

(Deeper Spiritual Life): Deeper Spiritual Life - What Is It?

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer emphasizes the importance of pursuing a deeper spiritual life that transcends mere external practices and seeks genuine connection with God through Christ.

Duration: 49:08

Scripture: Hebrews 5:11

Topics: "Deeper Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher describes a group of people who are hungry for a deeper relationship with God. These individuals are not interested in false doctrines or extreme excitement, but rather in knowing God and growing in holiness. They are dissatisfied with mere form and are seeking genuine content and substance in their faith. The preacher emphasizes the importance of seeking after God and thirsting for perfection, and encourages listeners to engage in meaningful conversations about God and Christ.

Transcript

I began this morning a series of talks. I do not know how many will be in it. I hadn't planned it.

But as a result of my reading and praying, I thought about this, and then I wanted to give one talk on it. But I find that I cannot do it justice in one talk, so it will be a number, each sermon complete in itself, but each following the other. I want to talk on the deeper life.

What is it? And I want to read, not to give close exegesis of this passage of Scripture, but as a proof that this that I am to talk about was known in Bible times, and that the Bible writers felt as I feel about it this morning. It is in the 5th chapter of Hebrews and over into the 6th. He talks about Melchizedek in the 10th verse, and then in the 11th says, Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing that ye are dull of hearing.

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a bad man. But strong meat belong to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, and of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do if God permit. I thought that you might like to hear it in another translation.

I don't often read other translations, but all English Bibles are translations. Let me show you how the Phillips translation has it, the same passage that I read. There is a great deal that we should like to say about this high priesthood, but it is not easy to explain to you, since you seem so slow to grasp spiritual truth.

At a time when you should be teaching others, you need teachers yourselves to repeat to you the ABC of God's revelation to man. For anyone who continues to live on milk is obviously immature. He simply has not grown up.

Solid food is only for the adult, that is, for the man who has developed by experience his power to discriminate between what is good and bad for him. Let us leave behind the elementary teaching about Christ and go forward to adult understanding. Let us not lay over and over again the foundation truths, repentance from the deeds which led to death, believing in God, baptism, laying on of hands, belief in life to come, and the final judgment.

No. If God allows, let us go on. Now, those are the words of the man who wrote the book of Hebrews by the pen of the Holy Ghost, and I have only selected this as one passage out of very many that I might have given to show that the temptation to settle down and not go forward is very strong in the Christian life, and that masses of people do it.

And yet that the Spirit of God rises up early and gets into man and urges them forward and urges them to urge others. And so we have such passages as this in Hebrews 5 and 6. Now, this idea of there being a better Christian life than most people know is not a modern idea at all, nor a modern development. Israel, for instance, began her history in a burst of divine power.

When God led the children of Israel out of Egypt in that famous and memorable journey through the Red Sea and over into the wilderness and on through the wilderness and across the River Jordan and into the Holy Land with the fire and the cloud going before and the children of Israel drinking out of the mysterious water from the mysterious rock and the food being manna, which God called angels, food which came down from above, and one miracle following another and grace upon grace with faith and love and worship at the center like a beating heart. Now, that was Israel when Israel began her famous history. But then came a slow shift from the center out toward the perimeter, out from the beating heart, out to the epidermis, out to the outside skin of things.

And then externalism took over in Israel, and a good deal of the long history of Israel in the Old Testament is the history of Israel yielding to the propensity to live on the surface and the prophets of God urging Israel back to the center. Always God urges men back to the center, and always men by centrifugal force tend to fly out to the outer edge of things. Always God wants men to have content, and always men seek to be satisfied with words.

If we can simply say words, why, we in the major, satisfy our conscience. And then man likes ceremony without love or meaning, and God always insists upon love and meaning regardless of ceremony. And man loves form without worship, and God wants worship whether he has form or not.

And externalism lies in words and ceremonies and forms. Internalism lies in content, in love, in worship, in inward spiritual reality. So God sent prophets and seers and reformers, the last one being Jesus himself.

And these rebuked externalism. They rebuked hollow form, and they pleaded for what we would now call a deeper life, which is simply deeper than the average life around the balance, which is nearer to the norm of the New Testament, the New Testament ideal. Now, in the book of Malachi, there is one of the loveliest, tenderest little passages imaginable, and I want to read it to you.

