

Attributes of God #2 'God's Immanence and Immensity'

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing God's character, particularly His immanence and immensity, and how this understanding can bring security and comfort to believers.

Scripture: Psalm 104:1, Psalm 139:7-10, Isaiah 40:12, Jeremiah 23:24, Matthew 6:33, John 15:5, Acts 17:27-28, Philippians 3:8, Colossians 3:1-3, Hebrews 4:16

Topics: "God's Presence", "Seeking God"

Description

A.W. Tozer explores the attributes of God's immanence and immensity, emphasizing that God is present in all things and transcends the vastness of the universe. He contrasts nominal faith, which relies on mere acceptance of scripture, with real faith that depends on the character of God. Tozer illustrates that everything created is insignificant compared to God's greatness, urging believers to seek fulfillment in God alone rather than in worldly possessions or achievements. He concludes with a call for Christians to recognize their need for God, as true satisfaction can only be found in Him.

Transcript

"God's Immanence and Immensity"

Sunday evening, September 21, 1958

Message #2 of #10 in Attributes of God Series

Colossians 3:1-3

Tonight I'm to give the second in a series which I have called "A Journey into the Heart of God." I want to talk about God these nights. I want to first read a text or two. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it. And whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Then there's the text which I have chosen for my every night text, "your life is hid, with Christ, in God." And then, this one in Philippians, "Yea doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

Let us pray. Father, we're unworthy. We're unworthy to think these thoughts and our friends are unworthy to hear them expressed. But, while we are not worthy, we will try to do this in a worthy manner. Hear worthily and speak worthily though we know that we have looked upon evil sights, we have heard with our ears evil words, and we have walked in evil ways. But now, we trust that is behind us, and our eyes are upon Thee. Show thyself to us, O God. We've sung about Thee the Shepherd, the sweet wonder of Jesus. And we ask Thee now that this evening, we may again have a vision of the Triune God through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Now, faith is of two kinds: nominal and real. The nominal faith is faith that accepts what it is told and can quote text after text to prove it. That is nominal faith. And it's amazing how nominal faith, nominal belief can weave these texts into garments, cloaks and curtains for the church.

And then there is another kind of faith. It is faith that depends upon the character of God. You remember that the Scripture does not say, Abraham believed the text and it was counted unto him for righteousness. It says, Abraham believed God. It was not what Abraham believed. It was who Abraham believed that counted. Abraham believed God. And the man of true faith, believes God and His faith rests on the character of God.

Now, the man who has real faith as over against nominal faith, has found a right answer to the question, what is God like? There is no question that is more important, none whatsoever until it's answered. What is God like? And the man of true faith has found an answer to that question. And this is by revelation and illumination. You see, I would have to say again what I have said so often perhaps to the point of monotony, that the difficulty with the church now is, even the Bible-believing church, that we stop with revelation. But revelation is not enough. Revelation is God's given word. It's an objective thing, not subjective. It's external, not internal. It is God's revelation of truth. And a man may believe that, and believe it soundly, and hold it to be true. And yet have only an objective revelation, or truth, that has been objectively revealed.

There is another word, and that is the word illumination. The man of real faith believes the Word, but he has been illuminated so he knows what the word means. That doesn't mean he's a better Bible teacher, but it means that he has had what the Quakers called an opening. His heart has been opened to the Word.

Now, you can't have too many texts. And this is not said to mean that texts are not valuable. They are. I'm using many of them tonight. But you see, texts are means toward an end and that end is God. The given revelation is a means toward an end, and God is the end. The text is never the end. That's why I never fight over translation or get all worked up and steamed up over translations. A text is a means to an end. We are making the mistake now, since there's plenty of money and the printers will print anything anybody will write. We're making the mistake of thinking that if we get the word said in a different way, there'll be some magic effect in that word. That if it is read in the King James Version, that's okay. But, if we get a new version varying just a little, we have automatically received something new. It doesn't follow my Brethren. It doesn't follow. The illumination is what matters.

And the word of God is a means toward an end, just as roads are a means to our destinations. A road is nothing in itself. Nobody ever built a road and fenced it in at both ends, and planted posies along it and beautified it and said this is a road. They said this is a way, a way, a means toward somewhere. And so, the Bible is a whole series of highways; all leading toward God. And when the text has been illuminated

and the believer of the text knows that God is the end toward which it's moving, then that man has real faith.

