

(The Chief End of Man - Part 10): Application - Saved Unto the Worship of God

by A.W. Tozer

The purpose of the Church and individual Christians is to worship God and show forth His virtues, and failing to fulfill this purpose leads to spiritual stagnation and disapproval by God.

Duration: 52:18

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 1 Peter 2:2-21, Revelation 4:8

Topics: "Chief End of Man"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of worship and how we are created and redeemed to worship God. He applies these truths to the Church, describing it as a company of people who are called to be a royal priesthood and a holy generation. The preacher also addresses the experience of someone who has missed out on the fellowship of the church and the truth it offers, highlighting the need for surrendering to the cause of the gospel. He concludes by urging listeners to prioritize becoming a purified soul through surrendering to God's spirit. The sermon references 1 Peter and emphasizes the significance of worship and surrendering to God.

Transcript

The book of 1 Peter, 1 Peter 2nd chapter. 1 Peter 2nd chapter, verse 9. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. The praises there would be the glory or the high and holy qualities that make God, God's virtues.

But ye should show forth the virtues of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Now, let us offer a word of prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, the world is very evil and the times are waxing late and we are running out of time.

O God, lay hold of us this evening. We pray that we may have eyes to see and ears to hear, hearts to understand. We pray that we may be saved from the routine and the rut.

We pray that we may have eyes inside and outside, anointed understanding. Help us, Lord, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Now, for several weeks I have taught you, coming always back to the same thing, starting wherever I started, always coming back to the same thing. I have taught you what worship is and that we are created to worship, as the text tonight says. But that we are largely failing in the purpose for which we have been created and redeemed.

Now, in this closing one of this series, this is the last for this series, I wish to apply the truths which I have taught. Most of you have heard them all. Therefore, I want tonight to make application of these things.

First to the Church, thought of as a company of people, as it says in 1 Peter, a royal priesthood, a holy generation, a peculiar people. First as the Church and then as the individual that composed the Church. Now, have you ever stopped to consider why we exist as a Church at all? You know, so many things we take for granted, we never ask why.

We are too busy with everything. We don't ask why. We are born into it and we just do it.

We don't ask why we do it. So, there is a Church here where a company of people meets. Every so often, I am going across the street where a company of people meets, a couple up the way here, down another direction.

Now, why? Let me answer to say that a local Church exists to do corporally what each should do individually, namely, worship God. Show forth the excellencies of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Reflect back the glory of him who shines down on us, even God, even Christ, even the Holy Ghost.

Now, all that Christ has done for us in the past and all he is doing now leads to this one end. And I sound strange to myself when I say this, because you hardly hear anybody that is saying it. I do not, I have not got a messianic complex, I think.

I hope I have. And I do not want to take even unconsciously the attitude that I alone am a prophet of the Lord and I would like to die along with Elijah. God says he has 7,000 that haven't bowed to me, and he usually has.

But as far as I get to hear men, and as far as I'm familiar with books, and that I think is fairly right, my familiarity, I do not find this being taught very much, that we are saved to worship God. We have it that we are saved for a number of reasons. I suppose that if you were to ask the average Christian, you were to take the average Christian who was really born in England and is truly a Christian, and say, well, why are you saved? Well, he would say, I was saved to have peace of mind, or I was saved in order that I might be delivered from smoking, or I was saved in order that I might give up dope, or I was saved because I had a bad temper and it bothered me, or I took the Lord Jesus as my helper because I was failing in business and I wanted him to be my business partner.

Or I was in school and I wanted him to help me to get good grades. We would have, I suppose, very many reasons, and I'm not going to be too hard on people really, because I notice in a study I once made in the New Testament, that people came to the Lord for many reasons. One man came because his boy was sick.

A woman came because her daughter was sick. Another woman came because she'd had a chronic disease for 12 years. A politician climbed out of a tree and looked down because his heart ached.

Nicodemus came by night because his religion was not adequate and his heart was empty. So the Lord received them all, and the Lord receives everybody that comes to him in faith, even if their motives may not be the highest, I suppose. But the point is, why should we always stay where we started in? That's what I can't understand.