It is the testimony of the prophet Malachi 400 years before Christ came, before the Maccabees, and he was the last prophet to appear to Israel as a prophet, at least the last prophet that got into the sacred canon. And here we read this, at a time when Malachi rebuked and warned and in every way that he knew, exhorted and urged the people who had gone astray, who had gone to externals and the surface of life, and were satisfied with the whirring machinery and the motion of the pieces and parts, but cared nothing about the beating heart of it and the life within. And here is the tender little testimony of a few that we would say sought the deeper life.

Listen. Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. Even in Israel, that religious nation of Israel, there were righteous and wicked. There were those who served God and those who thought they served God but served him not.

And this company of people, I take it there weren't very many. They were called they that feared the Lord. And they spoke often to each other, and the Lord was pleased with it so that he wrote it down in a book and probably wrote what they said.

And God said joyfully that they should be his in that day, they should be his jewels. Now, that was the Old Testament. Now, when we come over into the New, after all the wonders of the incarnation and the crucifixion and the resurrection and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, then the Church began as Israel before her had begun, in a blaze of life and power.

And simplicity marked her, and faith and love and purity and worship. All of this great, top-heavy Christendom that we know today was never known in the day of the book of Acts and the days of the apostles. Utter simplicity was at the root of everything.

Faith was the power, or at least the instrument and the Holy Ghost the power that led them on. And love throbbed at the heart of their worship, and purity of life was demanded of them. So they had worship and love and faith, and their moral lives were pure and their whole lives simple.

And then as the years passed came a shift toward externalism, just as had happened in the days of Israel. A shift outward from the center toward the surface. Always remember this, that it could be the easiest thing in the world to live at the center, but it usually is the hardest, and it's easier to live on the surface than it is in the center.

So the Church shifted toward externalism, and institutionalism took over. And then came form and ceremony and tradition. But again God sent his prophets.

Augustine, now called St. Augustine, came and met God in a marvelous and wonderful way. And while he lived within the framework of the organized Church, St. Augustine knew God with trembling raptures of worship, and he wrote it into his magnificent and justly famous books. Along came Bernard of Cluny.

We've read about him and I've mentioned before here, I think in other times, of how along about the 10th or 11th century this Bernard of Cluny was a monk, and he had had a dream that he might someday visit Rome. So that after much effort and preparation, he finally succeeded in realizing that dream. He went to Rome, and there at the very headquarters of the Church, he saw what was going on.

He saw the profligacy of the priests. He saw how form and ceremony took over, and there was very little true spirituality anywhere among even the prelates and those in high position. It so broke his heart that he went back to his little valley, and there hid himself away and wrote his famous *The Celestial Country*, one of the most rapturous things ever penned by any human being on this earth.

It was the mighty cry of a hungry man after God and the protest of the soul against all the formality, and particularly against the corruption that he saw in the Church. They had back in those days groups of men and women that called themselves the Friends of God. They did not leave the Church.

They stayed within the Church, but they paid little attention to the forms of the Church. They made the spirit everything. They had also groups they called the Brothers of the Common Life, and those men of God lived their simple lives.

St. Francis of Assisi came along, and his was a protest also against formality, and he formed his order. In fact, the great orders of the Church, I think, almost invariably grew out of a great revival in the heart of some man. And he formed that order in order that he might give spiritual religion a chance to live again.

And then he hadn't more than died and gone to sleep with his fathers until formality and externalism took over again, and it has been the history of the Church down the years. And these such men as I have named rebuked and pleaded for a life that was real. A life, as old Walter Hilton said to the nuns in a certain place, he said, Now, my ghostly sisters, my spiritual sisters, this book that I am writing to you is written in order that you might have actually in your heart what you seem to have.

That what you have, the dress you have, that indicates that you belong to a certain level or order that you may have within you. And then he wrote his great book called *The Ladder of Perfection*, or *The Scale of Perfection*, pleading that they might have within their hearts the power and love and grace and worship and purity that their garments indicated that they had. So God always had his men who pleaded and earnestly longed that they might be holy and they might have in themselves that which they knew the Bible had taught.

Well, we say, You're talking altogether about the Roman Church. Well, I come to the Protestant Church now, and I point out to you, my friends, sadly as I must, that this shift toward externals is just as strong within Protestants as it ever was in Israel or ever was in the Church before Luther's time. The temptation to go outward toward words and traditions and forms and customs and habits.

And we carry upon our back whole loads of traditions that have no place in the word of God. And Jesus taught that in vain ye do worship God, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. And if we can allow a word to stand for a deed, we'll do it and not do the deed and the forms and customs.

