

How to Cultivate the Holy Spirit's Presence

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer emphasizes the necessity of total commitment to God in cultivating the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives.

Duration: 43:01

Scripture: Psalm 1:2, Matthew 5:48, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:49, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:12, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Topics: "Relationship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker criticizes a pastor who prioritizes watching a televised fight over a missionary convention. He emphasizes the importance of hungering for God and having a genuine relationship with Christ, rather than viewing Christianity as merely a social opportunity or insurance against hell. The speaker shares a conversation with a missionary who expresses the need for revival in their alliance. The sermon concludes with a call to examine our actions and determine if they hinder our relationship with God, urging listeners to repent and seek the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Transcript

Now, uh, most people, I think, even God's people, would like to have the power of the Spirit and the peace of the Spirit and a lot of other qualities and gifts and benefits the Spirit may bring. But now the question is, can we afford to walk with the Spirit? Are we going to walk with him? And the answer is that we can't walk with him until and unless we're agreed. And if we're not agreed, then we can't walk with him at all.

Now, taking it out of the realm of the spiritual for just a little bit, and thinking about it, just two people, and that's what is meant here, and two people walk together, except they be agreed, that takes us back to the old days when men made long journeys on foot. One man said, I'm going to a certain town, and the other one said, I am too. When are you going? I'm going tomorrow.

And then the question was, would they go together, or would each one take out by himself? Now, if they were going to go together and walk together on the way as the disciples of Emmaus, there were a few things they were going to have to agree upon. One is their direction, and the other is their destination. Of course, you're going to such a town, and yes, well, I am not.

So they'd have to shake hands, in part because two men cannot walk together when one is going to one city and the other to another. At least they can't for very long. And then they would have to agree on which path to take.

If there were several paths, and there usually are, they would have to agree on the rate of speed. If one man said, I'm a very fast walker, and the other man said, I just slump along, I hardly make it at all, they'd say, well, there's no use for us to walk together because I'm so slow that I will bore you. The other man would say, no, it's not that.

I'm so fast that I will trouble you. So they wouldn't go together. And then they would have to agree they wanted to walk together.

Did they want to walk together? There have been a lot of people that if I were going to walk from here to Hamilton, I'd just as soon walk by myself. You know, you've had that experience, haven't you? You know, you love them all right and you pray for them, but you don't find them what you would call edifying companions. You'd have to decide whether you want to walk together or not.

Whether it's to the advantage and to the least disadvantage of both parties concerned, whether there is an incompatibility that might render the trip unpleasant. Now, to sum it all up then, for two to walk together voluntarily, they must in some sense be one. They must agree on the things that matter if they are going to walk together.

Now, that bears upon the subject that I want to talk about tonight, and you will quickly see how it bears. How to cultivate the spirit companionship, how to walk with the Holy Ghost. Now, some people are just not ready to hear what I have to say, and of that I'm convinced.

Some are not willing to give up all to obtain all. They are not willing to turn toward God and walk with him. They are facing both ways.

The great many Christians, even gospel Christians, are facing two directions at once, and they are not willing to go along one way. They want some of the world and some of Christ. They allow the Lord to disturb their way, but they also disturb the Lord's way.

And they don't get together on this, and there's just no use of our talking about being filled with the Spirit and walking in the Spirit unless we are willing to give up all to obtain all. And then there are Christians, and a lot of them in our gospel churches, that want Christianity for its insurance value. That is, they want the care and protection that God gives them now, and they want avoidance of hell in time of death, and they want the guarantee of heaven at last.

And it is to get this they are willing to support the Church and missions and other religious projects financially. And I want to ask you, who wouldn't be willing to pay his insurance if he knew that it would help him in the hospital if he got sick or got in an accident, it would pay his widow a lot of money if he died? Who wouldn't be willing to pay and support that kind of insurance? And Christianity to some people is simply there for its insurance value. They want its protection and what it has to offer and guarantee of heaven at last.

Now, I say they are willing to support it, and they are willing even to abstain from certain gross replaces. I don't think you'll have much difficulty getting the average man to quit gambling if he's been a gambler. I don't think you'll have much trouble in getting the average man separated from a lot of the fleshly things, because there are a lot of sinners that don't do certain sins.

My father used tobacco, both smoking and chewing, for, I guess, 50 years. One day he looked at the stuff and had a sudden revulsion of feelings. He said, what a dirty mess that is after all.

He turned his back on it and never touched it again until he died. He wasn't converted for many years after that. Between the time he gave it up and the time he was converted, a period of perhaps 8 to 10 years, he just didn't like this stuff anymore.

Not every sinner is dirty, not every sinner is a rascal, not every sinner cheats on his wife, and not every sinner refused to pay his debts. There are honorable men and good men and honest men and men that will tell the truth if it hurts, right out in the world, that have no hope of eternal life or of heaven to come, that are not followers of the Lord, they are just decent people. The idea that everybody is a wicked rascal and a scoundrel is all wrong.

I have known some of the finest men who are not Christians. I know a man in Chicago who is so good that everybody wants to make a Christian out of him, but he steadfastly refuses and says, I am not a Christian. I am not a Christian.

But he is so good that he puts to shame a lot of Christians. He doesn't claim that he is winning his way to heaven. It's not a question of the old morality that the evangelists talk about.

He doesn't believe in that. He just knows he is lost, but he is also a man of incorruptible character, he is a good man. And of course a lot of Christians are willing to give up the grosser things and live in a reasonably decent way.

For some people who aren't ready for this message tonight, their conception of religion is social and not spiritual. That is, they water down the strong wine of the New Testament until it has no tang in it anymore. Then they water it down with their easygoing opinions.

They are very broad-minded, they imagine, but the fact is they are so broad-minded they can't walk on the narrow way. And a lot of Christians now are more influenced by Hollywood than they are Jerusalem. That's just as sure as you live.

That is, their spirit, their mood is more like Hollywood than it is like Jerusalem. If you were to set them down in Jerusalem, they would wander around even in the days of Christ. They wouldn't feel at home, but take them out in that nest of iniquity in California and they would say, I wonder who she is, I wonder if she is one of the stars.

They'd be quite at home there, because their mood, the texture of their mind has been created for them by twentieth-century entertainment and not by the things of God. So they are very broad-minded, they imagine, but the fact is they are so broad-minded they can't walk on the narrow way anymore. They are very broad-minded, they imagine, but the fact is they are so broad-minded they can't walk on the narrow way anymore.

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