

His Immensity - Part 3

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon emphasizes that true fulfillment and happiness can only be found in God, not in material possessions or earthly relationships.

Duration: 22:49

Scripture: Psalm 46:10, Isaiah 64:1, Mark 8:36, Philippians 3:8, Colossians 3:3, Hebrews 4:9, Revelation 21:4

Topics: "Immensity"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the deep longing and emptiness that exists within every human soul. He emphasizes that even though people may have fame, success, and worldly pleasures, they still cry out for something more. The preacher suggests that this longing can only be satisfied by a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. He encourages the audience to seek God in silence and prayer, and to prioritize their spiritual well-being over worldly pursuits. The sermon concludes with a call to surrender the world and find true fulfillment in Jesus alone.

Transcript

So all things has its being in God, and I want you to think of God the Maker, God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. I want you to think of God the Lover, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. And I want you to think of God the Keeper.

And if you're a real Christian, now if you're not a real Christian, this doesn't, it doesn't apply to you. It doesn't apply to you if you're not a real Christian, if you've not been born anew and washed in the blood of the Lamb, and this doesn't apply to you, and there's no use in my trying to make it apply. But if you're a true Christian, this applies to you.

And so the little lady got another thought, and she said this. She said, if this is all true, and it is all true, then why be we not all of great ease of heart and soul? She said, why aren't Christians the happiest people in all the wide world? Why aren't re-Christians the most easeful people and the most restful people in all the wide world? Well, I'll tell you why. She said, because we seek to have rest in things that are so little.

This hazelnut, you see, brother, this little hazelnut into which is condensed all it is, that we try to find our pleasure in those little things. Now, I want to strip you down tonight a little bit and ask you a question or two. Think with me a little bit.

What is it that makes you happy? What is it that keeps you feeling good? What cheers you up and chucks you up your chin and gives your morale a lift? Is it your job? Is it the fact that you have good clothes? Is it that you're well married or that you have a fine position? Just what is it that keeps you, that you're taking your joy in? Well, that's our trouble, and that's why even though we know that the immensity of God is so vast that seen over against God, everything even out to the farthest interstellar space is just the size of a hazelnut. It's nothing at all but a grain of sand. And yet we're not a happy people because we multiply things.

We got our minds set on things. We multiply things, and we increase things, and we perfect things, and we beautify things, and we put our confidence in things and God. We have our job in God.

We have our husband in God. We have our strong body in God. We have our good job in God.

We have our home in God. We have our ambition for the future in God. And so we put God as a plus sign after something else.

For my brethren, all the great souls of the world, from David and Paul and Augustine and all the rest down to this present hour, every responsible writer who has ever been illuminated from the scriptures by the Holy Ghost has said the same thing. And whether he came from one school of Christian thought or another, as long as he was Orthodox, he said the same thing. And particularly if he was spiritual, he said the same thing, that our problem is that we are putting our confidence in things and not in God.

And this lady said, God showed me that all the things that are are only the size of a hazelnut. Why, therefore, should I put my confidence in a thing so little that God has to hold it together? Why should I trust things? We multiply, I say, and we increase, and still we're afraid and we're troubled and we're anxious and we're unsatisfied. And you know why? I'll tell you why.

Because all that is beneath God sufficeth not us. God made you in his image and you're stuck with it. God did not make the chimpanzee in his image.

He did not make that beautiful horse as he galloped across the field. He's a symphony in motion. God did not make him in his image.

God did not make that beautiful bird that the poet says sings darkly, and in shade he covered his tombs, his nocturnal note. God made him beautiful, but he didn't make him in his image. So God made only you in his image, and you're stuck with it, man.

Sinner man, lost man, Christian man, you're stuck with it. You're made in the image of God, and because you're made in the image of God, nothing short of God will satisfy you. And even if you happen to get saved on this nickel-in-the-slot and escape hell and take heaven, a modern idea of evangelism that Jesus came in order that we'd escape hell and go to heaven, that poor little kindergarten view of Christianity, even if you're that kind of believer, remember one thing, my brother, that even you will find somewhere down the years that you'll not be content with things plus God.

You'll have to have God minus all things. You'll have to come to a place in your life that you say, Don't you have things? You'll have a suit, as they say here. Richmond, brother, sure I have a suit.

And I have some pens here that I get kidded for carrying around. And what else do I have? God knows I don't have much, only a lot of boots. But I do have boots.

And a wife and some children and grandchildren and friends. I have all that. But just as sure as I set my hopes and my comfort upon things and people, I lose something out of my heart.

