

Spiritual Axioms

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon highlights that God is the sole worker in all things, emphasizing the importance of trusting in His wisdom and power.

Duration: 1:06:51

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 5:17, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 14:2, Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 2:13, James 1:17

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by describing the story of David and Goliath, emphasizing how God used a young and unarmed David to defeat the giant Goliath. The preacher then moves on to discuss the passage in 1 Corinthians 12, which explains how God works in and through his people by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The preacher encourages the audience to trust in God's plan and not to be discouraged by their own ignorance or mistakes. The sermon concludes with the preacher announcing that he will be discussing spiritual actions and reading three verses from the Bible that highlight God's work in believers.

Transcript

Well, tonight I am to talk on some spiritual actions. I know that's where to get nobody to come is to announce a subject like that, because that sounds terribly dull. But I want to read three verses from the Bible.

John 5, 17, But Jesus answered them, My father worketh hitherto, and I work. Philippians 2, 13 For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure. 1 Corinthians 12, 4-6.

Now, there are diversities of gifts of the same spirit, and diversities of administration of the same Lord, and diversities of operation of the same God, which worketh all in all. You will notice the Trinity there. Diversities of gifts of the same spirit, and diversities of administration of the same Lord, and diversities of operation of the same God.

We have the Trinity. As is generally known, my method in preaching is, and has been many, many years, to extract from the scriptures certain basic spiritual principles and to turn those spiritual principles into axioms, stated truth, and they are valid everywhere, anywhere, at all times, always. Tonight I want to talk about God's workings.

I extract what I have to say from the scriptures, as I have read through you the text. But for the statement of three of these axioms, I would acknowledge my indebtedness to a lady who has been dead 600 years. She called my attention to this 600 years after she had stopped living in this world and gone to live in another, in a better.

She put it down in that amazing little book I've referred to quite often called The Revelations of Divine Love. The first axiom, it might be good for you to take these down, because you will forget them if you don't. The first axiom that I want to note is that God does everything.

That is, that God does everything, creative and constructive. He does not do evil. Sin is a work of temporary rebellion against God, and the explanation is yet concealed.

Sin is concealed. That is, the reason and the how that the great God can be working and still things can be in the world, it's concealed from us. We don't yet know, because of those concealed things, mystery.

People don't like the word, but it's a good Bible word, and it's the word that we ought to learn to live with. For the world, everything around about us, is shrouded in mystery, that is, in things concealed. And I saw, she said, not the creature doing, but I saw God doing in the creature.

Here is exactly what the Bible says, both in the Old Testament and in the New. Remember that when the Lord would work through Gideon, he did what in some versions says he clothed himself with Gideon. He took Gideon and put Gideon on, and worked through Gideon and in Gideon to do his mighty work.

It wasn't Gideon that was doing it, but it was God working in the man Gideon. Then we come to David and Goliath in the Old Testament, and we notice that the upholding of this principle, that God does everything that is constructive, God does it, not people and men and creatures, but God. This is the reason there was no armor.

I don't suppose, I really don't, and I don't want to sound humorous, but I really don't suppose that there would have been a committee or a board anywhere in Israel that would have gone along with David and allowed him to go out and meet the great overgrown Goliath with his mighty sword as big as a weaver's beam. He couldn't have sold that ideal to anybody. He could have argued and pleaded and written, but he couldn't have got anybody that would have allowed him to go out there without armor.

Even Euphor a little bit at the first put the armor of Saul on. It was too big for him. He took it off and said it wasn't his armor, but if he didn't have to go to a committee or a board to get this armor off, he never would have got it off.

They sent him out there so loaded down with hardware that he couldn't have moved. And of course, Goliath would have simply pushed him over and cramped on him. But he didn't go out that way.

He had no armor. Why did God send a man out against a giant without any armor, though the giant was all covered with armor? Because God wanted to say, God doeth everything. He wanted to show that it is God who worketh through you to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

Why did he send David out against Goliath when there was such a vast disparity in size and strength? There was a vast difference in size and strength. This man Goliath was a huge creature, and David was an ordinary sized man. I'm not even sure that he wasn't a little undersized.

Yet God pitted the two against each other. Why? It was that David might never boast about it anywhere. David never boasted about this.

David never said to one of his wives, if she got a little out of hand, you remember what I did to Goliath? Because he knew he hadn't done it. God had done it. Then there was the unequal weapon.

The man David had sent for five smooth, strong, little marble-sized pebbles that had been made round by the water, rolling them along. That was all he had with a slingshot. It wasn't a rubber slingshot such as boys use now.

Rubber hadn't been invented. It was made out of leather prongs. Can you imagine God sending a young, undersized fellow out without any armor and without any weapon properly against a huge, oversized giant of a fellow who had proved his strength? It's preposterous, but God did it because it was a God that worked within you.

