

Divine Initiative

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of God's sovereign operation in enabling man to come to Christ, contrary to the notion of unqualified invitation.

Scripture: John 3:16, John 6:44, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Sovereignty Of God", "Divine Initiative"

Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes the dual truths found in the Gospel of John regarding salvation: the invitation for 'whosoever will may come' and the necessity of God's prior work in a person's heart. He argues against the notion that individuals can come to Christ solely by their own decision without the Holy Spirit's influence. Tozer warns that while the gospel invitation is broad, it is not unconditional, and the church has sometimes misrepresented this invitation. He stresses that the term 'whosoever' is always connected to the actions of believing or coming, which require divine enablement. Ultimately, Tozer calls for a recognition of God's sovereign initiative in the process of salvation.

Transcript

The Christian Scriptures, particularly the Gospel of John, contain two truths which appear to stand opposed to each other.

One is that whosoever will may come to Christ. The other is that before anyone can come there must have been a previous work done in his heart by the sovereign operation of God.

The notion that just anybody, at any time, regardless of conditions, can start from religious scratch, without the Spirit's help, and believe savingly on Christ by a sudden decision of the will, is wholly contrary to the teachings of the Bible.

God's invitation to men is broad but not unqualified. The word 'whosoever' throws the door open wide, indeed, but the church in recent years has carried the gospel invitation far beyond its proper bounds and turned it into something more human and less divine than that found in the sacred Scriptures.

What we tend to overlook is that the word 'whosoever' never stands by itself. Always its meaning is modified by the word 'believe' or 'will' or 'come'. According to the teachings of Christ no man will or can come and believe unless there has been done within him a prevenient work of God enabling him so to do.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/divine-initiative/>

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