

# (John - Part 32): If Any Man Will Do His Will, He Shall Know

by A.W. Tozer

---

*A.W. Tozer's sermon emphasizes the necessity of spiritual illumination for true understanding and acceptance of God's truth beyond mere intellectual acknowledgment.*

**Duration:** 48:18

**Scripture:** Matthew 11:25

**Topics:** "Expositional"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of complete self-renunciation and obedience to God's will in order to truly know and understand the truth. He warns against merely acquiring knowledge about the Bible without allowing it to transform one's heart and actions. The preacher highlights the need for repentance, tearing oneself away from their own will and turning towards doing the will of Jesus Christ. He also criticizes a shallow understanding of truth that focuses solely on doctrinal beliefs and rituals, and calls for a revival of spiritual life in America.

---

## Transcript

About the midst of the sea, Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.

Now that verse 17, of course, is the key verse here. And the grammatical position of the word will, fifth word from the end or fourth word from the end, if any man will, not quite accurate in the King James Version, I think every other translation as well as all commentators and Bible teachers will explain. But what our Lord said here was, if any man is willing to do God's will, he shall know.

Now I want to speak on that tonight. Sometimes people may ask the question, What do they teach at the Alliance Church that's different from what they teach in any fundamental church? And the answer can be given very clearly tonight. What we teach and what we believe to be the Bible, not different from what others teach, but will lay an emphasis where many do not.

It will transpire as I go along. Now when our Lord had been up there teaching, they marveled at him, these Jews, and they said, How does this man know letters, having never learned? How does he know learning? Margin has it, having never learned. Apparently our Lord, or at least they thought he had never been at school, never had studied in the regular schools.

If they had in the regular schools, I think the schools in those days mostly consisted of a rabbi coming and teaching, having little groups that gathered rather than schools as we know them now. Our Lord evidently had never attended that kind of rabbinical school. So they said, How does he get his wonderful doctor, seeing that he had never been to the schools of the rabbis? Now this tells us a good deal about them.

It tells us, for instance, that they held truth to be intellectual merely. They held truth, and you can spell it with capital letters if you please, they held truth to be intellectual merely, capable of being reduced to a code. And then to know truth was, therefore, it was only necessary that they learn to read the code, that they learn it.

And they learned it by memorizing it, reading out loud and memorizing it. Some of them had no books of their own, most of them had no books of their own, they memorized it in school and had it in their memory. And that was their conception of truth.

Apparently, not only do I gather that from this verse, but I gather it from the whole book of John, that their thought about truth was that it was an intellectual thing, just as we know this is true, two times two makes four, that's true, but it's an intellectual truth. It's the truth of the mind. All you have to do is learn the multiplication table up to two times two, and you've got that.

And they had reduced divine truth to that space. Now, to them there was no mysterious depths in truth, no nothing beneath and nothing beyond, two times two made four, nothing beyond and nothing beneath. And it was just exactly here where they parted company with our Savior.

For our Lord Jesus constantly taught the beyond and the beneath. And they saw no beyond and they saw no beneath. They only saw the two times two made four.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt remember this Sabbath day, keep it holy. Thou shalt, thou shalt not, thou shalt.

And then all the rabbis had over-larded this with commentaries. And they were all built upon the idea, I wonder if I should say all, I know that there was a noble group within the larger group that were on the side of the Lord, and they might have not been in this group that I am reducing by generality to the enemies of Christ. There were some that were not his enemies.

Now, remember this, that these believed, evidently here, that the words of truth are the truth. Now, my brethren, here is a basic mistake in Christian theology. And it is not simply splitting hairs, no, no.

If it were splitting hairs, I wouldn't bother. But it is, because it has a moral and spiritual consequence, it is vastly important. They believed that the word of truth was truth.

That if you had the word of truth, you had the truth. If you could repeat the code of truth, you had the truth. That if you were living by the word of truth, you were living in the truth.

And this was exactly where they parted company with our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, our Lord Jesus tried to correct this inadequate view. For it is partly correct, but it isn't fully correct.

And he showed the heavenly quality of his message. And showed that he was simply a transparent medium through which God spoke. He said, my doctrine is not mine.

I am not a rabbi teaching doctrine that you could memorize and repeat. What I am giving you is not that kind of doctrine at all. He said previously, I say nothing for myself.

What I see the Father do, that I do. And what the Father speaks, that I speak. And what I have seen yonder, I tell you about.