I want you to notice here the difficult passage in that Corinthian passage, 1 Corinthians 12.4-6. I've already read it. God is telling how the Holy Spirit, how God works in people and through people there in 1 Corinthians 12. He says that God has a work to do, and he does it himself, in and through his people, by the gifts of the Spirit.

The same Lord, though there are differences of administration, the same God, though there are diversities of operation, the same gifts, though there are diversities of gifts, it's the same Spirit. The point is that mortal minds can't think immortal thoughts. If we could only know that, there would be a lot of calling to board meetings instead of coming assured that we had the answer.

There would be a lot of us who, instead of answering all questions, would begin meekly to ask them. Mortal minds can't think immortal thoughts. God has to think immortal thoughts through us, or our thoughts are mortal thoughts.

And mortal hands can't do immortal deeds. That's a total impossibility. God does his eternal works through the hands of men, yes, but it's the work of God in us.

God doesn't give us a reservoir of wisdom and power. Here is something that most people don't know, and I suppose that we'll learn it and forget it, but God doesn't give us a reservoir of wisdom and power. If he did, it would very soon become stagnant.

If it's wisdom, God comes to a man according to the way we think about it, and he pipes him full of wisdom. He says, Now, if you're getting any trouble, come see me, or call me up and pray. But in the meantime, you have a whole cistern full of powers of wisdom here, and you draw on that wisdom because it's yours.

God never did it that way. God gives to a man a word of wisdom, and he gives to a man power, but he's power in that man. He is the word of wisdom in that man, which is God working in the man, and it is not the man working, if we could only remember that.

God becomes wisdom to us, and he becomes power to us. That is why Christians wonder so pitifully. If it is a baseball player and he plays 12 years in the league, big league, we say, Well, he's skillful, he has learned, he is caught on, he knows.

The same with anything people do. They learn by experience. They learn how to do things by doing them.

But in the kingdom of God, it's completely other than that, completely otherwise. A man can be 75 years old and have served God most of his lifetime, and yet make such pitiful blunders and be so ignorant and untaught. It's because if God isn't working through the man and in the man, the man himself is right back where he was when he started.

It is God that works within you. Did you ever have the experience of having some seeker come to you and want help, and to your chagrin you had no help for the seeker? I told you about my foray into pastoral counseling a year or so ago, a couple of years ago. Some people came and they had heard of me, and so somebody sent them.

I don't remember who it was. They sent them to me. They thought I could give them some pastoral counseling, that is, family or relationship counseling.

To a man and his wife, who were about ready to divorce, came to see me. It happened the same twice. They came in, I talked it all over with them, and the result was that both of the women left hopping mad at me.

The husband admitted that we got no place. Now, God didn't send me out to be a marriage counselor. He sent me out to teach the gospel, and if he gives me a word for somebody, it's his word and it'll help people.

But if I think that I can, out of years of experience, tell people how they ought to live, I'm only making a fool out of myself. And there's a great deal of this kind of fool-making going on in the Church of Christ in the name of Christianity. We forget that we have no wisdom for anybody unless God wants to give us the wisdom at the moment.

Take no thought, said Jesus, by one instance what you shall say for the Father will say it in you. I've heard old gentlemen preach, and they had everything all worked out very carefully, and they had little statements, little proverbs which they kept repeating all the time. But they never got anywhere because God was not speaking in them or through them, but they had learned little things to say, and they were saying them.

So that's the first that I would lay down. It's true everywhere, all the time. We extract this from the scripture of everything true, that every creative thing, every eternal thing, God does it.

God is doing it. Man is not doing it. God is doing it.

If we were to strip the churches from all that man is doing and leave only what God has done and is doing, we would trim the average church back down to a nubbin. There wouldn't be enough left to have a decent service. But almost all of the churches are running on their own steam.

They've learned how, they've gone to school to find out how, and we've written books on pastoral psychology and pastoral theology, which means how to do it and send easy lessons. The answer and the result is that we just don't know. We count on our reservoir and place it on our Lord.

My friends, if you say, talk to, let's say, a Christian scientist or Roman Catholic on Wednesday, and you have an amazing success with them, and perhaps even maybe win one of them to God, and then on Friday you try it the same way, you can fall flat on your face because God is working in you on

Wednesday, but you were looking to what God did on Wednesday, expecting to work on that same thing on Friday. You may even write a book about it. I have seen books on how to win Roman Catholics, and what to say to Christian scientists, and how to answer Jehovah's Witnesses.

You can answer one on Monday and answer successfully, and try it on Wednesday, and he'll put the half Nelson on you and throw you to the mat. It takes the Holy Ghost to work in a man. Always keep that in mind.

God did everything, and I saw that man is doing nothing. It's only God that is working. Remember that it is the Eternal Lord who is creating a new generation and a new creation.

Just as Adam didn't create himself, and just as the angels did not create themselves, but God created them, so he is building his Church. People are not building the Church. It's impossible.

God is building his Church. If he isn't building his Church, you simply have a religious organization. The second thing that I would say to you is that God does all in his foreseeing wisdom.

