

Being and Doing

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing our essential humanity, which remains unchanged despite our occupation or actions.

Scripture: Genesis 1:27, Psalm 8:5, Ephesians 2:10, Colossians 3:23

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "The Value of Work"

Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes the distinction between 'being' and 'doing,' arguing that society often defines individuals by their occupations rather than their inherent humanity. He asserts that a person's true worth lies in their identity as a human being created in the image of God, rather than in their job or achievements. Tozer highlights that, apart from sin, all work is good and natural, and that one's essential humanity remains unchanged regardless of their profession. He illustrates this by comparing a prince walking through a field, which elevates the ordinary path by his presence, symbolizing how humanity can elevate work through their inherent dignity. Ultimately, Tozer calls for recognition of our fundamental identity as God's special creation, beyond the roles we fulfill in society.

Transcript

Emerson complains in one of his essays that society tends to overlook our essential humanity and to think of us as being what we do. There should be no farmers, he argues, or carpenters, or painters; there should only be men who farm and paint and do carpenter work.

This distinction is fine but vastly important, for the most vital thing about any man is not what he does or what he has but what he is. And first of all, a man must be a man--that is, a human being free in the earth, free to do anything his basic humanity requires him to do. And apart from sin (which is a moral abnormality, a disease in the heart of the man), whatever the man does is good and natural and pleasing to God. Man was made in the image of God; it is that image that gave him his high honor as a man and marked him out as something unique and apart. His occupation--farmer, carpenter, miner or office worker--is altogether incidental. Whatever he may do for his living, he is always a man, the special creature of God.

Except for the presence of sin in human nature, there could be no nobler sign than the one seen so often on city streets or in the middle of busy highways: "Men at Work." Whatever he may be doing, the significant thing is that he is a man. "You made him a little lower than the angels" (Romans 2:7). And nothing he does can change in any degree his essential humanity. His work can neither elevate nor

degrade him; being made in God's image, he can elevate work by the very fact that he engages in it. A prince walks casually across the field, and his path becomes to the populace something different and wonderful. A thousand oxen had walked there before, but now the field is royal. The humble cow path did not degrade the prince; rather, he elevated it by his presence. That is as men see things, but it serves to illustrate a higher truth.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/being-and-doing/>

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