It dare not be things and God. It dare not be people and God. It must be God and nothing else.

And then whatever else God gives, we hold it iron's weight and we hold it dear for Jesus' sake and we love it for his sake. But it is not necessary to our happiness. If there's anything necessary to your eternal happiness but God, you're not yet the kind of Christian that you ought to be.

For only God is the very rest. I like that old expression very, as an adjective, very rest. Only God is the very rest.

So says the book of Hebrews. And that word very there is another form of the word verily. When Jesus, our Lord, wanted to say something that was so true that he wanted to underscore it, he said, verily, I say unto you, truly, truly, this I say, and only God is the true rest, the very rest.

You see, God takes great pleasure in having a helpless soul come to him simply and plainly and intimately. He takes pleasure in having us come to him. You know, this kind of Christianity doesn't draw a big crowd.

Nobody wants this except a few of those who have their hearts set on God and they want God more than they want anything else in the world. They want the spiritual experience that comes from knowing God for himself, that they could have everything stripped away from them and still have God. That kind of people, listen, they're not vastly numerous in any given locality.

So this kind of preaching doesn't draw vast numbers of people, but I'll tell you what it does do. It's likely to draw the hungriest ones and the thirstiest ones and some of the best ones. So God takes great pleasure, I say, in having helpless people come to him simply and plainly and intimately.

He wants us to come without all that great over-larding of theology. He wants us to come as simply and as plainly as a little child. And if the Holy Ghost touches us, we'll come like that.

Now, my brethren, I said last week that God had boundless enthusiasm. I repeat it now, that God is boundlessly enthusiastic. I'm glad somebody is, because I don't find very many Christians that are.

Or if they are, they're not enthusiastic for the things that matter. If they're going to have a movie, they can get all steamed up about that. If they're going to go on the moonlight cruise, they get all worked up over that.

But if you just say, Look, look, behold God, behold God, you can't get much enthusiasm these days. So I'm glad somebody's enthusiastic, and brother, God's enthusiastic. He's enthusiastic for himself in the persons of the Godhead.

The persons of the Godhead are infinitely delighted with each other. The Father is infinitely delighted with the Son, and the Son is infinitely delighted with the other two persons of the Godhead. He is delighted with his whole creation, I repeat, and especially for men made in his image.

Unbelief comes and throws a cloud over us and shuts off the light of God, and we don't believe what's actually here, that God is delighted, infinitely delighted with us. Here's a little prayer that was made, O God of thy goodness, give me thyself, for thou art enough to me, and I may ask nothing that is less, and find

any full honor to thee. God, give me thyself.

You know what a revival is, brother? We make out that a revival is everybody running around falling in everybody else's neck and saying, Forgive me for thinking a bad thought about me. Forgive me for that nickel that I forgot to pay back. Or we say a revival consists of people getting very loud and noisy.

Well, all that might happen in a revival, but let me tell you, the only kind of revival that will be here when the worlds are on fire is the kind of revival that begins by saying, O God, give me thyself, for nothing less than thee will do. For anything less than God, anything less than God, she says, ever me wanteth. I like that little expression.

I said, O God, if I get all this hazelnut, everything from the proton to the farthest, remotest heavenly body, up and down the scale, all the beautiful things of earth and sky and sea and all the diamonds of the mines and all the timber of the forest and all the charm of the landscape and all the riches of the cities, if I have it all and have not thee, ever me wanteth. Translated into modern English, O God, it won't be enough. It won't be enough.

You know deep down what's the matter with everybody? Nobody would say it, and the average person wouldn't believe it. And if he heard me quote these three words, he'd laugh in my face and say, What are you doing, teaching Chaucer? No, no, teaching theology, and then simply using some old phrases to get it home to him in a new way. Friends, the problem of the world is, everybody is saying and doesn't always say it, ever me wanteth.

You know, there's a little shrine inside of you, there's a shrine so far in that nobody can know that shrine but you. There is a penetralium, a deep, deep shrine, far eastward in Eden, and it lies in that great soul of yours, that soul that is bigger than the starry universe, and there's a shrine there and a garden and a throne. And no matter what you get, there'll be a cry from that shrine, ever me wanteth.

O God, I'm still hungry. God, I'm still hungry. Who are they that commit suicide? They're not the poor, they're the rich.

Who are they that commit suicide? They're not the simple unknown fellow on the street. They're movie actors and politicians and people that are widely known. Good men, everything, as the song had it, take the world and give me Jesus, and we can have all the world and have not Jesus.

