

(Hebrews - Part 22): Moses Instructed in Making the Temple

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of following the pattern shown to us in the Bible, which is a divine blueprint for living according to God's design and will.

Duration: 38:32

Scripture: Genesis 6:13-14, Exodus 25:40, Exodus 26:30, John 14:15-23, Revelation 3:16

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of following the pattern shown in the mount, which refers to the instructions given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. The preacher urges the congregation to prepare their hearts to hear the word of God and to have confidence in Him rather than in humanity. He emphasizes the need to obey the word of God and not to take any liberties or make any improvisations. The preacher also highlights that redemption is the work of God, not man, and that true freedom lies in obedience to God's laws.

Transcript

Hebrews, the eighth chapter. The Holy Spirit is writing and explaining to us the relation between the earthly and the heavenly, the Old Testament and the New, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, Christ and the High Priest of Israel. And he says, this is the sum of what we are talking about, that we have a High Priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, that he is a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Man pitched the tabernacle of Israel at the command of God, but there is another tabernacle pitched by God which man had nothing to do with. It is above and the other was below, and the one below is a shadow of the one above. For every High Priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices, wherefore it is of necessity that this man, Jesus, have somewhat to offer also.

For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law of Moses, who serve under the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle. For see, saith he, see that thou makest all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount. Now I want to talk about this.

See, saith God to Moses, see to that, that you make everything according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount. Plain enough. Why? Because God was making an earthly, temporary tabernacle with its services, after a permanent and eternal tabernacle above.

That's why. He showed him the pattern. I want to talk about that a little, and before we do, let's pray.

O God, time, like an ever-rolling stream, is bearing us all away. We have one fewer Sunday we will have tonight to prepare ourselves for the tabernacle above than we had last week. Prepare our hearts now, we pray, to hear.

We confess to thee we have no confidence in humanity, for the end of all flesh has come before thee, but our confidence is in thee. Speak, Lord, thy servant here. Speak, Lord, we are hearing, and we want to obey.

We pray thee save us from listening, always listening, hearing again the truth over and over, and doing nothing about it. O God, instruct our hearts, inform our minds, capture our wills, and make them thine. Bless us as we hear and speak, and may it be said that we are not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which the word is spoken.

For Christ's sake. Amen. Now, in this quotation where God told Moses that he was to make the tabernacle and have it made, after a divine pattern showed to Moses in the mount, the way of worship was being opened here for Israel, a new way for them, by blood.

There was to be the tabernacle with its altar of sacrifice made of brass, where beasts were offered, and the altar of incense, typifying prayer. Beyond that and within the Holy of Holies there was the Ark of the Covenant with its golden lid, called the Mercy Seat. And over that golden Mercy Seat there were two cherubim with their wings outstretched toward each other, and between the wings of the cherubim there burned the awful fire, which the old Jews called the Shekinah.

And then there were to be priests, of course the priests were there, important that they be there, anointed priests, born priests, and then anointed to exercise their function as priests. Garments they had, all symbolic and typical of heavenly things, and the high priest, typical of the great high priest who was to come. And of course that took a great deal of constructing.

They had to construct altars, and this Mercy Seat, and this Ark of the Covenant, and these tables, and the walls, and the curtains, all these had to be made. And Moses, I want you to note, was not permitted to draw a single plan, not one. In making of the veils, not one man was allowed to draw the pattern.

Moses might have well been able, as he was a learning man, and as we know now, a genius in his own right. He had lived in Egypt and had seen beautiful buildings there about the palace where he grew up as a boy, the supposed son of Pharaoh's daughter. And yet Moses, though he could have been, I'd be happy to live in a house that Moses designed, a man of that ability and a man of his experience and age.

But God said to Moses, Now Moses, I want you to make this earthly tabernacle so that it will be a reflection of the tabernacle above, so that the light that shines down from God upon this area will reflect back what it sees, and that that it sees will be your earthly tabernacle. This will only be here for a little while. Shadows don't remain very long.

