

Tenure

by Anton Bosch

The sermon teaches that in God's Kingdom, enduring faithfulness is more valuable than tenure or length of service.

Scripture: Matthew 20:16

Topics: "Faith And Endurance", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

Anton Bosch preaches about the misconception of tenure in the Kingdom of God, emphasizing that length of service is not a determining factor for position, entrance into heaven, or special treatment. He highlights examples from the Bible where those who came late to faith surpassed long-time believers, illustrating that God's ways are not bound by human standards of justice. Bosch stresses the importance of endurance over tenure, urging Christians to remain faithful and dedicated until the end, using verses like Matthew 10:22 and Philippians 3:13-14 to emphasize the significance of pressing forward in faith.

Transcript

Tenure is a term people use to describe something that relates to length of service. With tenure normally comes experience, job security, privilege and seniority. This is a principle that holds true in almost every area of human endeavor.

But even the world is not agreed on this matter. Here in Los Angeles there is currently a debate about tenure amongst school teachers and the notion that it makes it very hard to get rid of a bad teacher once they have earned tenure. One of the hottest topics amongst candidates for the US presidency is whether experience and length of service qualifies one better for the Oval Office or not.

However, in the Kingdom of God almost every human rule and principle is turned upside down. This is also true of the idea of tenure. Many Christians' claim to a position in the church and the Kingdom, and even entrance into heaven is based on the idea of length of service. That is a serious mistake. In the Kingdom of God, length of service is almost of no consequence whatsoever.

Think of the day Jesus was crucified. Who do you think pleased the Father more on that day - the thief who confessed Jesus after a lifetime of sin and crime or Peter who had walked with the Lord for three and a half years but that night had denied his Lord and who had fled from the scene of the cross? Praise God, Peter repented and went on to many years of fruitful service but at that moment, the thief had surpassed Peter by an eternity.

Jews who do not believe in Jesus cannot accept that Gentiles can possibly enter the Kingdom before them after they have had such a long 'relationship' with God. Yet it is true and even in Jesus' day many Gentiles believed when the Jews did not. In speaking to the priests and elders of Israel who though they were entitled to the Kingdom because of their long association with God, Jesus said "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you" (Matthew 21:31).

One of the parables Christians struggle with is about the landowner who hired workers and paid them all the same in spite of the fact that some had worked for twelve hours and others had only worked the last hour. The lesson of the parable is that "the last will be first, and the first last" (Matthew 20:16). But we also learn from this parable that God is entitled to use and bless whomever He desires. He is not bound by our sense of justice but by His. To those who worked twelve hours it seemed unjust that they would be paid the same as those who worked only for one. Yet, all of them had contracted with the landowner for one denarius, which is exactly what he paid - so he was not unjust at all. Each one was paid what was agreed.

Paul, by his own confession, was as "one born out of due time" (1Corinthians 15:8). He started at least four years after the Twelve and once he got saved, they all looked down on him as a "Johnny-come-lately". But he went on to surpass all of them in understanding, influence and usefulness. Peter could have felt cheated because this latecomer had been used more than him but he recognized that God was using Paul in a unique way and he loved Paul (2Peter 3:15).

In spite of this, many Christians rely on their years of service as a basis to their claim to special treatment, authority, or seniority. Yes, they may have served the Lord very diligently and faithfully for many years, yet they have become lazy, fat and arrogant. All those years count for nothing if you do not continue to serve the Lord and His church faithfully. We cannot slack off or feel that our tenure will make room for us. Many of the Lord's older servants easily become disgruntled and antagonistic towards new people that are being used more by the Lord and who are more blessed.

Just think of how many Scriptures exhort us to remain faithful and to endure. The word "endure" appears more than 111 times in the Bible. Here is one verse: "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved." (Matthew 10:22). Endurance is the opposite to tenure. Endurance means remaining faithful to the very end. Sometimes serving the Lord is like climbing Mount Everest. Even if you work hard and do all the right things but give up, slack off or become sidetracked ten feet from the top, then all the hard work could be in vain.

Paul understood this and near the end of his life stated that he could not rely on his past achievements but that he was still pressing towards the goal with all his might. "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14).

Nothing encourages me more than men who have fought for the faith long and hard and who, in their twilight years, continue to serve God with zeal and dedication. One of the men who profoundly affected my life was Brother Willie Burton. After a lifetime of extreme hardship of preaching in the jungles of the Congo, he continued to serve the Lord right up to his death. The year before he died at 85, I met him again while he was touring South Africa preaching almost every night of the week. Late one night after a long day of ministering to people, he invited me, a 17-year old kid, to his room where he spoke to me about preaching the Word, encouraged me to be faithful, and prayed for me. He understood that there was no retirement or

rest before we receive our eternal rest.

But nothing is more sad than a man who once served the Lord faithfully, but in his latter years became tired and began to be sidetracked. Or those who, become lords over God's heritage because they feel they have somehow "arrived". They become slave drivers riding on the backs of those they were supposed to serve. Preachers and Christians who retire from serving the Lord have always puzzled me. When does the work and our usefulness end? Surely only once the night has come and He lays us to rest! Anything else has to be a serious dereliction of duty.

Off course our many years of service count towards our reward, but the question is not what you did in the past, but what you are doing today. A tree that may have borne good fruit for many years will be chopped down when it stops bearing because its only purpose is to bear fruit. We are no different. John the Baptist said to the Jews: "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matthew 3:10).

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Galatians 6:9)

"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/anton-bosch/tenure/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net