I'm a transparent medium through which the truth is being spoken. And you believe that the way to truth is to go to a rabbi and learn it. But he said, that's not the truth.

Because that approach to truth is an inadequate approach to truth. And here, it seems to me, is where the weakness lies in modern Christianity. Now, I'm going to tell you something here, my brethren.

And almost the same thing, incidentally, although not the same, but almost the same, in essence, will appear in Moody Monthly for January issue. So you'll see I'm not too heretical and too far from the track on this. But nobody else says it, and I wonder why it's not being said.

And it's amazing that anybody's saying it, I guess, in this day. But here it is, that the battle line today, the warfare today, is not necessarily between the fundamentalist and the liberal. Now, there is a difference, of course.

The fundamentalist says, God made the heaven and the earth. The liberal says, well, that's a poetic way of stating it. Actually, it came up by evolution.

The fundamentalist says, Jesus Christ was the very Son of God. The liberal says, well, he certainly was a wonderful man, and he's the master, but I don't quite know about his deity. And there's a division between them.

But I don't think the warfare is there anymore. The battle has shifted from that field to another field, now more important. I went some years ago to Gettysburg with some preacher friends, and we walked around, drove around over Gettysburg.

And we saw the plaques and explanations given there, and we fought again the old Battle of Gettysburg via reading plaques and notices, telling us what had happened there. But nobody had died in Gettysburg for a very long, long time. The battle had come there and been fought and moved on and ended.

And the Battle of Gettysburg was now a historic fact, something in history, but there was no fighting there. I heard no boom of cannons. I saw no dead soldiers.

I heard no clashing swords. I heard no scream of dying horses. I saw no fight.

I only saw where the fight had been. Now, there are those who are still waving their bloody swords over their head with the bloodies dried on it. There's no fresh blood between liberalism and fundamentalism.

It's been settled. Those that are liberals are liberals, and those that are fundamentalists, they know what they believe and we stand. And the fight isn't there, but here's where the fight is, ladies and gentlemen.

The warfare, the dividing line, is between evangelical rationalists and evangelical mystics. Now, I'll explain what I mean. There is an evangelical rationalism which these Jews had.

They said the truth is in the word, and if you want to know truth, go to a rabbi and learn the word. And if you get the word, you've got the truth. That's evangelical rationalism, and we have that today in fundamental circles as big as my grandmother would say, as big as a sheep.

I don't know why that girl would use that figure, but she'd say, devil's in that fellow, big as a sheep. And we have that among us, big as a sheep. The doctrine, if you'll learn the text, you've got the truth.

Now, that's evangelical rationalism. And ladies and gentlemen, it will kill the truth of Christianity just as quick as liberalism will. And it will do it in a more subtle and deadly way.

For the liberal stands over there and laughs and says, I don't believe your inspired Bible, I don't believe your deified tract, I believe the Bible in a way, it's the record of the high moments of great men, and I believe in a certain mystic communion with the universe, and it's all very wonderful, but I don't believe as you people believe. You can spot him, you see, train your glasses on him and there he stands. He's got his uniform on, you can tell he's on the other side because he's got the other uniform on.

But your evangelical rationalist wears our uniform, and he comes right in wearing our uniform and says what the Pharisees, the worst enemies Jesus had while he was on earth. They say, well, truth is truth. And if you believe the truth, well, you've got it.

And they see no beyond, they see no mystic depths, no mysterious heights, nothing supernatural or divine. They see only that I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and Jesus Christ is only Son, our Lord, and we've got the text and the code and the creed, and that's the truth. And we pass that truth on to others, and they pass it on to others, and we build Bible schools to teach that truth, and we have denominations dedicated to that truth, and the result is that we die spiritually.

And we're dying spiritually. I know there's an awful lot of talk about revival. I understand America's having a revival that's sweeping us from coast to coast.

The reason I know it is I read the British news, the British papers, they say so. But they're not over here. I haven't seen it anywhere, and I don't think you have, and I don't know anybody, and I never discovered anybody that did.

I know there are big evangelistic meetings, but the very brethren who are running those big meetings will be the first ones to say, these are not revivals, these are simply evangelism on a big scale. Now, what about the evangelical mystic? I don't like the word mystic because you always think of a fellow with long hair and a little goatee and acts dream and strange, and maybe that isn't a good word at all. But I mean the spiritual side of things, that the truth is more than the text.