All that God is doing and does, he is doing in his foreseeing wisdom, so nothing is done by happenstance or by adventure. Would you write that down, that everything that God does, he does in his foreseeing wisdom? God knows our tomorrow, he knows our day after tomorrow, he knows all about us down the years, and it's all been planned before time was. The only reason I'd like to live any length of time yet is that I'm curious.

I always have been a very curious person, almost unnaturally or excessively curious, and I'd like to know what they're going to do with this time and space deal. I'd like to know, I'd like to hang around long enough. I'll tell you this, though, if Jesus cares, some of you young people now listening to me will see the day when they'll be sending men off to planets and heavenly bodies far removed from this earth and bringing them back again.

I'm curious to know these busy people, time and space, long before there was any faith, God had planned what he's doing now, and God isn't all mixed up. You know how they do in Washington and London and Berlin and all the rest? You know how they do it? They play by ear. Nobody ever plans anything and says, Now, here's the way it'll go.

They play by ear. And whatever Khrushchev says and we counter him, we're always counter-punching. There's always Western nations are busy counter-punching.

Nobody punches out there solidly and leads, but they're always counter-punching. When some big rumbling burp comes out of Moscow as a result of watching and egotism, then everybody in Washington runs in circles and begins looking at each other and says, Did you hear that? Did you hear that? Yes, I read that. Then they try to counter-punch, and they play by ear all the time to change the figure.

My friends, God Almighty never does it that way. All that is now happening was foreseen in the wisdom of God before any faith stretched out yonder or before any star was out there. Long before there was matter or motion or law, God had foreseen it all.

You'll either believe that, or you'll be frustrated and miserable all the time. It's taught in the Bible that God does it all in his foreseeing wisdom. He foresaw it all, and he isn't allowing anything to happen.

The world isn't a truck running downhill with the driver having a heart attack at the wheel. No. The world is moving toward a predetermined end, and God Almighty standing in the shadows is seeing it go and watching it and guiding it.

The nation of Israel and the nations of the world and the great worldly church we call Christendom and the true church that he hides in his own heart, God knows where they all are at all times by his intimate and perfect wisdom, and he's running everything according to plans which he made before Adam ever stood up on the earth. Before there was an Abraham or a David or an Isaiah or a Paul, before Jesus was born in Bethlehem's manger, God had this all planned out. I don't want you to think of God sitting down with a pencil and working it out the way you and I would have to do it.

God thinks and it's done. He wills that it comes to pass. God doesn't have to work with a pencil and a slide rule and a compass and a square the way architects and builders do.

No. And he doesn't sit and follow an agenda the way conventions do. He thinks it's done, he speaks it's done, and it's done because he thinks and he speaks.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and all things were created by him. Without him was not anything made that was made. How is that? He was the Word, and he spoke it's done.

So you're a Christian, all right, and something very unusual, very bad has happened, maybe. And you wonder, why did God let this happen to me, and how could this? This must have been a huge mistake somewhere. There is only one possibility, of course, and that is that you have not trusted and obeyed, because what I'm saying is valid if we trust and obey.

If we rebel against God, then of course we can get into all kinds of trouble, and we may bring on ourselves happenings that are temporarily not in the will of God. But even then, if the root of the ladder is in it, God absorbs this and turns it into victory. There was Jacob when Jacob fled from the face of his angry brother and was in the waist-high wilderness.

He saw that ladder standing upon the earth, and I'm still wondering whether Jacob would ever have seen that ladder if Jacob hadn't been on the run. If Jacob hadn't been back home in good company and staying around the house helping his mother with the dishes, that's about because he did almost as he did, because he was his mother's helper. The other, his brother, was out running around and hunting and bringing in savory meat.

But Jacob had never had any upset here. Jacob never would have seen that ladder. That's just as sure as you live.

So I'd like to suggest one thing. Remember that sin is always wrong, and if we insist on rebellion against God, we're going to get ourselves into real, serious trouble. But remember another thing, that if you are God and you do belong to God and you have learned the art of true repentance, God will turn even your defeat into a victory.

And a fleeing Jacob will see a ladder, and a Jonah that has disobeyed God may be swallowed by a fish and thus saved. Look at Saul. Saul was breathing out, threatening enslavement there, and suddenly he stands and sees.

He sees Stephen die, but he starts away from there, and as he goes away on the road to Damascus, he sees the Lord high and lifted up, and he hears a voice, and he's a converted man. I wonder if Saul would ever have been converted if he had been a quiet professor in Gamaliel's university, and had simply said, Well, there's no use to get excited about it, no use to get excited, everything will work out all right. If he had said that, there would never have been Saul, the mighty servant of God.

But Saul was a man, the root of the matter was in him, but that was about all. So God had to even absorb the man's wrongdoing, turn him around, start him right, and then begin to work in his life. Now, I give you the third thought here tonight.