I'm thinking about something that a gentleman told me. I'm trying to remember where. But when I go into cities, I visit usually cathedrals and great religious centers wherever I can, Catholic or Protestant.

And I was in one city, and I'm trying to recall now where it was encamped for the moment. But a man took me around and told me this. He said, Now, these windows that you see are exact replicas of a famous cathedral, I think Reims Cathedral, in Europe.

And he said, Artists went to Europe, and they copied with exquisite precision the stained-glass windows of that famous cathedral, now hundreds of years old, and they brought it back to this country, and now we have it. This is a perfect replica of such and such cathedral, all of these beautiful stained-glass windows. And he said, Now, I'd point out something to you.

He said, Do you notice here and there a rather spotted, splotchy appearances? Do you notice how down the edge along close to the frame there's a bit of discoloration? And I said, Yes, I do notice it. Well, he said, I'll tell you what that is. He said, These windows were hundreds of years old, and they have stood there as centuries rolled on, and nations and kingdoms rose and fell, and they naturally got washed only by the rains, and they collected on themselves a certain tarnish, a certain discoloration, the dust of the centuries was upon them.

And he said, There were those who believed that the dust and discoloration actually improved and mellowed the windows and made them look better than they were before. So he said, When the artists went over to copy them, they did not wash the windows, nor they did not try to copy the window without the dirt, but they copied dirt and window, so that what we have here is not only the glass of the artistry of the stained-glass windows of the cathedral, but we have in addition perfectly reproduced the dust of centuries that gathered on those windows. Now, there is a perfect illustration of how the Church of Christ tends to go on, how Israel did, and how every order that's ever been established and every new denomination that has ever come up, born out of an earnest desire to bring men to God.

Oh, then they became the dust of centuries went on and passed on, and that got on their windows and that became a part of their beliefs and a part of their practices so that they're hardly able to tell which is of God and which is simply the accumulation of tarnish and dust from the centuries. Now, that's what we have done in our time, but my brethren, don't imagine for a minute that we have been without our prophets and our pleaders too who have stood and warned us and tried to bring us back to God. God still has those who are not content with surface religion.

I find them all up and down the country. They're not all of one denomination, but they're not content with surface religion. They long to recapture the true inwardness of the faith and they insist upon reality.

They don't want anything artificial. They want to know that whatever they have is real. They'd rather it would be small and real than to be large and unreal.

Better a living dog than a dead lion, said the Old Testament, and so better to have a little church that's real than a big church that's artificial. Better to have a simple religion that is real than to have a great ornate ceremony that is only hollow. And God has had his people down the years.

And I want to describe these people to you and they live today. They're not all in this church, but they live today. And they live among God's people everywhere.

I've found them here and there. I think there are some of them in almost every religious group. There are those who want nothing apart from the New Testament.

Now remember this. You and I are brought to the Bible for our, this is our rock from which we drink our water. This is our manna.

This is our blueprint upon which we build our cathedral. This is our guide through the desert and the wilderness. This is our all in all, and we want nothing.

These that I speak about want nothing except what's in the New Testament. We ask not that we might go abroad into heresy, abroad and follow Jehovah's Witnesses or what have you into some wild doctrine which has not had the approval of the centuries. My brethren, you know that the difficulty down the years as a rule was not that men taught wrong doctrine, but that they didn't live to the doctrine they taught.

It was not when a reformer came along or a prophet came along. It was not to correct doctrine. It was to rebuke men for holding the doctrine without having the inward reality.

And so when such men as Wesley came along, they didn't try to straighten out the church. They didn't try to correct the doctrines of the church. They said there should be a witness in their heart that these things are true in us.

Men followed them because they found reality in the word of God for their own hearts. They wanted nothing outside of the Bible. They simply wanted what the Bible had for them.

These of which I speak have only one source of riches and all those riches are in Christ. Jesus Christ is enough. It is not Christ plus somebody else, Christ and somebody else.

Jesus Christ is all in all, fully sufficient, and these who seek for the deeper Christian life are those who want the riches that are in Christ Jesus the Lord. And these seek no place, no wealth, no fame. So much is being carried on these days that is where men are using religion as a source of either wealth or else fame or publicity or something else.

They're using religion to get something for themselves. The result is they'll take advantage of whatever happens to be current. I've preached now for quite a while, since I was 19 years of age.