There is something living in there that you've got to get through to. The truth is more than the code. There's a heart beating in the middle of the code, and you've got to get there.

Now, the question is simply this. Is the body of Christian truth enough, or does truth have a soul as well as a body? The evangelical rationalist says all that talk about the soul of truth is poetic nonsense. The body of truth is all you need.

If you believe the body of truth, you're on your way to heaven, and you can't backslide, and you'll be all right, and everything will be over, and you'll get a crown in the last day. Now, otherwise stated, is revelation enough, or must there be illumination too? Wars have been fought over this Bible. I don't mean wars, literal wars.

I mean verbal wars have been fought over this Bible. Is this Bible an inspired book? Is it a revealed book or not? And, of course, you and I believe that it is a revelation, that God spake all these words, and that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And I, for one, believe that this Bible is a living book, that God has put it here, and that we dare not add to it nor take away from it.

It is revelation. But now the question is not any more, is this revelation? But the question is, is revelation enough, or must there be illumination? And the evangelical rationalist says revelation is enough. And this church says, and I say, and there's a growing number of people on the North American continent that say it in unison with me, revelation is not enough! There must be illumination within the soul before revelation can get to your soul.

It isn't enough that I hold an inspired book in my hand, I must have an inspired heart! And there's the difference. There has come into our movement a man, I'll not name him now, we hope to have him here. There's a man in our movement who was with another society, that is, with a great missionary, a well-known missionary society.

And he was down in the South, and got there with the group that believe that, the rationalists who believe that the truth is enough, the code is enough. You come and say, I believe in Christ, join the church, and you're in. And God Almighty met him and came down on him with floods of glory, and the wings of love blinked over his soul as they did over Phineas and David.

He made a trip over to the city of Chicago and came to my study. And he told her, I've been invited out of my society. I've been attacked by men whose only argument, only accusation, was that I believe in the miraculous divine element of grace.

I believe not only in grace as being here in the book, I believe that grace must get into the heart. I believe that the new birth is a miraculous act of God within the soul. He said, they attacked me on that and told me that was heresy, for me to get out.

Who attacked him and who threw him out? Fundamentally said it. My brethren, evangelicals did. The evangelical rationalists that says, if you but believe, everything is all right.

And they did it in that day. They said, how about this man here? He never sat at a rabbi's feet, and he hasn't memorized the text, and he doesn't have the truth. And he said, you don't understand.

He said, I speak from my father. There is a level of truth you don't know about. The doctrine above yonder God's given me, and I'm a transparent medium through which that doctrine shines.

And said, in effect, there is a throbbing soul of truth as well as a body of truth. You can memorize all the Bible, and I believe in memorizing it. I don't memorize it, and I believe in it.

But you can memorize all the text of the scripture, and when you're through, you've got nothing but the body. There is a soul of truth as well as a body. There is a divine inward illumination the Holy Ghost must give us, or we don't know what it means.

And there's the difference. You say, what's the difference between the Alliance Church and the average fundamentalist? There is one of the differences. The difference, we believe, in conversion is a miraculous act of God by the Holy Ghost.

And we believe that there must be something wrought in the Spirit, that the body of truth is not enough, that there must be illumination, that an inspired revelation is not enough, that there must be an inward illumination. Christ's conflict with the theological rationalists reveals itself in the Sermon on the Mount and the whole book of John, just as the book of Colossians is a long argument against the Manichaeans and the book of Galatians is a long argument against Jewish legalists, so the book of John is a long, inspired and passionately outpoured book trying to save us from evangelical rationalism, the doctrine that says the text is enough. Textualism, ladies and gentlemen, is as deadly as liberalism.

Mere textualism. Revelation, I repeat, can't save us. Revelation is the ground upon which we stand.

Revelation tells us what to believe. It's the book of God, and I stand for it with all my heart. But there must be, before I can be saved, there must be illumination, there must be penitence, there must be renewal, there must be inward deliverance, or we're not saved.

I have no doubt in my mind that many people are eased into the kingdom so-called that never get into the kingdom at all. They are docketed into believing in the text, and they do. But they have never been illuminated by the Holy Ghost.

They've never been renewed inside their hearts. They've never been renewed. Now, there's a secret in divine truth that is altogether hidden from the unprepared soul.

This is where we stand in the terrible day in which we live. Christianity is something you reach up and grab, but there is a preparation of the soul before a man can believe in Christ savingly. There's a preparation of the heart that our fathers talked about.