It is that much that God is doing looks to us like an accident or a mistake. Much that God is doing, I say, looks like an accident or a mistake. But you know that is due to our blindness and our ignorance.

We don't know why God is doing the way he's doing, and so we begin to fidget and wonder if God does really know. My friend, God sees tomorrow, and we see only today. God sees both sides, and we see only one side.

God knows what we don't know, and God has all the pieces to the puzzle. You and I have only a few of the pieces. Have you ever put together a jigsaw puzzle? Half a dozen times, I guess, over the years I have been inveigled into sitting around a table and trying to put a jigsaw puzzle together.

I don't know why anybody with a world so full of miseries as it is should ever invent one. Just sit right down and invent one. With a world full of trouble, problems to solve, and all kinds of worries and frustrations, and then invent one.

Actually invent and create one and sell it. I don't know why anybody would buy it, but I've tried it a few times and usually wandered off before we got the first square, first corner finished. But you see, we don't have the pieces.

Incidentally, I have almost always, much to the disgust of my boys and my daughter, and sometimes my wife, insisted that some pieces were lost. I'd look under the table and say, Well, they're lost. But they weren't lost.

I just didn't know where they fitted. But you know you and I are like that. Here's our pattern of life and how we like to see it bloom into a beautiful picture there, everything in place, but all scattered around.

And I don't know where the pieces are. Nothing fits. Have you ever tried that? Do you ever do this? Two pieces look as if they belong together, but they don't, and so you try to force them in place.

Have you ever tried that? Force them in place, and you break an edge off, and then you're worse off than you were before. But we take the work of God, and we try to push pieces together. I spent a good part of my lifetime trying to shove pieces that don't belong together together, and trying to separate pieces that do.

It's ignorance, and we forget that it's God that gives us the wisdom, it's God that works in us, and if we'd only know it, first we'd let God do his work to us and in us. That's why I believe in the gifts of the Spirit, by the way. I don't think that I have done myself any good by converting the law with the fundamentalist hierarchy, by coming out as I have, and always have, in belief that there ought to be all the gifts of the Spirit ought to be in the Church today, the same as they were back yonder at Pentecost.

I read in the newspaper the other day a long, about six-point type, very small and hard to read. I read about the gifts of the Spirit, and this fellow says the gifts of the Spirit are all ended, all ended, and he's a fundamentalist, too. Well, he's just plain wrong.

R. N. G. He is wrong. The gifts of the Spirit did not end. He even goes to quote 1 Corinthians 13.

I don't remember who he was, fortunately. I wouldn't advertise him for dibs, but he says, Now that it takes hope and charity to be freed at the grace of Jesus' love, and says all these things will be put away, knowledge will cease and vanish away, and everything will cease, and so he says all these things cease. Doesn't he know that they ceased by fulfillment? They meant they did not stop being, and so we cannot get rid of faith, hope and love, and we dare not say that the gifts of the Spirit are no more.

They are. God is working through his people, and what God works will last. What God doesn't work, won't last.

I don't care how much personality a man has. He can't do immortal work because he's a mortal man. He can't think immortal thoughts because he's got a mortal mind.

But if the Holy Ghost works in him, too, distributing to every man's trouble as he will, and it's the same Father working in us, and the same Son working through us, and the same Spirit working through us, then God will do his work. There are these accidents that you and I think we're in. We're not in the accidents at all.

If a man follows the Lord in anything like a reasonable faithfulness, he'll not find any accidents. He'll find that God is working his life out for him. Do you know what I wish? I wish that the psychologists and the counselors and all these experts would let people alone.

When I was in my teens, or what seems like a couple hundred years ago, nobody had thought of that whole thing yet, and I actually grew up from 12 to 20 without knowing that I was in a period that was the most deadly, the most dangerous, the most unheard of, the most unusual, the most miserable, the most frustrating, the most confining, the most harmful period possible, and that I just needed somebody to tell me every move to make. I just came through the whole movement doing what came naturally. You know, we just came through the whole thing doing what came naturally.

And I didn't have a psychiatrist to help me, nor a psychologist, nor a youth counselor, nor a panel discussion. I didn't have a thing. I just lived right through.

When I was halfway through, in the middle, I got converted. When I was 17, a little over, I was converted, and after that it was easier than before. Fortunately, I hadn't been told that I was unique, different, that my mother was against me, that my father was jealous of me, and that my brothers were down on me.

And the result was, I didn't develop any complexion, I didn't get any mother fixations or father complexions. I just lived through it. But now they won't let the poor kids alone.

God bless you, young people. You have an awful time now. Every religious magazine you're picked up wants to try to defect you and take your spot.

You know what teenage is? It's just when you're not in the past twelve and haven't come to twenty yet. Just forget, relax, and go right on. You'll be all right.

You'll come through without a thought. Well, I don't know how I got over on that. I didn't have that in my mouth, really.

But I wanted to say that, because they just let people alone. You live and live and you do what, getting along all right, and everything's okay, and then you pick up a magazine, and you read an article in the magazine, and you begin to look out of the corner of your eyes as you watch. And they create suspicion.