I've been preaching, and that's a long time ago. And I have outlived innumerable sheaves of men who came along and tried to cash in on whatever was popular at the time. And so they rode the coattail of whatever new thing there was that came along.

And I went right on preaching the gospel. I never preached to big crowds, at least not in my own church, but I preached to consistent crowds. But this thing of wanting to ride in, get something, get a few people around you, be known, get a reputation.

Those who seek the deeper life do not want this. They want the riches that are in Christ Jesus, and they're willing to lose their reputation if they must in order to get on with God and go on to perfection. They seek no fame.

They seek no place. They seek no wealth. The man who longs after God wouldn't turn his hand over to get elected anywhere to anything.

The seeker after high ecclesiastical position, brethren, it is pathetic, this desire to be known as to be somebody. Yes, he wants to be somebody, and then he dies. Every once in a while I hear about some great big shot that dies, and immediately I say to myself, what now, brother? What now? What now? While you lived, you climbed the ladder of success, and you trampled other men down in the name of Christ and religion.

Now you're dead, and the worms will soon eat you, and your poor, spotted, tarnished soul goes out to face the judge of all the earth. What now, man? The seekers after God don't ever want fame nor place nor wealth. They're never seeking a high position.

They don't want to be elected to anything. They want rather to know God and to be where Jesus is. Only to know Christ, that is all.

Paul said, I consider that all I ever was to be but dumb, that I might win Christ and be known in him. And this is the plea and the testimony of those of whom I speak. And these seekers after God are deeply dissatisfied with mere form.

You give them a beautifully painted package, and they shake it, and nothing rattles, and they weigh it, and it doesn't weigh anything. They toss it aside. You can't fool them with painted toys.

They want content. They want to know what's there. One diamond, small enough to be lost in our pockets, and we men have plenty of them, you could lose a diamond worth thousands of dollars in a little creek somewhere in one of our pockets.

And yet it is worth more ten times, more twenty times more than a bass drum. And a bass drum is how many times, maybe a thousand times larger and infinitely noisier. And they usually paint some things on the outside of it.

But one tiny diamond will buy a whole room full of those windy bags they call bass drums. And the people of God that are seeking the face of Jesus in all denominations everywhere in kindness and charity leads me to say, I think some of them are over on the other side of the fence. I believe that Thomas Merton of the Capuchin, is it fathers? I believe he's a seeker after God.

And don't you follow me around afterwards and say that I shouldn't have said that. I should have said that. That's why I said it.

I believe that there are those who have never left the ancient Roman church and still they know God and they're seekers after God. I personally can't say why they don't leave, but I say I believe there are a few, and I think Merton's one of them, a man who knows God and seeks after God. Brethren, God has his people and they're everywhere and they're known by the fact that they hate mere form.

And even though they may get through with it, they have something within them that's bigger than all of that. This is the end of Side A. Please flip the cassette and press play to continue the message. When Brother Lawrence, the Nicholas Herman of devotional fame, when he was in his monastery, he said, I learned to pray to God all by myself.

He said, I just talked to God all the time. Everything I was doing, washing dishes, traveling, whatever I was doing, I was talking to my Heavenly Father. He said, I developed such a sense of God's presence round about me that I never lost it for 40 years.

He said, I didn't need their forms. They told me set times to pray and I did. He said, I was obedient.

I prayed set times. But he said, it didn't mean a thing any more than they did any other time. He said, I had learned the inner secret of fellowship with God myself.

So while he, when they said, all right now, Brother Lawrence, you go and pray 27 minutes, he went and prayed 27 minutes. He did what he was told, but he smiled and said it didn't mean anything, because I had already found God, and I was in communion with God all the time. So you'll find them, my brethren everywhere, who know God.

The average Christian's spiritual progress is not sufficient to satisfy these longing seekers after God. They want something better than that spiritual progress. The average fellow doesn't make any spiritual progress.

He gets converted, joins the church and five years later he's right where he was. Ten years later, he's either where he was or he's slipped back a little. That's not satisfactory to the thirsters and the hungers after God.

As the roe panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My heart and my flesh cry out for God, for the living God. That's the testimony of the seeker after God.

And he's not going to let somebody else's slow, snail progress keep him from And then these seekers after God are impatient of the substitutes that are offered. You see, when you don't have anything inside, then they try to get something outside. It's a well-known fact out in the world that when the fire goes out in the furnace, they paint the outside to make it look as if the fire was still there.