And still there's a cry from deep within, ever me wanteth. And you know, I think this would be the world's greatest calamity. The greatest calamity for a human soul to be made in the image of God, and to be made with a spirit so big that it can contain the universe and cry for more, that it's bigger than the heavens and the heaven of heavens, and the emptiness of God, and go through the eternity to come crying, ever me wanteth.

O God, forever and forever, O God, I'm hungry, and I can't eat, and I'm thirsty and can't drink. Send Lazarus, that he might dip his finger in water and put it on my forehead, for I suffer in these flames. And I wonder if the flames of hell aren't kindled from deep in the shrine where dry and cracked and parched the soul of man cries, O God, ever me wanteth.

I've had everything. I've had religion, I've had physician, I've had money, I've had children, I've had wife or husband, I've had clothes, I've had a good home, I've had, I've had, I've had, but O God, this is a little hazelnut, it's nothing, and my heart cries, O God, I miss that which I wanted the most. You know, friends,

really down at the bottom, that's the problem.

That's the problem with Russia. That's the problem in Washington. That's the problem everywhere, ever, ever they want, because they can get everything.

You know the old story of Alexander who conquered the world and wept because there was not more world to conquer. Man has gone to the North Pole and to the South Pole and now turns his greedy eyes on the moon and on the planets. Have and get and get and have.

The richest nation in the world is America. We've got the most. We think we're in a recession, and still cars are coming out longer and bigger and looking more like jukeboxes than ever, and there's still more money and more bank accounts.

I heard of a fellow whose deductions began to catch up and did finally catch up with his salary, but mostly it's not so. After they've taken off everything that they want to take off and can think of, still the average fellow has more money than he used to. Back when I was a young fellow, a man used to raise ten kids on a dollar a day and do a good job.

Now we've got everything, absolutely everything, and yet what country in the world is the most troubled, had more breakdowns, more insanity, more murders, more triangles, more bug houses, and more hostilities, and more psychiatrists, more couches? Here in America, it's rather a cynical thought, an ironic thought, that the richest nation in the world manages to have the most divorces, the most suicides, the most juvenile delinquencies, proving again that no matter how much you give a man, if he misses God, he cries every word he wanted and goes out to do some crime. And if you give him everything and then add God to it, you have wronged him, and he's wronged his own soul. For God wants to be first and wants to be all.

Money won't do it. If you take the kingdom of God and his righteousness, God will add money to you, as much as you need. If you take the kingdom of God and his righteousness, God may send your way learning and art and music and legitimate earthly loves.

God may send it all to you and let you have it, but always with the understanding that if you can take it away again and you won't crumble, you still have God. God is all, and now I close. Isaiah wrote, "...thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself.

For the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." And the silkweaver of Germany wrote a kind of wild paraphrase on this, running like this, O past and gone, how great is God, how small am I, a molten, illimitable sky, amidst a glory deep and wide and high of heaven's unclouded sun. There to forget myself forevermore, lost, swallowed up in love's immensity, the sea that knows no sounding and no shore. God over there, not I, more near than I unto myself can be art thou to me, so have I lost myself in finding thee.

The boundless heaven of thine eternal love around me and beneath me and above, in glory of that golden day where the former things are passed away, I, past and gone. We've almost lost the scope, he says, of the song of Solomon. We've almost lost our ability to kneel barefooted before such a burning bush as this.

When the Church has restored to her again the kind of spirit that can understand what Isaiah meant and what Ter Stegen meant when he paraphrased Isaiah, then we will have revival. Then we'll have the kind of revival the Quakers had. Then we'll have the kind of revival the Methodists had.

Then we'll have what they had at Pentecost. Then we'll have what the Quakers had. Then we'll have what the Saints have had down the centuries.

Wherever the fire glowed until the ages turned, that's what they had. So have I lost myself in finding thee, have lost myself forever, O thou Son, the boundless heaven of thine eternal love around me and beneath me and above. This is God.

Now, brethren, let's remember the text again, hid with Christ in God. And if you gain the whole world and find not God in your own soul, what is it? It's worth nothing to you. Then these days let's search, let's go home to pray, let's get still, let's get quiet, let's learn the wonder of silence, let's learn the beauty of the secret seeking after God.

With our Bible before us open and our knees bent, and all alone in humility and penitence, let us cry, Only God, only God, in God alone, take the world but give me Jesus. Will you do that? We need it in this church. You need it.

We all need it. May God grant it. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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