Now, I told you that these nights, that I intended to use an occasional quotation from an old book. I never saw but one copy of it in my life. I wouldn't know where to go to get it now. One time it was a very famous book, but it fell into desuetude and nobody knows anything about it much. I've quoted from it in the past. I preached a sermon until the sermon got so well known that I quit preaching it. On the "Three Wounds of a Friend." And I spoke last week briefly about this little book. It's called "The Revelation of Divine Love," written by a woman by the name of Julian, 600 years ago.

Now one day she said as she prayed, she had a little experience and here's what it was. She said I saw a very small object as large as a hazelnut. Now when I was a boy on the farm, we had hazelnuts and hazelnuts as we knew them, was about the size of a large marble. No larger than that. It's not even as large as the largest marbles, but just the size will say of a mib, I think they call it, a good size marble. You may have seen larger ones, but these were wild growing and those as I remember them. And she said, she saw this little tiny object. And she said, what might this be? And something in her heart said this is all that is made. This is all that is made. This little, tiny, hazelnut sized affair is all that is made. Now, I want you to think about this with me; all that is made.

Years ago, I remember reading the great French philosopher and mystic and mathematician, Pascal, sitting up on the hillside in the woods in West Virginia reading Pascal's thoughts. Now, I remember that he said this, he said, we are halfway between immensity and that which is infinitesimally small. And he said, you will find worlds beyond worlds beyond worlds, our solar system, moves around another solar system, and that solar system with our solar system moves around another solar system, and that solar system with ours and so on, on and on and on, out infinitely into size and vastness. Then he said, if you turn the other way, you will find little worlds within little worlds going down and down to molecule, the atom and the electron and the proton and so on, down and down, down into an infinitesimal smallness.

Now he said, I believe that man, made in the image of God, is exactly halfway in between that which is infinitely large and that which is infinitesimally small. Now, there's no way to prove that. But that's a frightening place to be brother. To know that you're half as big as the universe but also half as small, and that they can keep reducing you and reducing you and melting you down, reducing you. Pretty soon, you're infinitesimally small. Or we can go out in increasing spirals until we're so vast until the world is so vast that we cannot think it anymore. You know, we think that the sun is very large with its planets circling around it. But if you study astronomy, even elementary astronomy, you will learn that there are heavenly bodies so large, suns so large, that they could take our sun, and all of its planets, and all of the satellites that revolve around those planets, and could throw them into that sun, that other sun and never notice it. They say that there are suns that you could put millions of our suns in, they are so large. I give up. I don't even try to understand it.

Then there is space. Of course, such vast worlds have to have distance between them. So, we have what we call space. I don't think space is a thing. I think it's just a way we have of accounting for different positions in the vast universe. But we call it distance. And you know, they don't measure it. Oh, if it's the moon they say 250,000 miles. If it's the sun, they say 93 million miles, but after that, they start talking in light years.

Do you know what a light year is? Well, a light year is the time that it takes light traveling for one year. And light gets along at the rather amazing speed of 186,000 miles a second. That is, every minute light travels 11 million miles. And every hour it travels 669 million miles. And every day it travels 16,061,000,000 miles. And every year it travels 5,862,484,000,000 miles. And then they tell me that's how far light travels in a year. And there are bodies so far away that to tell us how far they are, they can't measure them in miles. They made them in light years. They say it's as far away as it would take light so many years traveling at 186,000 miles a second. You know that's quite a quite a rate of speed. And they say that there are bodies that are millions of light years away, say ten million just to get a start. So, if you want to know how far it is from Earth to that body I'm talking about, you multiply 5,862,484,000,000 by 10 million and you're getting around somewhere where we're the distant is. Doesn't that stun you? It makes my head ache. There's not too much to ache. And when you get that far up, Brother, you're going.

Now, seen over against this, you and I are terribly small. Now we're not the smallest thing there is. We're not infinitesimally small, because you start dissolving us, melting us down and getting at the molecules and at the atoms and that the bits of disembodied matter or energy that we call by various manufactured names and you'll find that we're, according to Pascal, half as big as the universe which is a tremendous thought I'd say.