There's a preparation of the mind, a preparation of the life, and a preparation of the inner man before we can savingly believe in Jesus Christ. But somebody says, is it possible, Mr. Tozer, to hear the truth and not understand the truth? Listen, Isaiah 6, 9. Hear ye indeed, but understand not. See ye indeed, but perceive not.

Isaiah 6 says that it's possible to hear and not understand. It's possible to see and not perceive. 1 Corinthians 2, let me read some here to you.

You'll excuse my doing it. I know nobody ever likes to hear anybody read passages. But let me read this to you, what the good old King James Version says.

Paul is writing, it says, My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, in order that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Now, the way the theological rationalist understands that is this. He says that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the word of God.

Paul didn't say that at all. He didn't say that your faith should stand in the word of God. He said your faith should stand in the power of God.

It's quite a different thing. Albeit, he said, we speak wisdom, but I'll skip that now. Go down to this one.

Verse 9, But as it is written, I hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of a man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man that is in him? And in his like manner the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for their foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned. There we have the man of God saying, I came preaching and I preached with power that would illuminate and get to the conscience and to the spirit and change the inner man in order that your faith might stand in the power of God.

My brethren, your faith can stand in the text and you can be as dead as the proverbial doornail. But when the power of God moves in on the text and God sets the sacrifice on fire, then you have Christianity. Then we call that revival.

Not revival at all, it is simply New Testament Christianity. It's what it ought to have been in the first place and wasn't. My brethren, let's remember it, that there is grave danger in the terrible day in which we live, that our faith should stand in the text, that we should believe in belief in place of believing in the truth.

Now let us look at Matthew 11. See what he says here, familiar to us all? At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father. Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. So there we have the doctrine taught plainly that there is not only a body of truth which we must hold at our peril, there is a soul in that body which we must get through to.

And if we don't get through to the soul of truth, we have only a dead body on our hands. The Church can go on holding the creed and the truth for years and generations and grow old and die, and new ones come up and receive that same code and gold and die. And then some revivalist comes in and fires his guns and gets everybody stirred, and prayer moves God down on the scene, and revival comes to that Church, and people that had only thought they were saved get saved.

And people who were only believing in a code now believe in a Christ, and they say that's a revival. That's simply a coming in of New Testament Christianity. That's what it should have been in the first place.

And it's not any deluxe edition of Christianity. It is not any highly spiced up and beautified kind of Christianity, because that is Christianity, brethren. That is Christianity.

And a man will go along in the Church and believe the text and quote them and memorize them and teach them and maybe become a deacon and get on the board and all the rest. Then one day under the fiery preaching of some passing man or maybe the pastor, he'll suddenly feel himself terribly in need of God, and he'll forget all of his past history and go to his knees and begin to pour out his soul like David in

confession and will leap to his feet and get up and testify, I've been a deacon in this Church 26 years and I never was born again till tonight. That happens.

That happens, gentlemen. What happened there? Only this happened. That man had been trusting the dead body of truth and he had forgotten that truth had a soul.

Then some evangelist or some inspired creature let him know or maybe God taught him in secret that truth had a soul as well as a body and he dared to get through and push through but penitence and obedience and right living and right doing until God honored his faith and flashed the light on. And like a lightning flash out of heaven it leaped in on his soul. Down from God's heaven above it leaped to his spirit and all the text he'd memorized now came alive.

Thank God he did memorize them and all the truth he knew suddenly now bloomed into life. That's why I believe we ought to memorize. That's why I believe we ought to get to know the Word.

That's why I believe we ought to fill our minds with the psalms and the great hymns of the Church. It won't mean anything to us until the Holy Ghost has come but when he has come then he'll have fuel. The fire without the fuel won't burn but the fuel without the fire is dead.

And the Holy Ghost will not come on a church where there is no biblical fuel. There must be Bible teaching. We must know the text.

We must have the body of truth here. The Holy Ghost never comes into a vacuum. But where the Word of God is and we have the fuel then the fire falls and burns up the sacrifice.

Well, let us go on. Jesus said, and here really is the text, Jesus said, If any man is willing to do my will he shall know he shall know the doctrine, he shall know the teaching. Now, this body of truth can be grasped by the average normal intellect.

All you have to have is a reasonably good IQ. You know, anywhere up around the 80s. And you'll get the truth all right.

You can even stand up before the presbytery or the baptistry. But anyhow, you can come before the examining board and pass all examinations and become a pastor. I won't go into that.