They create suspicion. Young people are friendly and get on fine with their parents. Then they read an article, and after that they're suspicious of their parents.

They're storing suspicion in our hearts, friends. I wish they'd let us alone. I sat on a committee one time not long ago where there was a fellow who had applied for service in the Christian Missionary Alliance, and they said that he had gone to college and had specialized in psychiatry.

But during the meetings in New York last fall or fall of October, he'd come down to the tavern at the Alliance church there, where Brother Reed had a pastor, and he'd heard some of it, and he was pastor of a church. It was a denominational church, and he'd gotten under blistering conviction. So I went up and asked if he'd been delivered from his psychiatry, and they said he had.

They said he'd gotten delivered from it, thank God. Because I consider the average psychologist as just an educated witch doctor. And if you think that's because I'm ignorant, I was studying psychology when you weren't even born yet, some of you.

You know that? I was reading Freud and William James and Jung and many of the great psychologists when you weren't even born yet. So don't think it's ignorance. I know what they teach.

But experience and further knowledge of God and watching them operate has left the impression with me that I don't need them at all. Let nobody come to me peddling spare heads. I've got one.

I don't need a spare head. I've got one. It's been very good, and it's becoming slightly bald.

But I still have it, and I'm not going to need a spare. Let them let me alone. I bear in my body the match of the Lord Jesus, and I don't want these people bothering me.

If you trust God, my friend, and God will bring you out all right, there won't be any accidents. There won't be any accidents. The accidents I thought were accidents back down the years were simply God letting me through when I didn't know what he was doing.

Well, another one I want to give you, and I borrowed this one now, and I'll quote it. God changes never his purpose, nor never shall a world without end. God changes never his purpose, nor never shall a world without end.

That doesn't sound to me as if that had been written 600 years ago, but it was. But here it's part of the truth. It's the word of God.

The gifts and callings of God are without this sentence. God never loses heart. I'd seen some good, godly people coming through a tailspin, an emotional tailspin, and they were so low, there was no describing how low they were.

But God never gets low, because God sees the end comes in June. And to God all these things have already happened. They've already happened.

You knew you had to die tomorrow. I suppose you'd feel a little low tonight for a while, and then you'd get elated. If you're a real Christian, you'd get elated.

But God never gets up and then down and then up and then down, because everything has already happened with God. God isn't going around watching dials and looking at gauges and seeing if everything's all right and testing to see if you're on the feet. Oh, no, God doesn't have to do that, because God changes never.

His purpose is known, or never shall world without him. He's moving toward a pre-determined end, which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began. When the angels sang over Bethlehem's manger, they were not announcing anything new.

It had been known back to the Garden of Eden, and it had been known to the heart of God before to reject it, in Eden or a Garden, or in Adam or in Eve. So God changes his mind never, no, never shall be. Jonah grew up and preached in Nineveh, and Jonah bought a ticket in other directions.

God changes not his mind, no, never shall. So the way it ended up was, Jonah was up preaching in Nineveh. So all of that rest.

Israel sinned against God. God didn't change his mind. He just punished them and disciplined them, and they're yet be where God said they would be.

There's a lot of difference of opinion now on prophecy, but I'll tell you what I believe. Holding this holy book in my hand, I believe that the seed of Abraham shall yet walk upon the mountains of Israel. I believe that God shall yet have his people back there.

He's not changed his mind, no, nor never shall change his mind. If when he sent his son to die on that cross, or sent his son to save the world, if he had gotten discouraged when he saw how they received his son, he wouldn't have been God. So knowing what he had in mind, Jesus walked quietly to the cross and died.

Conditions may seem helpless, hopeless things may seem helpless, and conditions hopeless. You read Bible history. A man asked me one time, a young fellow, he said, I didn't get convinced of the Bible.

He said, Oh, that old, dry history. Do you know what that old, dry history teaches? The old, dry history teaches that God is working providentially through men. That history or the footprints of God, or the footprints of God are history.

And the way God worked with Abel and Noah and Abraham and Lot and all the rest down in the years, that's why I refer to these men so much. Because it's the way God works, and he's not changed his mind. Well, then I've got one more yet, and it's this.

That God never lifts his hands off his work. He leads all things to an ordained end. He never lifts his hands off his work.

When Michelangelo died, they say that he had a big backyard, and the whole backyard was stacked full of partly done statues. Michelangelo was an Italian, and was in addition to having a high-hot Latin

temperament, he had a double charge of genius. He wore the five crowns, they say, of genius in his day.

And when we wanted a statue to change and be the way we wanted it, he wasn't fooling. He was like the farmer that cut five holes in his barn door, and they said, What's that for? He said, It's for the cat and their kittens. He said, Wouldn't one do nothing else? He said, When I say cat, I mean scat.