Now, over against that stands God. Over against it stands God. And there is an attribute of God, I talked about the attribute of God last week called infinitude. I want to talk about the attribute of God called imminence now, and immensity. You know, there's such a thing as, as God's imminence, that is, it's an attribute of God, and it's taught in Christian theology, that God is imminent. That is, that you don't have to go distances to find God, that God is imminent, that He is in everything, that He's right here.

I have a little, I borrowed a little formula. I've repeated it very often until some of you know it by heart. If you don't, you should. And I want to repeat it now. I think I did last week. Let me give it to you. It is very brief. It is that God is above all things, and beneath all things, and outside of all things, and inside of all things. That God is above, but He's not pushed up and He's beneath, but He's not pressed down. And He's outside, but he's not excluded. And He's inside, but He's not confined. That God is above all things presiding and beneath all things sustaining and outside of all things embracing and inside of all things filling. That is the imminence of God. That's what that means. And that's taught in Christian theology.

So that God doesn't travel to get anywhere. We say, O God, come and help us. Well, that's good to say that because we mean it in its psychological way. But actually, God doesn't have to come to help us, because there isn't any place where God is not. And I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea then there thy hand shall hold me. And if I go up to Heaven, even there God will be and if I make my bed in Hell, even there God will be.

So, it's impossible to think of a place where God is not. After you have gone out into those millions of light years and found bodies so vast that you could throw all our solar system, and all of the galaxies to which this solar system belongs into it, and to be like throwing a shovel full of coal into a furnace; and it would simply swallow it up and go on. After you thought of all that, remember that God contains all that. That God is outside of all things, and inside of all things, and around all things, that are God made this. That is the immensity of God.

Now, the Scripture teaches the immensity of God. Let me give you a few verses. It says in Isaiah, "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and made it out heaven with a span and

comprehended the dust of the earth and the measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in the balance. The Holy Ghost is bigger than all the universe, this little hazelnut here, you know, that the woman saw, and then another. Behold, all the nations are as a drop of a bucket. It's awfully hard to get a Christian scared. It's hard to get him panicked if he really believes in God. If he's just a church member, you can get him panicked, but if he really believes in God, it's very difficult to do it. Very difficult for a great big mouth like Khrushchev to get anybody scared if he really believes in God. You know, Khrushchev is beginning to sound more and more like Hitler. By the way, where is Hitler? He's beginning to sound more and more like him.

And the same God that disposed of Adolph will dispose of Nikita one of these days. Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and they are counted as the small dust of the balance and He takes up the islands as a very little thing. It is so small He doesn't even notice that. All the nations before Him are as nothing, and they're counted to Him as less than nothing and vanity. Old Dr. Neighbor used to say, the word vanity in the Hebrew meant a soap bubble, something that floated. It's just a tiny, infinitesimally thin, iridescent skin. If you touched it and it was gone and nobody could find it again. And that's what it means. All the worlds and nations are to Him as a soap bubble. And he says, "It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are but are as grasshoppers, that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. To whom then will ye liken God, or to whom shall I be equal says the Holy One? Lift up your eyes on high and behold, who has created these things that bringeth out their host by number: He called them all by name by the greatness of His power or might. For that He is strong in power, not One to faileth.

Now there, as I pointed out in another set of circumstances, there is probably the most daring flight of imagination ever made by the human mind. I think we have here in Isaiah that which is vaster and more and more awesome than anything ever struck off of the mind of Shakespeare. Do you remember what Shakespeare said? That the lark at morn sings hymns at Heaven's gate. And somebody pointed out that nobody else had ever a thought of that except Shakespeare. That the lark mounts on her quivering wings to the very gate of Heaven and there sings her hymns.

Milton wrote "Paradise Lost." And a great critique, I think it was Macaulay who said that Milton could write "Paradise Lost" and get away with it. But that Shakespeare couldn't have. Because, Shakespeare's mind was so brilliant, that if he had ever tried to take in "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained," if his mind had ever gone out to try to take in Creation and the Fall and redemption of man, that he would die, he would have died of a rupture of the brain. That his imagination was so tremendous, it would have blown his head off in the language of the street. Milton, not being quite so great, not quite so imaginative, managed to toddle along and not die under it.