But you can grasp truth. But brethren, only the enlightened soul will ever know the truth. And only the prepared soul will ever be enlightened.

And what is the preparation? Jesus said, If any man is willing to do my will, the light will flash in on him. If any man will obey me, God will enlighten his soul immediately. But we make Jesus Christ a convenience.

We make him a lifeboat to get us to shore, and then we kiss him goodbye. We make Jesus Christ a convenience, a doctor to help us when we're sick. A guide to find us when we're lost.

We make Jesus Christ a convenience, a doctor to help us when we're sick. A guide to find us when we're lost. And we reduce him simply to a big friend that helps us when we're in trouble.

Oh, that's not Christianity. That's not historic Christianity. That's not biblical Christianity.

Jesus Christ is Lord. And if any man is willing to do his will, the truth flashes in on the man. You haven't been willing to do God's will up to now.

Now tonight you say, I'm willing to do the will of the Lord, if I die for it. All right. Illumination will start in your heart.

That's repentance, my brethren. Repentance is when I have been doing my own will, and I decide to do the will of God, and I tear myself loose from my own will as a vine. It'll rip loose from the wall.

And I turn myself around to do the will of Jesus Christ. And then as I do begin to do the will of Jesus Christ, the light begins to come in. And instead of it being in my head here and now, it gets down into my spirit.

Even so, Father, for so it seems good in thy sight. No man can know the Son except the Father tell him, and no man can know the Father except the Son reveal him. I can know about God.

That's the body of truth. But I can't know God, which is the soul of truth, unless I am ready to be obedient. Somebody called me on the phone.

I get an awful lot of phone calls asking me where texts are and so on. And I got a phone call from some office here in the city, some evangelical office, and said, I'm about to deliver a talk on discipleship. Have you got any books on discipleship? And I combed through my mind, and I said, I'm sorry to tell you, sir, that I do not have a book on discipleship.

I preached on it, and the theme of Keswick was discipleship. But I said, I don't have any book on discipleship. What is discipleship? It is obeying Jesus Christ, and learning of him, and following him, and doing what he tells you to do, keeping his commandments, and carrying out his will.

That's discipleship. And that kind of person is a Christian, and no other kind are, or is. But that's why we're in the terrible rut we're in, to find out the condition the church is in.

Don't find out whether it's fundamentalist or not. Find out whether it's an evangelical, rationalistic church that says the text is enough, or whether it is a church that says the text plus the Holy Ghost is enough. And this church believes that before the word of God can mean anything inside of me, there must be obedience to the word.

Truth will not give itself to a rebel. Truth will not impart light to a man who will not obey the light. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, what? We have fellowship one with another, and what? The blood of Jesus Christ, what? Cleanseth him from all sin.

For us, from all sin. So there's a walking in the light, there's obeying the word of God. If you're just obeying Jesus Christ, you can't expect to be enlightened.

You can stand on a text and go down and maybe perish. But oh, there's an illumination. I know what Charles Wesley meant when he wrote, The Spirit with answers to the blood and tells me I am born of God.

Don't you? I know it. Then I didn't have to have anybody come around and tell me. Nobody had to come.

The person that has to be told he's saved, a year later somebody may tell him he isn't saved. What kind of a miserable business is that? No, sir. You can know you're saved.

Hath the witness in himself. That's in the text too. That's in the Bible.

Hath the witness in himself. Hath the witness of the man who is obeying. He shall know.

He shall know. And Christians like that, you can't do anything with them. They're the stubbornest people in the world, that kind of Christians.

They're just, they're nice about it, but they're as stubborn as a thousand mules. They know. You ever have the experience of seeing something happen and then going telling it and being laughed at and kidded and pushed around and one fella tell the other fella that he said that and then they'd all laugh and they thought you'd been dreaming or taken too many aspirins or that you'd been partly asleep, accuse you maybe of having your milk spiked, kidding you around.

They didn't believe it, but you'd seen it! And what you'd seen and heard and felt and touched you knew was true. I was talking about an airplane one time many years ago over in a factory over in Akron, Ohio, many years back. And there was a hillbilly from West Virginia there.

And he heard that fella talking about airplanes and he said, you can't fool me, there ain't no such thing. He hadn't seen one and he didn't believe that airplanes were. But I'd seen them, I knew they were.