And I have seen them, God bless them. I have nothing but sorrow and sorrow smiling pity in my heart for them. But I have seen old ladies that should be sitting in front of the fireplace if they could find one in this busy chrome age, nipping booties for their great-grandchildren.

But in place of that, bless them, they're out there painted like a flagpole and with every gadget and prop known to mortal man, they're trying to recapture if only for one fleeting evening the life of the glory of their girlhood. But it just won't come back, that's all, Granny, it just won't come back. And you might just as well come out from behind the mask because we know who's back there.

And we know all about your wrinkles and we know a lot of things we won't say. Well, the Church is the same. And even evangelicalism and so-called gospelism, when it loses something from its heart, then it gets these bangles and bangles on the outside in order to pretend that it's got something on the inside.

But you can't fool the seekers after God with this kind of thing. They know better. When some red-faced, curly-haired fellow rushes in with a briefcase full of samples and wants to show you how you can have the biggest church in all of Cook County bar none, they smile.

They say, Listen, son, cool off. Be still and know that God is God. Go somewhere and reduce your temperature by two degrees and get a hold of yourself.

Read the Bible calmly and see whether you don't find that all of this you are trying to feed me is only paint for the corpse. That's all. Bells on the doorbell ring, and I hear the bell ring, and I hear the hear the bell the way I do it.

He said, I come in and I set up an electric chair replica on the platform. Then I get somebody to play the part and I have a young fellow come and sit in the electric chair and go through the motions, dying in the chair. He said, I have seen, I forget how many, die in the chair and I've seen how many hanged, and I saw a great heavy woman one time hanged.

He told me some things about that I won't repeat because we're too near to dinner time. But he said, I don't ask for an offering, but I'll just wait at the door and the people can give what they want to as they go out. I sat down and wrote him a letter.

And as near as I can remember, this was the gist of the letter. I said, my dear sir, I have your letter and your literature, your promotional literature, and your request to come to our church and have a meeting. I said, now first, if you have stood beside young men who have died in the chair and have comforted them with a gospel text in their last hour, I want to thank you.

And I said, for any little comfort that you've been able to give to these poor, misled, reckless boys who have been forced to pay the last full measure of punishment to society for the crimes they have committed, receive my thanks and I deeply appreciate anything that you have done. But I said, if you for a minute imagine that by putting up a replica of an electric chair in the platform and going through a mask and masquerade and pretense, if you think that helps anybody, you're a mistake. And I said, I personally wouldn't have you anywhere near our church.

And I said, the fact that you don't take an offering doesn't mean anything to me. And I said, to see you sitting after you had properly shocked the audience with this terrible display, in the name of the Lord, to have you sit at the with a smirk and receive the offerings from the shocked and pop-eyed congregation that was foolish enough to come and see your carnal exhibition, I still think you're out for the money. And I said, so according to the above, I'm quite sure you will draw the proper conclusion that we have no place for you in our church fellowship, sincerely yours.

He never replied. And in fact, I'm not sure he didn't drop dead. But I've never heard from him since.

But still, I suppose, if he hasn't retired now, living on the proceeds in Florida, why, he's somewhere with his portable electric chair. My God, in heaven above, what have we come to? That the people of God aren't shocked enough by Calvary. A man dying on a gallows on a hill outside Jerusalem who was God-man, dying for the sins of the world, that leaves them dull and unmoved.

So we have to bring in a half-witted ex-chaplain with his cheap buffoonery in order to move the congregation. Well, that was way back there before all this outburst of modern theatrics that's taken over Protestantism. But it was the beginning, it was the seed that grew, the dragon's teeth that grew into more dragons.

So we don't like it, and the hungry-hearted Saints of God don't want it. But they read with great eagerness the lives of holy men and the devotional books of the centuries. For instance, I wonder if you have ever read *The Song of Songs* or *The Love of God* by Bernard of Clairvaux.

I wonder if you have ever read *The Dark Night of the Soul* by St. John of the Cross, or *The Scale of Perfection* or *The Gold of Love* by Walter Hilton, or *The Amendment of Life* or *The Life of a Servant* by Richard Rowe, or *The Little Book of Eternal Wisdom* by Henry Sousa, or *The Great Sermons* by John Toler and Meister Eckert, or *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas A. Kempis, or *The Devout Life* by Francis

de Sales, or The Anonymous Cloud of Unknowing or Theologia Germanica, or The Letters of Samuel Rutherford, or The Works of William Law, or The Letters of Fenelon, or The Journal of Fox, or The Hymns and Writings of Simpsons, and Murray, and Wesley, and Simpson. Why have I named these? I have named these men because they were those who rose like the prophets in Israel and didn't change a doctrine, they just protested against the hollow externalisms of the world and sought to find and recapture again the glory that was in Jesus Christ, to worship and prayer and desire to be holy. These that I have named form a fellowship, a fellowship of sacred brotherhood down the years, and I find them.