The light continues, but the shadows go. So he said, I want you to make this, and don't you dare improvise. Don't you take any liberties with the score.

Don't you tack on anything. And don't you in your hurry say, Now this isn't necessary. Don't you do it, Moses.

You stay by the pattern shown to thee in the mountain. Because if you fail me in the making of this, then there will be an imperfect reflection of the shining glory above. Now this God insisted upon, and warned Moses not to vary any from the pattern.

And this springs out of a twofold presupposition, or threefold. One is that redemption is wrought out by God and not by man. I want you to hear this, my brethren and sisters, that redemption is wrought out by God and not by man.

There isn't any place in the head of a man or in the fingers of a man, however skilled or however brilliant, for redemptive plans or purposes. God purposed redemption in Christ Jesus before the world began, and it doesn't need any editing on my part or on the part of any living man. And then, in this presupposition, that true religion is revealed by God, and that it is not discovered by man or constructed by man.

Christianity grows downward from heaven, not upward from the earth. It doesn't stand upon the earth, its roots are in heaven and it grows downward, so that man has nothing to say here at all. True religion is revealed.

There are many religions in the world that man has constructed, and some of them are very beautiful and meaningful and all that, but they are not redemptive religions. They are not redemptive. And God says, this true religion which you are to enjoy comes from heaven above, and all you ought to do now is to simply let the light above shine down and reflect the glory that is above, and when you pull away the Old Testament mirror, there is no more any reflection.

That's gone, but the eternal world above remains. But there is a third presupposition, and that is that salvation is received from God and not achieved by man. I want you to hear that, that salvation is received from God and not achieved by man.

If salvation had been achieved by man, even a little bit, even one percent of it, then God would have said, Moses, I'm giving you a 99 percent perfect blueprint. You can doodle a little and write in and improvise and put in anything you want to put in, because I allow you one percent. God said, No, Moses, one hundred percent is from Jehovah thy God, so don't take liberties here with the pattern.

Now, heaven will tell earth how to build, remember that, and heaven speaks and it is for earth to listen. And heaven commands and it is only for earth to obey, not to ask questions, but to obey. Heaven calls and it is for earth to answer, and heaven invites and it is for earth to respond to the invitation.

We in the New Testament church have also been handed the pattern, and that pattern consists of things which are eternally true, which are revealed by God, commandments laid down by God, eternally true, and true for all nations and for each single nation, and for all persons and for each single person, and true under all conditions, and not relative. You know, there is what they call the relativity of morals. One of our boys attended a state university, and he came home.

He's gotten over it since. But while he was going through the mill of getting his basic degree in this university, he was talking loudly and swinging his arms and trying to set the old man straight on the relativity of morals. He said that morals are not fixed, they are not absolutes, they are relative, they float.

And it depends upon the angle you see them from. For instance, in Canada and in the United States and most of the Western world, monogamy is morally right. That is, one man takes one wife.

But that is not a fixed thing, that's not an absolute. Under some cultures, a man can have as many wives as he can support. And therefore, it's just as right for a man to have five wives in Turkey as it is, if they do, I don't know what they do in Turkey, but just as right for a man to have five wives as it is for a man to have one wife in Canada.

And he said, you see, the morals are relative. Well, I smiled him down, and he got over it and he learned better. But you know that there's no relativity.

When you come to the things of God, brother, when you open your Bible, you put away this woozy idea of relativity, of this floating standard of morals. God speaks, and let the world listen. O earth, hear the word of the Lord.

When God speaks, it's for us to listen, for these things are eternally true. I can lean back and quote with the best of the Anglicans and the best of the Methodists and the best of them all. I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of the Father, begotten of him before all worlds.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who with Father and Son together is worshiped and glorified. I believe these things, they are true. And so the New Testament is the pattern shown us in the mount.

It is the mere reflecting from God above, the truth. Not truths that are relative and floating, the truths that are true beyond debate. There is not another side to them.

This is the day of the panel discussion. I said a panel discussion is half a dozen people pooling their ignorance. Nobody knows anything about it, but they sit around and discuss it in one town where I won't tell you what town it is unless it slips out, and if it does, I won't mind too much.

