earnest, earnest means guarantee (read Ephesians 1 verses 13 & 14), was common to all. It was not unique to Paul. Therefore it is just another way of describing what they had all received when they had received the Lord Jesus, no special anointing for each time. Some brothers are always looking out for the anointing to worship the Lord or do anything for that matter, but the anointing remains in them, all they have to do is open their hearts and worship will flow out.

Jesus of course was anointed with the "Oil of gladness above His fellows". In Acts 2 we read of Jesus receiving the gift of the Spirit from His Father. It is the same thing. Jesus was made Lord and Christ on the throne, anointed to reign forever. He is the Lord forever and Christ forever and the anointing remains

with Him. That oil of anointing which He received He pours out when He baptises us in the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit does not remain on the outside of us but enters our hearts. We have the Spirit of Christ, Christ in us, the hope of glory. So even the anointing on the Lord Jesus on the throne comes **INTO** us by His Spirit, not on the outside to do something in our flesh, but in our hearts to change our nature and fill us with the life of God.

James 5 talks of anointing the sick with oil, just a sign of the Holy Spirit doing the work. The Lord shall raise the sick person up. Nothing in the oil, it is just a sign, the real work is in the prayer of faith and the power of the Lord Jesus.

Even spiritual gifts are administered by the Lord Himself, no mention there of anointing. We have the Holy Spirit we just need to let Him flow in our lives. God wants spiritual men not those making a show of the flesh, but a demonstration of Spirit and power. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Jesus Christ on the earth

So we have the anointing because we have received the Holy Spirit and that anointing remains with us so we are ever ready to serve the Lord and do His will.