He wasn't going to fool around having them go out one at a time when he said, Scat, there were five holes for five cats. And that was Michelangelo. When he said to a piece of rock, Become something, he wasn't willing to wait around.

He got distracted, and he had a whole backyard full of statues that he had started and lost heart on. It wouldn't work fast enough, and so he quit recruiting backyards and started on something else. He had done an amazing amount of work, but there was an amazing amount of work he was doing and taking to finish.

If this had given him another day, it might have turned into what he wanted to do. Instead, he threw it out in the backyard, and after they buried him, he found his backyard full of half-done pieces. God never lifts his hands off his work.

I believe that. I don't care what happens. I believe it.

I said something about the fact, here at our recent board meeting, that the Lyons people say they believe in healing, but don't. They say they believe in it, but they run very out as soon as their sensitivity goes up half a degree. And dear Brother Cox, he's been here in Creech.

You know, he is often quoted. He's a Dutch farmer from out in Pennsylvania. But I consider him a kind of a rough human being.

He said to me afterwards, he said, Brother, I'm going to preach healing and anoint people and pray for them if I die surrounded by doctors and nurses with a searing needle in each leg. He wasn't going to be fooled, he wasn't going to be discouraged, he was going to preach and preach what he thinks God sent him to preach and preach. I'm for him.

God never lifts his hands off his work. And when God says, You do this, he means you go do it and I'll work through you, and I'll not be discouraged. You may be discouraged, but I won't.

He draws them toward a preordained end, Satan and Israel's foes and those who crucify Christ they've all tried to stop. You know, I think sometimes there's a mistake to think Communists are smart. If they were as smart as they think they are, they wouldn't advertise their intentions, would they? Wouldn't they be wiser if they didn't advertise their intentions? They're always blowing off, saying, We're going to do so-and-so.

And so we reverse ourselves and say, You and how many others? I don't think they're as smart as they think they are. I never thought Hitler was smart. They said Hitler was such a genius.

I thought he was a great, big, bumbling fool, because he tipped his hand, he told in advance, he even wrote a book telling us what he was going to do to us. Yes, he did, he wrote a book telling us what he was going to do. He called it My Encounter.

It translates into English, and we read it, and we found out what he intended to do, and we stopped him. I didn't have much to do with it, but anyhow, we stopped him. And I think the Communists are the same, and you know I believe the same as the devil.

If the devil was as smart as he thinks he is, he wouldn't allow us to catch on to his plans. You know, there's an old saying, the higher up the ape goes, the more his tail shows. And the devil rises up there and starts, you look and you see it hanging.

You know it's the devil. And if the devil only knows one thing, that if you hit God's people hard enough, they break themselves. All you have to do is to get after God's people just enough, and you bring out everything that's in them.

And everything's going all right with me. I'm one of the lazy, easy-going persons who every song you like. But when things start against me, I back up a few steps, and then suddenly I feel when I hold on here, and the very intention of the devil to drive me back has exactly the opposite effect.

I believe the same thing with Christians everywhere. God doesn't take his hand off his work, he's moving toward the preordained plan, and if we weren't with him in that plan, Satan's efforts to stop us can only cause us to snap our teeth shut and say, in the name of God and in the strength of Jehovah, we're going forward. And for this church, that's my message.

God never takes his hand off his work, but leaves it for it to a preordained end by the same wisdom and power and love by which he created everything in the first place. You're no accident. Don't think you are.

You're no accident. God made all things by a preordained purpose, by foreknowing wisdom, and when you came into the kingdom, you weren't an accident. We think we went and knocked on the door, and God said, Gracie, who's there? And the name of the king, he said, is Jim Docherty.

All right, Jim Docherty, the Irishman knocking on the door of the kingdom. He wants to get in. God said, isn't that wonderful? Why, we've got a new applicant.

Now, don't let you think about God like that, brethren. God knew Jim Docherty long before his grandmother ever made an eye at his uncle. God knew them long before they were ever born.

Back, big Adam, and back to the beginning when there was nothing, but God came back to us. Emptiness and God. God knew all about that, knew all about him, knew what things he'd bring with him when he came, knew when he would come, knew what he would say.

God never lifts his hand off his word. He does it by wisdom and power and love. There's no less wisdom, no less power, Lord, no less love now than there ever was.

Now, this is hard for us to understand, because, you see, we can't see it. You see, we can't see it. But we must believe, and believing is a kind of seeing, you know.

Believing is a kind of seeing. And if I believe what God has said, I am seeing in a sort of way. But I'm not seeing down on my human level.

You know, it's the humanity that gets in trouble. I heard a man teach a sermon one time years ago, and I've never heard anybody else talk about that, and I've never done it myself, I think. He said, The Christian has three men inside of him.

The old man, the new man, and the human. He said, Those three men, there's the old man, and that's all there is until he's converted, and then you get the new man. But, of course, I mean there's the human all the time.