But they have a young people's crowd there, and they meet. They have one older man, and he is older in body, and he is the moderator. These young people will raise a question about the scripture, a question about morals, a question about something that has to do with faith.

Then these young people tear it all to shreds, and some thin burst of the champion will pipe up and give his opinion. Why doesn't he shut up and let God talk? He doesn't know anything about it anyhow. He isn't dry behind the ears, and if he were as old as Methuselah and as wise as Plato, he wouldn't have any right to introduce his own opinion into the word of God.

See, they'll make it after the pattern shown me in the mount. Don't doodle, don't improvise, don't stick in a single board or plank. Don't put in one thread into the garment of God.

Don't you dare lay one foundation or put one pillar upright except God tells you to do it. This is the hour when they are telling us preachers, now don't be dogmatic. Don't be dogmatic.

After all, there is another side to things. There is another side to everything you say, and there is another side to everything I say, but there is only one side to what God says, and that's God's side. And we therefore dare not allow ourselves to take another side and begin to debate.

The word of the Lord is not debatable, and the commandments of Christ are not there to be discussed by a panel. They are there to be obeyed in humility and tears for the power of the Holy Ghost within us. So remember that.

These are built into the Christian faith. They are the threads which God works into the holy garment, and they are the philosophy by which all men live. This Bible I read in that profound magazine that somebody sent to our house, or at least it comes there, Reader's Digest.

You've got to shake your head to get to the depths of that profundity. But anyway, this fellow was saying in a recent article that we have to develop space, we have to go out there. He said, If we don't, we'll stagnate.

And he said, Remember one thing, that when we get out there, that rash religious statement that God made man in his image will be ticking like a time bomb under the faith of Christians, ready to blow up in our faces. We'll go out there and find a green creature with bug eyes, or one in the middle of his forehead and antennas on his head, and say, Take me to your leader. Well, we'll go there and we'll find that all that we knew about or believed about God is all wrong.

Oh, I don't know who that fellow is, but I do know you couldn't be any wronger if you said that this two times two made twenty-nine. Because he's just wrong, that's all. The word of the Lord stands.

Here it is. What are you going to do about it? The words that I speak unto you, they are spirited and they are truth. The words that I speak unto you shall judge you in the last day.

These are my words, says God, and let no man add anything to them, lest he be cursed, and let no man take anything away. There they are. They are not for me to edit and tinker with, they are for me to believe and obey.

For there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey. Now, we're committed to the Bible pattern. We're committed to it, and no man has any authority to add anything to it, and no man has any authority to subtract anything from it.

No man has any authority to alter it in any way, and no man has any authority to remold it nearer to the heart's desire. No man has any authority. See, they'll make all things after the pattern.

But some are afraid of this. They're afraid of a man like me. I am very happy that a woman went out of this church roaring mad one time when I preached here.

You didn't know that, did you? Well, a young lady, and she was here, a very brilliant young lady, and I preached and said, You have to believe in the Deity of Christ, you couldn't be a Christian. She went stomping out of here roaring mad, and she said, That ignorant man, that he'd say a thing like that, that you have to believe in Jesus Christ to be a Christian! Well, she can stay as far as I'm concerned or swing both ways in this church. But I don't think that's ignorance, I think that's faith, and he has well confirmed it to how many millions throughout the world.

How many have gone out and died with light in their face, singing the songs of Zion, because they believed that he was God, a very God-begotten, not created. That the man whose name was Jesus was God manifest in mortal flesh. Some people are afraid of this kind of teaching.

They don't want to be confined, they say. They don't want to be fenced in. They feel that that narrow, very narrow, and to hold any dogmatic views like that is to be narrow and tame and static.

But that's the devil's argument, because the answer to it all is that all our miseries in the world are the result of our not believing it. All the miseries in the world stem originally from our human race not having followed the patterns shown them in the mount. The Lord laid down a few certain rules for them and said, If you want to live in the light of my face, live like this.

