

# Confining the Holy Spirit to a Footnote

by A.W. Tozer

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*The Holy Spirit is necessary for moral effectiveness and must not be banished to a footnote, lest we face terrible consequences.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 11:2, John 14:26, John 16:13, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:14, 1 Corinthians 2:12, Galatians 5:25, Ephesians 4:30, 2 Timothy 3:5

**Topics:** "The Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Vitality"

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## Description

A.W. Tozer addresses the troubling phenomenon of increasing religion alongside declining morality, attributing this to the error of religious intellectualism that confines the Holy Spirit to a mere footnote. He emphasizes that mere adherence to doctrine is insufficient for moral effectiveness; the transformative power of the Holy Spirit is essential. Tozer warns that banishing the Spirit leads to a hollow form of faith that lacks the vitality of Christ's teachings, resulting in a superficial and carnal version of fundamentalism. He calls for a return to reliance on the Spirit, likening it to the guiding pillar of fire that led Israel, and urges believers to trust in the Lord wholeheartedly.

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## Transcript

The question being discussed by many these days--why religion is increasing and morality slipping, all at the same time--finds its answer in this very error, the error of religious intellectualism. Men have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. The text alone will not elevate the moral life. To become morally effective, the truth must be accompanied by a mystic element, the very element supplied by the Spirit of truth. The Holy Spirit will not be banished to a footnote without taking terrible vengeance against His banishers. That vengeance may be seen today in the nervous, giggling, worldly minded and thoroughly carnal fundamentalism that is spreading over the land.

Doctrinally, it wears the robes of scriptural belief, but beyond that it resembles the religion of Christ and His apostles not at all.

The mysterious presence of the Spirit is vitally necessary if we are to avoid the pitfalls of religion. As the fiery pillar led Israel through the wilderness, so the Spirit of truth must lead us all our journey through. One text alone could improve things mightily for us if we would but obey it: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5).

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/confining-the-holy-spirit-to-a-footnote/>

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