But so great was the imagination of Shakespeare that according to this critique, he would have died under it. It would have killed him if he had tried to think a thought that big, because his mind would have gone so vast. But here, I find something bigger yet than anything thought that Shakespeare even ever had. And it is the thought of the Great God, the Shepherd of the Universe, moving through His light years with its trillions, and billions and millions and 1000s, with its light traveling at 186,000 miles a second, with its world so big that our whole solar system would look like a grain of sugar or sand by comparison. And God stands out yonder and calls all of these millions of worlds as His sheep, and calls them all by name. He says, "Come on," and leads them out across the vast sky.

I'd say this is the highest thought that anywhere that I know anything about in the Bible, or out of it. This vast, huge illimitable thought, and because of the greatness of His power, not one faileth. Just as a shepherd keeps all of his sheep and not one is lost, and so, God keeps all of His universe. Men point their tiny little glasses at the stars and talk learnedly, and when it's all over, they've just been counting God's sheep, nothing more. And God is running His universe.

And then in the Psalms, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, O Lord, my God, Thou art very great, Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, who covereth thyself with light as with a garment, who stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain, who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters, who maketh the clouds His chariot, and who walketh upon the wings of the wind.

Well, there we have the greatness, the immensity of God, the imminence of God, set over against the vastness of the world and the littleness of the world. For as she said, I saw all of this vastness reduced and I saw how big it actually was set over against God Almighty. It was the size of a hazelnut. Then she said, I marvel at one thing, and I've thought of that myself. I marvel at what could hold it together? Did you ever wonder about what held things together? Do you ever wonder why things didn't fall apart? I have.

I had a younger brother who used to lie on the floor and cry. And they'd say, what's the matter Uilly? He would say, I'm afraid I'll fall up. And I've had my imaginations like that too. I wondered how things didn't come apart; didn't tear loose at the seams. Well, she said, I marveled how it might last. Now, since distance is all in God and since matter depends on God's Word, and since life is a ray from God's heart, then there isn't too much to worry about. But she said, How can all this last? How can it hold together and then she said, it came to me and I saw that all things has it being in the love of God, and that God made it and God loves it. And God keeps it. I can't think of a better formula my friend for you to take home with you. That's why you don't fall apart; because God made you. God loves you. And God keeps you. And what God made God loves because it's inconceivable that God should make anything that he didn't love.

A fellow recently brought a picture that he had painted. He'd been working on a picture he had worked, he said quite a while on that picture. He brought it and showed it to see if I liked it. Well, now it's inconceivable that he didn't like his own picture. I liked it too. But he liked it. That's the reason he brought it to show it to me. We like that which we make. And God loves that which He made. And because He made it, He loves it. And because He loves it, He keeps it and nobody is going to lose anything that they love, if they can help it.

Now, a mother may lose her baby by death, but she won't do it if she can help it. The man may lose his property or estate or his car or his job, but he won't if he can help it. And so, God Almighty is in a position never to lose anything, because He's able not to lose. He keeps it. He keeps it because He loves it, and He loves it because He made it, or did He make it because He loved it. I don't know. But, He keeps it because He made it and loved it or loved it and made it. I heard an Episcopalian rector one time who preached a sermon on immortality. And he gave one of the finest arguments for immortality that I've ever heard. He said, The Bible says that Abraham was a friend of God. Now, said the Rector, how would it be he said, that a man should ever give up his friend. He said, if a man is your friend, you wouldn't lose him if he could help it. And if he died, you'd bring him back if you could. You would keep your friend if he was your friend. Well, God Almighty is able to keep his friend. So that's why we know that Abraham will rise again from the dead, because he's God's friend, and God isn't going to allow His friend to lie around and rot forever. He's going to bring him out of the grave again. And that's why I believe in immortality. I believe that God made us and God loves what he made and is keeping what He loves.

So, all things have it's being in God. And I want you to think of God the maker, God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. I want you to think of God the lover. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. And I want you to think of God the keeper. And if you're a real Christian, now if you're not a real Christian, this doesn't apply to you. It doesn't apply to you if you're not a real Christian; if you've not been born anew and washed in the blood of the Lamb. Then, this doesn't apply to you and there isn't any use of my trying to make it apply. But if you're a true Christian, this applies to you.