They thought they knew better. Eve got fooling around and thought she knew better than the rest, and the result is this mess that we're in. There won't be a tear shed in the world today, around the whole wide globe.

But what is the result? A salty, bitter tear squeezed out of broken hearts. There won't be one, but the result of people thinking they knew better than God knows about things, and taking things out of God's hands and taking them into their own. If Adam and his people, his race that followed Hadro, had obeyed the pattern in the mount and lived the way God told them to, there would be no cold war and no hot war and no graveyards and no bereavements and no cancers and no tuberculosis and no murders and no rapes and nothing.

But there would have been a race, and there wouldn't have been a stagnant race. Can you imagine? Brother, I don't understand. There are two ways to be dumb.

One is not to go to school at all, and the other is to go too long. I think that some of these people have been in school too long. Can you imagine saying to a sardine, take a sardine out as long as my little finger, take him out into the middle of the vast, rolling Pacific and put him down? Just before you put him down, you'll say to him, now sardine, you're going to have to run around the ocean a while, you're going to have to hunt other oceans because they don't just stagnate.

How long would it take him to stagnate? It would take him a million years, and he wouldn't have found the borders of that vast, rolling, undulating sea. And God has given us this wonderful world with its high-peaked snow-capped mountains, and he's arched over it the star-studded sky, and he's made the winds to blow through her valleys, and he's clothed her with green and decked her with flowers. And he has said, this is yours now.

Everything you put your foot on belongs to you. I've given this to the sons of men. And then we get all anxious and say, if we were going to go and look out, you don't stagnate, brother.

Why, my dear friends, we don't use one-third, we don't use one-twenty-fifth of the brains we already have now. We spend our time fooling around, and the result is we're not developing the mighty pattern that's within our own nature. So I'm not going to stagnate because I don't go to the moon or go somewhere else up there and float around.

I'm doing pretty well down here, thank you. And if you come to know God, you can go on to know God, because we're not dealing with matter and space and time and law and motion, we're dealing with the Eternal God, who made the visible and invisible. And God being the Eternal One and God being the

Infinite One, you could take all the creatures that God ever made from the holy watchers beside the throne to the amoeba there in the seawater, and they could all search into God for all millions of years and eternities to come, and they wouldn't have found even the touch of the hem of his garment.

So let men stagnate out there in the world, but Christians don't stagnate, because we have God. And God is the everlasting, self-renewing fountain that never gets stale. So I say that our mistake is in thinking, and the mistake we've made all down history is that we know better than God knows.

God says, see, thou maketh after the pattern. And we say, well, we'll partly do that. We're glad for the inspiration of the pattern, sure.

Sure, it's wonderful to have the inspiration of the pattern, but we don't think that it's necessary to stay by the pattern. If we do, we'll stagnate. Well, if that's true, then the one who goes the farthest from the pattern and is the freest ought to be the happiest man and the freest man.

But you know it's not so. If it's true that keeping the word of the Lord binds us and makes slaves out of us, and repudiating the word of the Lord and breaking the commandments of Christ sets us free, if that's true, then the man who's the farthest from God ought to be the freest man. But it's just exactly the other way around.

The man who's the farthest from God is the greatest slave. Look at the man who has gone the farthest and who is away from God. I tell you, that war and murder and all the rest, they're the free ones.

This dope fiend down here that has said, let's cast God's cords from me, he has been temporarily freed from the commandments of God, but he's got a monkey on his back. He is now a slave to dope. And that young fellow who has forgotten why he was born and hides in the hedges of the city of Chicago, Illinois, they have beautiful parks.

You've been there and of course you know it. They have them here too, and they make a great deal out of those parks. There was a park down off 67th Street and north, a lovely park, and it had a hedge all the way around it.

You know what they had to do? They had to remove that hedge. Now I'll give you three guesses why they took that hedge down. Beautiful, carefully trimmed hedge went all the way down one street, down another street, down another street.

And you could look in there, and of course there were openings and gates where you could go in, and then you were in a park. You know why they did? Because young men hid in the hedges and jumped out and attacked women. And to get rid of this hiding place for morons, they had to take away the hedge.