Strangely enough, I don't find them by any means all in our own society. There are men in our own society that are just ordinary men. They have no longing after God.

They grind out their sermons week to week and take their little trips here and there and fish and play golf and fool and come back and preach again and go again and spend their lives that way. But you can't talk with them much because there's nothing much to talk about. After you've talked about a little chit-chat and business, then they're sunk.

But they're not all that way. There are those that you can meet for hours on end. They can talk together about God and Christ.

And they that love the Lord spoke often one to another, and they heard it and wrote it down in a book. You say, this is Mr. Tozer's idea of religion. Well, there are Presbyterians that believe in this.

I was just invited to a Presbyterian church in Milwaukee to give a holy week series of sermons on these very subjects, and I have just been invited this week by telephone and by letter to give a series to the Baptists out in the east. And if I hadn't canceled out, I'd have been in Taylor University, a Methodist college, and they want to hear this kind of preaching. And I just came back from a Baptist college in St. Paul, and I preach this same way.

And they gather around me and talk with me, not because I'm a good preacher. I know I'm not. I've heard myself on tape.

I'm too jumpy to be a good preacher, too nervous. Not because I'm a good preacher, but it's because I talk about things that the hungry hearted want. And that's the fellowship of the longers and seekers after God.

Yet these same people may be practical and plain and cool-headed and have no sympathy with false doctrines and keep away from extremes and excitement and fanaticism. They don't want any of that, but they just want to know God and grow on to be holy and to seek the face of Jesus and tell that they're aglow with his light. Brethren, I've described them.

Now I want to ask one question. Have I described you? Have I described you? It isn't a question of how far you've gone, it's a question of which way you're headed. It isn't a matter of how deep you yet have plunged, but have you got your diving suit on? It isn't how far the arrow has sped, but has the arrow left the bow? It isn't that you're perfect, but thirstest thou after perfection, seekest thou God? Or is your religion social? Is it satisfied with a once-a-Sunday, once-a-week gesture to Almighty God? He gives you the wind, he gives you the rain, he gives you a body to contain your wonderful soul, he gives you an amazing mind.

If you've got steady C's or D's in your school all the way through, still your mind is so amazing that the angels wonder at it. He's given you his Son, he's given you the ability to know him. He's sustained you, holds you up, and keeps your heart beating.

He waits to receive you young, but you toss him a sock once a week. Here you are, God, come get it. So God gets what's left, that tattered remnant of your time.

And then you're a follower of the Lamb. Don't fool yourself, you're not. Are you weary of externals and long after God? I do.

I'm long after God, and this is not old age, and this is not the result of anything I've been reading, except the Bible. This has been growing on me through the years. The only gratifying thing I have, apart from my communion with God, is the knowledge that I'm not alone in this.

God has his people everywhere who are in revolt, in revolt against pretense, and textualism, and externalism, and tradition, and they want to seek God for himself through the scriptures as revealed by the Holy Spirit. Have I described you? If I have, God bless you. They that love the Lord speak often one to another.

We know you by the conversation we have with you. We know you by what you're interested in. We know you about how you talk, and what the topic will be when conversation begins and ends, and has been.

We know that God has his people. There are not many, but I thank God it's amazing that there are this many, amazing that there is sufficient, that we can keep a congregation going and keep even growing a little, and giving a little more, and doing a little better. I think it's simply amazing in this day of surface religion, this day when externalism has taken over and become triumphant.

But I'll have no pardon. Have I described you? If I have, I want to help you. I want to help you to know God.

Pastures are greener, the waters are deeper, and bluer, and stiller, and further on. Do you want to go on? I trust so. I pray thee, shut around us today by thy grace.

Shut us out from the world's clamor, and the wagging tongues, and the noisy, booming voices, and the example that would lead us not toward thee, but toward the world. Save us from it, and shut us in with thee. May we think, and talk, and meditate on the holy things of the day.

Dismiss us now with our blessing. May grace, and mercy, and peace be with us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/1/SID1994.mp3>

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