And so, the little lady got another thought, and she said this, if this is all true, and it is all true, then why be we not all at great ease of heart and soul. She said, why aren't Christians the happiest people in all the wide world? Why aren't we Christians the most easeful people and the most restful people all the wide world? Well, I'll tell you why. She said because we seek to have rest in things that are so little. This hazelnut you see brother. This little hazelnut into which is condensed all it is that we try to find our pleasure in those little things.

Now, I want to strip you down tonight a little bit and ask you a question or two. Think with me a little bit. What is it that makes you happy? What is it that keeps you feeling good? What cheers you up and tucks up your chin and gives your morale a lift? Is it your job? Is it the fact that you have good clothes? Is it that you're well married or that you have a fine, fine position? Just what is it that keeps you, that you're taking your joy in? Well, that's our trouble and that's why even though we know that the immensity of God is so vast, that seen over against God, everything, even out to the farthest interstellar space is just the size of a hazelnut. It's nothing at all. It's a grain of sand. And yet, we're not a happy people. Because we multiply things. We got our mind set on things. We multiply things, and we increase things, and we perfect things, and we beautify things, and we put our confidence in things and God. We have our job and God. We have our husband and God. We have our strong body and God. We have our good job and God. We have our home and God. We have our ambition for the future and God.

And so, we put God as a plus sign after something else. Now my Brethren, all of the great souls of the world, from David and Paul, and Augustine, and all the rest down to this present hour; every responsible writer who has ever been illuminated from the Scriptures by the Holy Ghost has said the same thing. And whether he came from one school of Christian thought or another; as long as he was orthodox, he said the same thing. And particularly if he was spiritual, he said the same thing, that our problem is that we are putting our confidence in things and not in God. And this lady said, God showed me that all the things that are, are only the size of a hazelnut, why therefore should I put my confidence into things so little, that God has to hold it together? Why should I trust things?

We multiply, I say, and we increase and still we're afraid and we are troubled. And we're anxious and we're unsatisfied. And you know why? I'll tell you why. Because, all that is beneath God sufficeth not us. God made you in His image and you're stuck with it. God did not make the chimpanzee in his image. He did not make that beautiful horse as he gallops across the field; he's a symphony in motion. God did not make him in His image. God did not make that beautiful bird that the poet says "Sings darkling, and in shadiest Covert hid Tunes her nocturnal Note. God made him beautiful, but He didn't make him in His image.

So, God made only you in His image, and you're stuck with it man, sinner man, lost man, Christian man, you're stuck with it. You're made in the image of God and because you're made in the image of God, nothing short of God will satisfy you. And even if you happen to get saved on this nickel in the slot and you escape Hell and take Heaven modern idea of evangelism; that Jesus came in order that we would escape

Hell and go to Heaven. That poor, little kindergarten view of Christianity, even if you're that kind of believer, remember one thing my brother, that even you will find somewhere down the years, that you will not be content with things plus God. You will have to have God minus all things. You'll have to come to a place in your life.

But you say, don't you have things? You have a suit. What does it say here? Richmond Brothers. Sure, I have a suit. And I have some pens here that I get kidded for carrying around. And I have what else do I have? God knows I don't have much, only a lot of books. But I do have books and a wife and some children and grandchildren and friend. I have all that. But brother, just as sure as I set my hopes and my comfort upon things and people, I lose something out of my heart. It dare not be things and God. It dare not be people and God. It must be God and nothing else. And then whatever else God gives, we hold an arm's length and we hold it dear for Jesus' sake. And we love it for His sake, but it is not necessary to our happiness. If there's anything necessary to your eternal happiness but God, you're not yet the kind of Christian that you ought to be. For only God is the very rest.

I like that old expression "very" as an adjective, "very" rest. Only God is the very rest. So says the book of Hebrews. And that word "very" there is another form of the word verily. When Jesus our Lord wanted to say something that was true, so true that He wanted to underscore it, He said, verily, verily, I say unto you. Truly, truly this I say. And only God is the true rest, the very rest. And you see, God takes great pleasure in having a helpless soul come to Him, simply and plainly and intimately. He takes pleasure in having us come to Him. You know, this kind of Christianity doesn't draw big crowds. Nobody wants this except a few of those who have their heart set on God, and they want God more than they want anything else in the world. They want the spiritual experience that comes from knowing God for Himself; that they could have everything stripped away from them, and still have God. That kind of people listen, but they're not vastly numerous in any given locality.