Cut them away so they wouldn't have a place to hide. There's your free man. He laughs at the patterns shown in the mount, and the commandments of Christ mean nothing to him.

He's free. He's following his own desires. He's an unsuppressed animal.

But you don't dare let your daughter go. Our daughter Becky was 19 years old, I think. Well, she was off to college before we would ever let her go anyplace alone.

Even when she came out on the train from working in a bookstore down in the loop, I'd meet her. Didn't like it. She felt she was making a baby out of her.

But I was determined that these free men who were free to follow their lusts like a goat, I was just determined that they weren't going to beat her up. So if it was true that we Christians are slaves and that there is a great deal of slavery and bondage in obeying the commandments of Christ and living in obedience to the faith of our Fathers, then we Christians should have shackles on our wrists and the beatniks and the rest should be the freest people in the world. Exactly the opposite is true.

We're free as birds and the beatnik is a slave. A slave. The bearded beatnik with his feet up in espresso coffee between his brown unscrubbed teeth.

He is a slave to the opinion of the beatnik crowd. He is a non-conformist, he says. And as a non-conformist, he is slavishly conforming to his non-conformity.

So my dear brother and sister, always remember the patterns shown us in the mount. The four Gospels, the book of Acts, the book of Romans, the Corinthian epistles, the Galatian epistles, Thessalonians, and all John and all the rest. These are the patterns shown us in the mount.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. And the man to whom God has come, and in whose heart God dwells, is a free man compared with the man who is trying to be free in his own right.

The murderer and the drunk and the dope-fiend and the suicide, they are free from the commandments of Christ, but they are slaves to the devil. But the Christian, according to Paul and according to Christian experience, gets free from the bondage of Satan and becomes a happy servant to Jesus Christ the Lord. You know, there are households where the servants are better off than a lot of householders.

And in the kingdom of God, the humblest servant that serves by the kitchen sink is a happier, freer man than the Lord of the man across the street if he's not a Christian. I'm not apologizing for being a Christian. Don't imagine that.

There was a day when I looked up to learned men and felt that they were so learned that if ever I'd ever find out what they knew, I couldn't believe the Bible at all. But I had an itch in my head to find out what that was they knew, that they were supposed to know, that was to invalidate what I believed. And so I did a little reading on my own, I read a book, and I find out that nobody knows enough, and I venture to say nobody can ever know enough to invalidate one word of the scriptures or to prove wrong one single sentence from the book of God.

Careful that you follow the pattern shown you in the mount, sir. You won't go wrong. If you listen to people, you'll go wrong.

Listen to the editors and the fellas who feel that they must amend the word of God and change the truth, modify it, you'll go wrong. You'll come under bondage to yourself, under bondage to the world and to the devil. But if you will go free, you will find that freedom lies in obedience to laws.

And so the Christian is free when he is obeying his Lord. He's the freest of all beings, unless it would be the angels above. The airplane that flies up yonder is obeying certain laws of aerodynamics, law of gravitation, and all kinds of laws.

Sometimes when I have nothing else to do, usually I ride on an airplane, but sometimes I read the literature that explains about the various engines and all the rest, and I find out that there isn't a single thing in all that great plane, not a thing, it's accidental. It's all put there in obedience to a law which God Almighty has given to the material world. And if the law is broken down, plunges the machine into the mountain below, or into the sea.

So it is with music. My friend Dave Lutzweiler, who's here from Chicago, our friend, staying as a house guest over the weekend, he is a little bit nutty on music, and we're alike on that. And so we've been enjoying listening to the great composers.

Beethoven, who is my favorite, and his, and Mozart, and a few of the others. Well, you know something? I don't know how to compose anything. I composed a hymn tune one time, nobody ever sang it.

But outside of that, I'm not a composer, but this much I'll tell you. That every sonata, every trio, or quartet, or symphony, every single page of the music of the masters are obedient to law. If you don't obey those laws, you've got nothing but junk.