And the human gets us in so much trouble. So much trouble. Even that long after you've gotten victory over the old man, the new man, you know, just playing you, you know, the thing your wife loves about you, you understand? You know what I mean? Yeah, that thing, just you, you know, just you, you fella, just you.

The human, you know, you inherited it, and it's an insoluble mixture of genes that come down the years and got bumped around, you know, down the centuries. But here you are, and it's what makes you you. That's the human.

And that's the part that gets blue. And the part that gets carnally crappy over things and gets carnally gloomy about things. The old man needs to die in order to live in the power of the new man.

And the new man keeps this new man sort of under control. Maybe I've told you this before. I have a friend down in Brazil.

I never saw him. His name is Ernest Michaels, or my Felix, I don't know which they pronounce it. He writes me, and he sends some of the things I've written all over the world to other people, and he sends me stuff from other people, and we try to correspond.

He wrote a very complimentary thing to me some time back, very glowing with compliments, and I wrote him back, and I said, Brother, I'm afraid you don't know me. You're highly complimentary, and you've got so many things to say. You don't know me.

And then I went on to tell him what kind of a mess I was. I thought that probably ended the correspondence. Instead of that, I got a better letter than others.

This time he said, Oh, you don't know something we know. He said, The very thing you declare in yourself. This part puts an edge on you and makes you such a blessing to fellows like me.

I kind of liked that, you know. It helped me. It was a place to hide my bad disposition.

But if we don't remember that now, and get a hold of it, that God does everything, and he does everything in his force and wisdom, and while much that he does looks like an accident to you and me because we don't know enough, God never changes his plans, and never will, and never lifts his hand off his work, but goes forward toward a preordained purpose, using even such people as I and you. Look, look, old Billy Nicholson. Old Billy Nicholson, they tell me, says I'll admit in one day, in one day, that Billy Nicholson's personality and disposition and temperament, I thought that if he hadn't been pendulous, he probably would have been one of the worst Irish rebels ever to live.

He really would have. He'd have been awful. The woman sat beside me on the platform over in New York, one of the speakers, and she turned to me and said, Mr. Kerr, if Christ hadn't got into your heart, you'd have been awful.

And I said, you can say it again, Mr. Kerr. I said, I'd have been a pocket edition of George Bernard Shaw. I don't know how she meant it, but I would have been awful.

I probably would have been divorced years ago, and maybe been in jail, but by the mercy of God, the poor slave was set free. And by the mercy of God, somebody told me it was possible to kill the spirit and walk in the spirit and not fulfill the lust of flesh. By the mercy of God, he done these things.

And I've never been able to discourage God enough to get him to take his hand off, because God would have thought it all out before I was born. What kind of a God would he be? He would cry out and let me sleep. You've got to believe this, my brother.

Believe it and claim it, and then get happy about it. You know what I've sensed too many people lately? I don't know why. Bad weather, poor transportation, our folks are moved away, and a dog howling under the window in the rain.

You know what I've sensed too many people, and I want to change so I can be nice. I want you to believe what I preach to you and get happy and glad about it. And when you meet somebody, don't say, we didn't have as many out.

Let's thank God we have a few, and if we're still going on, we have plans and a job to do with it and do it, and let's get happy about this. You can imagine me being happy, but I'm going to be. And I'm going to see to it.

I'm not going to wear a cape on my arm to please the devil. Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and he's our Lord, and he's our help, and he's running things, and we're his little children. And he's a servant, and he's followers, and he has plans we don't know about, and he's going to work them out.

If you and I just humble ourselves and walk along with him. Amen? All right, now let's get happy in God and stay happy in God. Let's not dishonor him by his name.

Let's be happy in God. We'll look back and smile at our own ignorance, and we'll thank God that blind unbelief was sure to earn Stanley's working dream that God was his own interpreter, and he'll soon make it plain. Amen? That's all I've got.

Tonight I'm going to talk on some spiritual actions. I know that's the way to get nobody to come is to announce a subject like that, because that sounds terribly dull. But I want to read three verses from the Bible.

John 5.17, But Jesus answered them, My Father, worketh hitherto, and I work. Philippians 2.13, For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. 1 Corinthians 12.4. There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit.

There are diversities of administration, but the same Lord. There are diversities of operation, but the same God, which worketh all in all. You will notice the trinity there.

There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. There are diversities of administration, but the same Lord. There are diversities of operation, but the same God.

We have the trinity. As is generally known, my method in preaching is, and has been many, many years, to extract from the scriptures certain basic spiritual principles, and then to turn those spiritual principles into axioms, stated truths, and they are valid everywhere, anywhere, at all times, always. Tonight I want to

talk about God's working.

I extract what I have to say from the scriptures, as I have read to you the text. But for the statement of three of these axioms, I would acknowledge my indebtedness to a lady who has been dead 600 years. She called my attention to this 600 years after she had stopped living in this world and gone to live in another, in a better.

She put it down in that amazing little book I've referred to quite often called The Revelations of Divine Luck. The first axiom that might be good for you to take these down, because you'll forget them if you don't. The first axiom that I want to note is that God does everything.