So, this kind of preaching doesn't draw vast numbers of people. But I'll tell you what it does do, it's likely to draw the hungriest ones, and the thirstiest ones, and some of the best ones. And so, God takes great pleasure I say, in having helpless people come to Him, simply and plainly and intimately. He wants us to come without all that great overlarding of theology. He wants us to come as simply and as plainly as a little child. And if the Holy Ghost touches us, we'll come like that.

Now my Brethren, I said last week that God had boundless enthusiasm. I repeat it now that God is boundlessly enthusiastic. I'm glad somebody is, because I don't find very many Christians that are. Or if they are, they're not enthusiastic for the things that matter. If they're going to have a movie, they can get all steamed up about that. If they're going to go on the moonlight cruise, they get all worked up over that. But if you just say, look, look, behold God, behold God, you can't get much enthusiasm these days. So, I'm glad somebody is enthusiastic and brother, God's enthusiastic. He's enthusiastic for Himself in the persons of the Godhead. The persons of the Godhead are infinitely delighted with each other. The Father is infinitely delighted with the Son. And the Son is infinitely delighted with the other two persons of the Godhead. He is delighted with His whole creation I repeat, and especially for men made in His image. You see, unbelief comes and throws a cloud over us and shuts out the light of God. And we don't believe what's actually here, that God is delighted, infinitely delighted with us.

And here's a little prayer that was made, "O God, of thy goodness, give me thy self, for Thou art enough to me, and I may ask nothing that is less and find any full honor to Thee. God give me thy self." Do you know what a revival is Brother? We make out that a revival is everybody running around falling in everybody

else's neck and saying, forgive me for thinking a bad thought about you and me. And forgive me for that nickel that I forgot to pay back. Or, we say a revival consists of people getting very loud and noisy. Well, all that might happen in a revival. But let me tell you, the only kind of revival that would be here when the worlds are on fire, is the kind of revival that begins by saying, O God, give me thy self; for nothing less than Thee will do. For anything less than God, anything less than God, she says ever me wanteth. I like that little expression. She said, O God, I get all this hazelnut. Everything from the proton to the farthest, remotest heavenly body up and down the scale. All the beautiful things of earth and sky and sea, and all the diamonds of the mines and all timber of the forest and all the charm of the landscape and all the riches of the cities. If I have it all and have not thee, ever me wanted. Translated into modern English, O God, it won't be enough, won't be enough.

Do you know, deep down what's the matter with everybody? Nobody would say it and the average person wouldn't believe it; and if he heard me quote these three words, he would laugh in my face and say, "what are you doing teaching Chaucer? No, no, teaching theology. And I'm simply using some old phrases to get it home to him in a new way. Friends, the problem with the world is, everybody is saying and doesn't know he's saying it, "ever me wanted." You know, there's a little shrine inside of you. There's a shrine so far in, that nobody can know that shrine but you. There is a penetralium, a deep, deep shrine far eastward in Eden. And it lies in that great soul of yours, that soul that is bigger than the starry universe; and there's a shrine there and a garden and a throne. And no matter what you get, there'll be a cry from that shrine, ever me wanted. O God, I'm still hungry. God, I'm still hungry. Who are they that commit suicide? They are not the poor. They're the rich. Who are they did commit suicide? They're not the simple, known fellow on the street. They're movie actors and politicians and people that are widely known. Give men everything as the song had it, take the world, but give me Jesus. And we can, we can have all the world and have not Jesus, and still, there's a cry from deep within, "ever me wanteth.

And do you know I think this would be the world's greatest calamity. The greatest calamity for a human soul, to be made in the image of God, and to be made with a spirit so big, that it can contain the universe and cry for more; that it's bigger than the heavens and the heaven of heavens, and be empty of God. And go through the eternity to come crying, "ever me wanteth." O God, forever and forever; O God, I'm hungry. And I can't eat and I'm thirsty and can't drink. Send Lazarus that he might dip his finger in the water and put it on my forehead, for I suffer these flames.

And I wonder if the flames of Hell aren't kindled from deep in the shrine where a dry and cracked and parched, the soul of men cries, O God, "ever me wanted." I've had everything. I've had religion. I've had position. I've had money. I've had children. I've had a wife or husband. I've had clothes and had a good home. I've had, I've had, I've had, but O God, this is a little hazelnut. It's nothing. And my heart cries, O God, I miss that which I wanted the most.