And once you have seen something, once you've experienced it, all the arguing in the world can't change your mind. He that is willing to do my will, he shall have a revelation to his own heart, he shall have an inward illumination that will tell him and nobody can change his mind or argue him out of. If a sinner goes to the altar and you send a worker around with a marked New Testament to argue him into the kingdom, two blocks down the devil won't meet him in arguing back out again.

But if he has an inward illumination and he knows it's true because the Spirit answers to the blood and he has the witness within, he can't argue with that fellow, he knows. And he's stubborn about it. You can bring this argument in, you can bring that argument in, but he's a fellow that I've told this good many times, but in the hope that somebody here didn't hear it.

About a happy Christian brother that worked in an office or a factory somewhere and somebody knew his spiritual condition, and he said, Now there's a fellow going to argue against your position down here, he's going to lecture, and he's going to lecture proving you wrong. I said, Will you go and hear him? And the Christian said, Sure, I'll go hear him. So he went and sat through the lecture, it was powerful, and buttressed by every kind of argument.

And when they were on the way out, the fellow grinned at this happy Christian and said, Now what do you think? Well, he said, The trouble is I heard this lecture 25 years too late. He said, 25 years ago God did for me what this fellow says can't be done. You can't argue a man like that out, he knows.

He's not bigoted or arrogant, he's just happy, he knows. The Spirit answers to the blood. And that's revival, ladies and gentlemen.

But yet it's not revival either, it's normal Christianity. It's the thing that should be, that's the way we should be. But the text is, If any man is willing to do my will, he shall know.

But you say, I'm going to take a course at Moody's. I can't attend days, so I'm going to take a course by mail. Listen, all the time you're holding out on God.

All the time you're refusing to follow Jesus. All the time you're hanging up on some point, something he told you to do and you won't do. And then you're going to take a course and learn all about synthesis and analysis and all the rest.

You might just as well read Pogo, for all the courses in the world won't illuminate you inside. You can fill your head full of knowledge. I'll lend you my Ellicott's new commentary, a wonderful thing.

And you can get all the information about the Bible all over the world. But it will be up here. But the day that you decide you're going to obey God, it will get down here.

And you shall know the doctrine, you shall know. You will understand perfectly then. That is it, brethren.

And this thing is so important that I don't think too much can be said about it. Complete self-renunciation. If any man is willing to do my will.

Only the servants of truth can ever know truth. Only those who obey can ever have the inward change. Only the true disciples of Christ can ever know Christ.

I stand on the outside and I can know all about it. I'm reading a book now called The Perennial Philosophy. It is a book about the inner life, the inner spiritual life by a man who is not a Christian at all.

He has an amazing penetration. He's sharply intellectual. He's a keen Englishman.

And he stands outside and examines spiritual people from the outside. But nothing ever reached him. You can do that.

And there comes a day when we're ready to obey him. Ready to renounce our own will and obey our God. And then in that day we shall know the truth and the truth shall make us free.

We shall pass through the outer shell of truth into the inner core of truth. And suddenly these things will come alive in us and come awake. And it will be springtime in our spirits.

Now remember this. You can't argue around this. You can read your Bible.

You can read any version you want to. I don't care what version. Any version you want to.

And if you're honest, you'll have to admit it's either obedience or inward blindness. You can repeat the book of Romans word for word and be blind inwardly. You can quote the whole book of Psalms and be blind inwardly.

You can know the doctrine of justification by faith and take your stand with Luther and the Reformation and Protestantism and be blind inwardly. For it is not the body of truth that enlightens, it's the spirit of truth that enlightens. And when the Holy Ghost is come, he will show the things.

He will teach and he will instruct. So the blessed spirit of God it is that we must look to and depend upon and obey. So give up to God's will now and be willing to obey the truth.

And if you're willing to obey the Lord Jesus, he will illuminate your spirit and inwardly enlighten you. And the truth you have known intellectually, you will now know spiritually. And power will begin to flow up and out.

You'll find yourself changed, oh, marvelously changed. I believe in a Christianity that changes men, changes men. I heard a colored preacher say today about some people, he said, Them people ain't in the church, they're on the church.

And we've got a lot of people that give the illustration of a bum riding a freight train. And he said certain types of Christians, they're not in the church, they're on the church, like a bum on a freight train. And there are a lot of Christians, so-called, that are just on the church, but they're not in the church.