Why should the Church be composed of a school of the 1st grade with never any 2nd grade? Or if a few got into the 2nd grade, nobody got into the 3rd. Why should the Church be a spiritual school composed of 1st graders who never went beyond the 1st grade? There's an old joke I heard of a man who said that he ought to be well-educated, who spent 5 years in the 4th grade, and that's, I suppose, funny, but it's not so funny when it comes to the Church. I suppose we might say, and I think the devil would laugh, I doubt whether God would be so much pleased, but we might say, well, I ought to be a good Christian.

I've been in the 4th grade or 3rd grade now for 29 years, come next mass. I think this is a tremendous and terrible thing, that a Church should remain, should be dedicated to the proposition that everybody ought to be ecstatic, if that's where we are. Why were we converted? Well, I was converted so I could be happy, happy, happy.

And everybody's happy to say, Amen. And this is as far as we get, my dear friends, this is as far as we get. Nobody wants to get any further than this.

And I don't mind telling you that I'm kind of sick about it all. Not only here, it's everywhere the same on the North American continent, and I suppose all around the world. And we're out busy evangelizing, making your 1st graders, so we can keep them in the 1st grade until the Lord comes and gives them a rule in the 5 cities.

It seems to me that it's an awfully badly mixed up concept of Christianity. For now the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross that he might make his people worshipers of God. That's why we were born, that we might show forth the excellency of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

He is thy Lord, worship thou him. And we see when it's all over, and the consummation has taken place and been fulfilled, that the beasts and the elders and the creatures under the sea and above the earth, and the holy, holy to the Lord God Almighty, which is and which was and which will be, this is the purpose of God, that he might redeem us and put us all in the choir and keep us there singing his praises and showing forth his excellencies while the eggs are old. This is the purpose of God in redemption.

So I say that he has done it for us and he is doing it now. What he's done all leads to one end, and all we should lead to one end. All that we do should lead to one end.

For activity's sake, it is not of God, it's not a high thing. Religious people are very active people, I suppose. Politicians and preachers are the longest-wounded.

Two weeks from tonight, Brother Gray, Senator Thiessen is going to be here and take a part in the service, and I'm going to have the longest part. That will be the only time when the preacher and the politician ever got together, and the preacher preached longer than the politician, but it will be two weeks from tonight, God willing. But we are very noisy, very wordy and very active people.

But the activity, for activity's sake, is not of God. Now we must bring our ideas into harmony with the Lord of the church. Would you like to do that? Would you? Are you interested in this? Bringing your whole thought, your whole philosophy of Christianity, your whole conception of what the church is, into harmony

with the Lord of the church and his teaching.

Well, I might say what the church is not, and I'm not saying it because I'm slapping at this church. That's not the idea at all. But you might push clear away, we're not a social club.

A church must have certain social connections, I suppose, and certain fellowship. But we are not a social club, and we are not a current events forum, reading Time Magazine or Liberty or some other magazine and taking off like a little airplane off of a ramp from what we've just read. We're not a current events forum, and we're not a religious theater to provide a place for amateur entertainers to display their talent, home talent, barn talent, displaying their gifts.

We're none of these things. We are holy people, a supposed to be, a royal priesthood, a holy generation called out of darkness to show forth the glory of the one who called us out. Now, we should take whatever steps are needed to fulfill our high design as a New Testament church.

Does that sound reasonable, that we should take whatever steps are necessary to fulfill our design, our high, holy, sovereign design as a New Testament church, and to become a true church of Christ? Now, to do less than this is to fail utterly. To do less than this is to fail God, and it's to fail our Lord Jesus Christ who redeemed us. It is to fail ourselves, and it is to fail our children, and it is to fail the whole host who has come from the heart of Jesus to do in us the work that is to be done to make us a holy people, a sanctified people, mirrors of the Almighty, to reflect the glory of the Most High God.

Now, if we fail God, you say, well, it can't happen here, but that I hope you'll never use that argument. If it does happen, the result is that the next generation will depart from the faith altogether. That's how liberalism comes.

You can strive out here at the City of Nimitz where I live, and you can go to the lake. You who know Toronto better than I know it. And you'll find church after church standing as a monument to the fact that the generation before failed God, and this generation is liberal and not preaching the word of God at all.

So they keep it up by social activities and by tying it in to whatever is going on in the world. But as a church it has failed and is not a church anymore, and the glory has departed. The glory has departed.