Some of these modern composers give us a cacophonous welter of badly disjointed, hateful sounds. They won't obey laws. Jazz artists claim that what makes jazz is refusal to obey the laws of music.

They say, we just help ourselves. Sounds like it, all right. Sounds like it.

I expect fully, when I'm passing over, if God allows us to get that close to the belching fires of hell, on my way to heaven, I fully expect to hear a jazz combo down there, because it's that kind of music, that kind of music. But the great music, all is obedient to the laws of God. And you could transfer some of the great melodies from Beethoven's symphonies right to the throne of God and sing them there.

We sang one this morning, this dumb hymn book, excuse my expression, I don't mean the hymn book, I mean the editors. They call him Francis Haydn. Oh, that's Franz Joseph Haydn, that's Papa Haydn, that's one of the greatest of them all.

And we sang his hymn, his tune to the glorious things of thee are spoken. And you could, this crowd could rise in the grace of God to the right hand of the throne and sing glorious things of thee are spoken to Franz Joseph Haydn's tune and not be in any wise out of place. So I say, keeping of the laws of God to make us free, in the breaking of this make us slaves.

So it is with beauty, so it is with the stars that shine in the heaven above, and so it is with all of the world of God. If you obey the pattern shown in the mount, you'll be free and happy and completely at rest, and you'll be able to develop all of the hidden potentials that lie within your own nature, it's a common expression from the world. But if you refuse or if you fail or if you let the word of God lie while you read Pogo, I read Pogo too, but only after I read the word of God.

And Pogo is funny. But I also think there's nothing funny in the book of God. Here it is, this holy book.

God help us to love it and to live in it and to live by it and to eat it and to drink it and to lie down on it and to walk on it and stand on it and swear by it and live by it and rest in it. This is the book of God. See that thou do all things according to the pattern shown me in the mount.

Clean up your life, bring it around to the harmony of the word of God. If Moses had come and had found some of his workers and he said, what's that thing there? Well, he said, I don't know, I was just improvising. Well, he said, take that out and burn it.

Stay by the pattern shown me in the mount. And if Moses or any Paul or somebody were alive today and come to our average church, they'd find a great deal that's just improvising on the part of people who ought to know better. Let's obey God.

Let's do what we're told to do. Let's have faith and then let's be obedient. Let's believe what he tells us to believe, do what he tells us to do.

Let's not make the mistake of trying to believe what we should do and do what we should believe. There are things to do and there are things to believe. And the things that are to do are to be done, not believed.

And the things that are to be believed are to be believed. So let's believe what's to be believed and do what we're commanded to do and there'll be the two wings of the bird that take us up to God. Somebody asked the old saint, which is the more important, prayer or the reading of the word? He said, which is the more important to a bird, the right wing or the left? So which is the more important to a Christian, believing or obeying? I answer, which to the sparrow that flew to the housetop? Which little wing was the more important to him? Both are equally important.

So we must believe God's word and we must obey it. And by those two wings, a man will rise to God. Faith and humble obedience in his faith to the Lord himself.

So the truest Christian is the freest Christian. And I think I'll close there and say that the gospel of Jesus Christ sets slaves free. But you say, my experience with Christians hasn't taught me that they're the ideal people you've described this morning.

The reason is, very few Christians are prepared to go with God all the way. They go part of the way and then they be improvised. They follow the Lord until things look a little sticky and then they say, well, there's no use to get radical about this and be a fanatic.

I think I can reason this out myself. So they have a panel discussion and decide on what the Lord really should have said there. The result is, of course, confusion, lukewarmness, which God will spew out of his mouth.

Oh, let's come back to the book, will you? Or rather, let's go forward to the book, for we lag so far behind it. Here it is. Thank God for the book.

See that thou do all things after the pattern I've shown you in the mount. See that your faith conforms to my revelation. See that your footsteps walk in my path.

If you do that, I'll be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. And I'll look after you. And when hoary hair shall thy temples adorn like lambs, thou shalt still on my bosom be born.

Amen. Amen.

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