I'd rather have a small group inside than to have vast numbers outside. For in that great day that's coming, all that will matter is, have I been inwardly illuminated, have I been inwardly regenerated, have I been inwardly renewed, have I been inwardly purified? Do I know Jesus inwardly? That's all that matters then. Brother McAfee's song reminded me of a time great many years ago, when I was maybe 20 now in this city.

I was on 63rd Street, and I was feeling low. I don't know whether you ever get those times when it looks as if the world is going to collapse around you and you just can't ride, you just can't. And I couldn't, I couldn't get up.

So I was walking, and shouldn't have been. Why should the children of the King go mourning all the day? I have no excuse for it. I shouldn't have been down, but I was.

And I was walking slowly and mournfully up south on Halsted Street to the church, the old church. And I heard music. A horn, you know, off-key, and a drum that doesn't keep time.

Salvation Army. And when I got there, I stopped a minute. And there broke into a song.

It was, I need no other argument. I need no other plea. It is enough that Jesus died, and that he died for me.

And then they sang the verses and sang it. When I reached the pearly gates, I went and put in the plea. I was once a guilty sinner, but Jesus died for me.

And the motors of my soul roared, and I took off the ramp, and I was airborne. And it wasn't very long, brother, until I was walking along on the hardly-feeling sidewalk, singing to myself. And I remembered the words in the tune ever since.

And that's the unusual for me, because I can't remember tunes. But I remembered the tune ever since, just as he sang it tonight. It is enough that Jesus died.

But, brother, that wasn't a doctrine held in my head. That was something that got inside my inner spirit. I heard those words in the garden of my soul.

What about you tonight? If you're holding out on God, on one known thing, you're blind. If there's one known sin, you're blind. He that is willing to do my will, he shall know.

And conversely, no one else shall. So it's either obedience or blindness forever. I would rather be a blind pagan than a blind church member.

I'd rather go to hell from the Congo than from Englewood. I would rather perish lying on my face on a Mohammedan prayer mat, praying to Allah in my blindness, than to perish in an Alliance Church. For the

judgment will not be as severe to those that did not know, that is, intellectually know, morally know, so they could have known what to do and didn't do it.

The judgment won't be as severe as it will be for those.... I've worded this thing around, but I've forgotten how I started. The person who intellectually knows and morally knows, but doesn't have spiritual illumination, he knows enough to put him under judgment. But the poor man that doesn't know anything, he's judged for his sins, but with a lighter whip and a lighter hand.

And hell's fires will not be as hot for the blind Mohammedan or the poor fetish worshiper as for the man who says, I'm a Christian, but has held out on God and will not obey. Now, that's serious, but you'd better listen. For, Lord Jesus, thou art the light of the world, the light of the world.

O lighthouse, shine on me. Shine on me. And please, Lord, don't let anything prevent the light from shining.

Thou hast said, if anybody is willing, he shall know. We believe in the body of truth. And with full stentorian tones, we can say, I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, and I believe in the Holy Ghost.

We thank thee we believe the body of truth. We thank thee also thou hast taught us that there are depths beyond and beneath and above, that we must plunge into by obedience and faith. And when we find the inner soul of truth, then we're converted and not till that time.

O God, save us, we pray thee, from the snares and the traps into which we so easily fall. Save us from textualism. Save us from rationalism.

Save us, we pray thee, our God, from the error of the Pharisees. Save us from the cold hand that would teach us the code. We pray thee, give us light from above.

O light, come down. Illuminate our souls. Make heavenly things vividly real.

Make divine truth vividly real to our spirits. Turn the bright light on until we can see the landscape of theology lies shrouded in night. Turn the bright sun on, God, so we can see everything, down to the four-leaf clover or a butterfly there.

Make it so bright, O my God, that we won't perish in the midst of truth, but we'll be saved by truth. Save us, we pray, from hanging on to the things that will bind us and going the way of evil, wanting to be good but not wanting to be good bad enough to be good. Great God, help us to repent.

Help us to hate ourselves. Help us to hate sin. Help us to hate the sin that makes thee mourn, keeps thee from our rest.

Help us, God. Bless these people tonight. Let there be no deceived people walk out these doors.

Let there be none go out of here who have a name to live but are dead. Let there be none go out who are reprobates. Let no one walk down these winding stairs onto the street in inward blindness.

But may they obey, for thou hast told us if we would be willing to obey, we should know. Knowledge follows willingness to obey. So help this night, we pray, for Jesus' sake.

I give you praise.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/2/SID2119.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/john-part-32-if-any-man-will-do-his-will-he-shall-know/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**