If we could see the visible cloud hanging over churches these times as once the visible cloud and fire hung over the camp of Israel in the wilderness, if we were permitted to see the fire by night and the cloud by day visibly hanging as a plume over the churches in which God is pleased, I wonder how many churches in this city we would see having a plume of fire by night and cloud by day hanging over them to tell all the world this is God's willing place and God is pleased with this place. But instead of that we'd see only monuments, monuments out in the country. Out in the country they have in some smaller towns, they have a rather quaint, and sometimes I think of more of it, but nevertheless they have this habit of burying good people out back of the church.

They came to the church so much that they thought, well, we might as well bury them out back. They're here all the time anyhow. So when they died they just buried them out back of the church.

They have a little church yard, the church, the little brown church in the vale. Do you remember singing that song, the little brown church, come, come, come, come? I never could count the comes. And I always got in each step and came in with too many or too few comes and singing that song.

But come to the church in the wild widow, come to the church in the vale. Now that little church is in Iowa, the state of Iowa. And out back of that little church there are the old people that used to come, come, come, come.

But now it's just a monument, a place where people come and say, that's the little church where Mbella was that wrote that song. And they pass on. But the Christians are lying out back of the church, they're sleeping out there, and I don't know about that church, but most of these monuments, they're great big buildings, kept up nicely.

But the people that have the fire are lying out back asleep, and the people that don't have the fire are sitting inside asleep. And that's the church. I say it's a monument for the fact that the church failed God.

It would be a tragic and a terrible thing, but you can keep coming to Avenue Road to Church week after week and putting in your huge offerings and keeping it running and keeping interested in it and never worry over it and never have any anxiety about its spiritual condition. It was too bad, because it's only as men and women labor in Israel, it's only as mothers travel in Israel, that Israel keeps alive and keeps pure. Now, that's the church.

We must not accept the church as it is. We must check it with the word of God and see if this is the way it should be. And then reverently and quietly and slowly but surely and patiently and lovingly bring the church into line with the New Testament to see that this is the way it would be done if the Holy Ghost were preached.

And when that takes place, the Holy Ghost begins to glow like a light in the church, begins to glow like a light. And that's what my heart longs to see. Now, secondly, the individual Christian, that is, the individual professed Christian.

Now, if you fail the purpose for which you were created, which of course is to be saved, to be born of God, to be filled with his Spirit and then be a reflector of the glory of the One who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, to be a reverent, humble worshiper of the Most High God, if you fail in this purpose, then you had better never have been born. Jesus said that one man, it were better for that man if he had never been born. In what there is no retreat or escape once you are born.

And once we grow up and become in that state that we call a state of responsibility, there is no retreating, you can't go back. But it would be better if I failed to reflect the glory of my God, if I failed God, it would be better if I had never been born to the world at all. How utterly tragic, how unspeakably tragic to be forever a broken vase.

How utterly tragic that God should make me to be a vase in which he would place the flowers of paradise, the lily of the valley, the rose of Sharon. And out from that simple earthen vessel there would go forth a fragrance that would fill the universe of God. And when I allow that vase to be shattered on the floor and not be used for the purpose God had intended.

How utterly tragic to be a stringless heart and to have all the shape and outline and form of a Christian that had no strings that the Holy Ghost could pull over. How utterly terrible to be a barren fig tree. Jesus walked to Jerusalem once, or out from Jerusalem with his people and saw a tree that had leaves on it.

And he went to that tree and found that it had no figs. And the way a fig tree does is different from an apple or a peach or a pear. The way the fig tree does is the fruit comes first, and then the leaves.

And when the leaves appear on the landscape, they tell everybody, come, come, there's fruit here. And according to the nature of the tree, the fruit should have been there before the leaves were there. But the leaves were there, and the order had been reversed.

And when Jesus came and parted the leaves and reached in for figs, there were no figs. He turned to his disciples and said, see that tree? No more, go further. And he cursed it and it withered from the top down.

How terrible to be a barren fig tree, to have the form and delineation of the Christian, but have no fruit, to be a star that shines not. Those solemn, lawful men, Peter and 2 Peter and Jude in this little epistle, speak about the dark stars that shine not, and clouds without rain. How terrible, how terrible to be a shattered mirror of the Almighty, meant of God to attach and reflect the beautiful light of God back to all the universe, but to be a cracked and shattered mirror that can reflect nothing.