That is, that God does everything, creative and constructive. He does not do evil. Sin is a work of temporary rebellion against God, and the explanation is yet concealed.

Sin is concealed. That is, the reason and the how that the great God can be working and still things can be in the world is concealed from us. We don't yet know.

We call those concealed things mystery. People don't like the word that it's a good Bible word and it's a word that we ought to learn to live with. For the world, everything around about us, is shrouded in mystery, that is, in things concealed.

And I saw, she said, not the creature doing, but I saw God doing in the creature. Here is exactly what the Bible says both in the Old Testament and in the New. Remember that when the Lord would work through Gideon, he did what in some versions says he clothed himself with Gideon.

He took Gideon and put Gideon on, and worked through Gideon and in Gideon to do his mighty work. It wasn't Gideon that was doing it, but it was God working in the man Gideon. Then we come to David and Goliath in the Old Testament, and we notice that the upholding of this principle, that God does everything that is constructive, God does it, not people and men and creatures, but God.

This is the reason there was no armor. I don't suppose, I really don't, and I don't want to sound humorous, but I really don't suppose that there would have been a committee or a board anywhere in Israel that would have gone along with David and allowed him to go out and meet the great overgrown Goliath with his mighty sword as big as a weaver's beam. He couldn't have sold that ideal to anybody.

He could have argued and pleaded and written, but he couldn't have got anybody that would have allowed him to go out there without armor. And even he, for a little bit at the first, put the armor of Saul on, which was too big for him. He took it off and said it wasn't his armor.

He didn't have to go to a committee or a board to get this armor off. He never would have got it off. They would have sent him out there so loaded down with hardware that he couldn't have moved.

And of course, Goliath would have simply pushed him over and cramped on. But he didn't go out that way. He had no armor.

Why did God send a man out against a giant without any armor, though the giant was all covered with armor? Because God wanted to say, God doeth everything. He wanted to show that it's God who worketh through you to work and to do his own good pleasure. Why did he send David out against Goliath when there was such a vast disparity in size and strength? There was a vast difference in size and strength.

This man, Goliath, was a huge carnero, and David was an ordinary-sized man. I'm not even sure that he wasn't a little under-sized. And yet God stood against each other.

Why? It was that David might never boast about it anywhere. David never boasted about it. David never said to one of his wives, if she got a little out of hand, you remember what I did to Goliath? Because he knew he hadn't done it.

God had done it. Then there was the unequal weapon. The man David had simply five smooth, strong, little marble-sized pebbles that had been made round by the water, the rolling and the water rolling them along.

That was all he had with a slingshot. It wasn't a rubber slingshot such as boys use now. Rubber hadn't been invented, it was made out of leather thong.

But can you imagine now God sending a young, under-sized fellow out without any armor and without any weapon properly against a huge, over-sized giant of Apollo who had proved his strength by his preposterous? But God did it because it is God that we're giving you. I want you to notice here the difficult passage in that Corinthian passage, 1 Corinthians 12.4-6. I've already read it. God is telling how the Holy Spirit, how God works in people and through people there in 1 Corinthians 12, and he says that God has a work to do, and he does it himself in and through his people by the gift of the Spirit.

The same Lord, though there are differences of administration, the same God, though there are diversities of operation, the same gift, though there are diversities of gifts, it's the same Spirit. The point is that mortal minds can't think immortal thoughts. If we could only know that, there would be a lot of calling to board meetings instead of coming assured that we had the answer.

There would be a lot of us who, instead of answering all questions, would begin meekly to ask them. Mortal minds can't think immortal thoughts. God has to think immortal thoughts through us, or our thoughts are mortal thoughts.

And mortal hands can't do immortal deeds. That's a total impossibility. God does his eternal works through the hands of men, yes, but it's the work of God in us.

God doesn't give us a reservoir of wisdom and power. Here is something that most people don't know, and I suppose it's real, and I wouldn't forget it, but God doesn't give us a reservoir of wisdom and power. If he did, it would very soon become stagnant.

If it's wisdom, say, God comes to a man according to the way we think about it, and he parts him full of wisdom, and he says, Now, if you're getting any trouble, come see me, or call me up and pray. But in the meantime, you have a whole cistern full of powers of wisdom here. You draw on that wisdom because it's yours.

God never did it that way. God gives to a man a word of wisdom, and he gives to a man power, but he's power in that man. He is the word of wisdom in that man, which is God working in the man, and it is not the man working, if we could only remember that.

God becomes wisdom to us, and he becomes power to us. That is why Christians blunder so pitifully. If it is baseball player and he plays five years, and he's busy, we say, Well, he's skillful, he has learned, he is caught on, he knows.

The same with anything people do. They learn by experience. They learn how to do things by doing them. But you know, in the kingdom of God, it's completely other than that, completely otherwise. A man can be seventy-five years in the kingdom of God, and he can be seventy-five years in the

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