Do you know friends, really down at the bottom, that's the problem. That's the problem with Russia. That's the problem in Washington. That's the problem everywhere. Ever, ever, they want, because they can get everything. You know the old story of Alexander who conquered the world and wept because there was not more world to conquer. Man has gone to the North Pole and to the South Pole and now turns his greedy eyes on the moon and on the planets; have and get and get and have.

The richest nation in the world is America. We've got the most. We think we're in a recession. And still, cars are coming out longer and bigger and looking more like jukeboxes than ever. And there's still more money and more bank accounts. I heard of a fellow whose deductions began to catch up and did finally

catch up with his salary, but mostly, it's not so. After they've taken off everything they want to take off and can think of, still the average fella has more money than he used to. Back when I was young fellow, a man used to raise ten kids on a dollar a day and do a good job. Now we've got everything, absolutely everything. And yet what country in the world is the most troubled, have more breakdowns, more insanity, more murders, or triangles, or bug houses and more hospitals and more psychiatrists, and more couches, in America. It's rather a cynical thought, an ironic thought that the richest nation in the world manages to have the most divorces, the most suicides, the most juvenile delinquency; proving again that no matter how much you give a man, if he misses God, he cries ever me wanteth and goes out to do some crime.

And if you give him everything and then add God to it, you have wronged him and he's wronged his own soul, for God wants to be first and wants to be all. Money won't do it. If you take the kingdom of God and His righteousness, God will add money to you, as much as you need. If you take the kingdom of God and His righteousness, God may send your way learning and art and music and legitimate earthly loves. God may send it all to you and let you have it. But always with the understanding that He can take it away again and you won't grumble, you'll still have God. God is all.

Now, I close. Isaiah wrote, thy sun no more going down neither shall thy moon withdraw itself. For the Lord shall be thine everlasting light. And the days of thy mourning shall be ended. And the silk weaver of Germany wrote a kind of wild paraphrase on this, running like this. "O my God, How great is God! how small am I! A mote in the illimitable sky, Amidst the glory deep, and wide, and high Of Heaven's unclouded sun. There to forget myself for evermore; Lost, swallowed up in Love's immensity, The sea that knows no sounding and no shore, God only there, not I. More near than I unto myself can be, Art Thou to me; So have I lost myself in finding Thee. The boundless Heaven of Thine eternal love Around me, and beneath me, and above; In glory of that golden day, The former things are passed away-- I, past and gone. And then we've almost lost as Scofield says of the Song of Solomon; we've almost lost our ability to kneel, bare-footed before such a burning bush as this.

When the church has restored to her again, the kind of spirit that can understand what Isaiah meant, and Tersteegen meant when he paraphrased Isaiah, then we will have revival. Then we'll have the kind of revival the Quakers had. Then we will have the kind of revival the Methodist had. Then we'll have what they had at Pentecost. Then we'll have what the Quakers had and then we'll have what the saints had had down the centuries. Wherever the fire glowed until the ages turned, that's what they had. So have I lost myself in finding thee; have lost myself forever, O Thou Son, the boundless heaven of thine eternal love around me and beneath me and above. This is God.

My Brethren, let's remember the text again, "hid with Christ, in God. If you gain the whole world and find not God in your own soul, what have you found? It's worth nothing to you. Friends, these days, let's search. Let's go home to pray. Let's get still. Let's get quiet. Let's learn the wonder of silence. Let's learn the beauty of the secret seeking after God. There the Bible before us opened and our knees bent, and all alone in humility and penitence, let us cry, "only God, only God and God alone. Take the world but Give me Jesus." Will you do that? We need it in this church. You need it. We all need it. May God grant it through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now Father, wilt Thou bless all who listened tonight. Wilt Thou grant we pray, that we may forget the things that are behind and press forward toward the things that are ahead. And that we may see all that is as only the size of a hazelnut and ourselves in God as vast, so vast that we encompass the worlds and are utterly empty without Thee. Fill us O God. Fill us with thyself for without Thee, ever we'll be wanting.

Fill us with thyself, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/attributes-of-god-2-gods-immanence-and-immensity/>

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