

Holiness and Worship First

by A.W. Tozer

The primary work of the Holy Spirit is to restore the lost soul to intimate fellowship with God, and holiness and spiritual worship come first.

Scripture: Titus 3:5

Topics: "Holiness", "Worship"

Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes that the primary purpose of the Holy Spirit is to restore believers to a close relationship with God through holiness and worship, rather than merely empowering them for service. He argues that while power for service is important, it should not overshadow the need for genuine worship and moral integrity. Tozer laments the modern church's focus on activity and growth at the expense of cultivating a hunger for holiness. He reminds us that God desires worshipers first, and that true service flows from a heart aligned with God's holiness. The sermon calls for a return to prioritizing spiritual worship over mere works.

Transcript

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,...that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. --Titus 3:5-7

To teach that the filling with the Holy Spirit is given to the Christian to provide "power for service" is to teach truth, but not the whole truth. Power for service is but one effect of the experience, and I do not hesitate to say that it is the least of several effects. It is least for the very reason that it touches service, presumably service to mankind; and contrary to the popular belief, "to serve this present age" is not the Christian's first duty nor the chief end of man....

The primary work of the Holy Spirit is to restore the lost soul to intimate fellowship with God through the washing of regeneration.... God wants worshipers before workers; indeed the only acceptable workers are those who have learned the lost art of worship. It is inconceivable that a sovereign and holy God should be so hard up for workers that He would press into service anyone who had been empowered regardless of his moral qualifications. The very stones would praise Him if the need arose and a thousand legions of angels would leap to do His will.

Gifts and power for service the Spirit surely desires to impart; but holiness and spiritual worship come first. That Incredible Christian, 36-37.

"Oh, Lord, where has the hunger for holiness gone? We're such active doers; we're so enamored of activity; we're so focused on growth. We desperately need this reminder of the priority of holiness and spiritual worship. Amen."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/holiness-and-worship-first/>

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