And thus to be disapproved of God and banished from the garden, and be eternally aware of all this. The most frightful thing about human beings is our consciousness, that we are aware of things. But wasn't our awareness, if you were not aware of anything, no matter, nothing could harm you, if you weren't aware of it.

But it's a consciousness, it's sentiency, it's ability to feel, it's awareness. Hell would not be hell if it wasn't for the awareness of it. If men slept unconscious in hell, hell couldn't be hell.

But the rich man who died and found himself there was conscious he was there, and knew his brothers were not there, but would be coming there. The story is too well known to repeat, but he begged that somebody might go back and tell his brethren. It's awareness that matters.

I preached somewhere not too long ago, and I think the Lord was blessing me all right. And afterward a man came to me that had been under my ministry somewhat years before. I was sitting in a restaurant eating with a preacher, and this man came by with his wife, and they stopped him in at our table.

And he said, I enjoyed hearing it today. She told me it was like old times. And then he wept and said he'd had a bump back there that had thrown him out of the church, and he wept and said with tears, think of what I lost and gave up.

I could have heard this and could have had this kind of thing, but I foolishly sold it out, and he went on pestering me. I could say nothing, could do nothing. He was aware of what he had missed.

Not in my preaching necessarily, but the fellowship of the church and the truth is what he was talking about, not my sermon. Now if this is true, my dear friends, if you have been called God out of darkness into light to show forth the excellencies, the virtues, the beauties of him who called you in worship, in continual and perpetual, radiant, vibrant worship, and you're not doing it, or you have never allowed yourself to be born of his Spirit, you've never surrendered at all to the cause of the gospel, then let me say that your first interest should be to become a purified soul. Your first interest should be to have a purified soul.

I bought out here, I think it was here, perhaps it was in some city elsewhere, but I was flying out of here, and I bought a upper stand, one with paper bounds, and it's a new translation of the purgatorial that is Dante's second piece in his Divine Conquest. I had them in various translations, but it was a cheap paper bound and I wanted something to look at while we waited around, so I took it. Of course, it's entirely Roman Catholic, all together Roman Catholic, all of its philosophy is Roman Catholic.

But it's profoundly serious, Dante's work, profoundly serious. This purgatorial is the story of Dante. First he went to hell, that's the infernal.

Then he got graduated upward into the purgatorial and finally went into perdiccio, the heaven itself. But this was the new translation by the Italian poet Charlie on the purgatorial. There they are getting ready for what they hope is heaven.

It's half a room between hell and heaven. They're not bad enough for hell and not good enough for heaven, but hanging in between they're being purified. Purified in the oddest and strangest way.

Purified by carrying red rocks on their shoulders. Purified by being subjected to every kind of temporary punishment and fire and cold and heat and all the rest in order that they might be a purified people. Now I speak respectfully of this because Dante believed that.

He believed that. He'd been taught that and though he was a genius, he believed that. I don't.

And no bible teacher, no bible reader can believe it. It's appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment to depart and be with Christ which is far better. For if we are absent from the body we'll whom with the Lord, but absent from the Lord we'll whom in the body.

And the rich man died and in hell lifted up his eyes and Lazarus died and carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. That's what the bible teaches. But we think this is all over the place.

Well, when the flesh is gone and we can't do any more, then we'll decide we want to be poor. Well, we don't even have to give any money to the youth at the same church on which we were decided after we're dead doesn't give anything. He doesn't give anything.

So, the first thing we should do to be a purified soul, no matter how I look, not after I'm busy going to the public house. You know what to do when one of your relatives has been cut out or not. If your relatives happen to be too busy, they'll start out there to the left.

And if you don't have enough money for, for, for, what private attention, they'll start out in the left. What can you do to see if you have been favored and captured from unloved by the Lord of Christ? So, we ought to see quickly. This ought to be our first interest.

We shouldn't do this until we're purified people. And when we're purified people, we ought to do, we ought to do. I've said we ought to do it for all the little ones.

But I've also said we ought to do it for all the older ones, because there comes a time when everybody knows that they're not able enough. Not able enough to sing. And people say, well, they're still on the road.

And don't they know? When the terrible time is up, we'll all know that there's some time when we ought to do it while we have a cap. We all know psychology and psychiatry are both very different. Very different.

There's been a lot of people who say they've been bound from childhood and that's the root. You know, I'm telling you, it's not enough to allow the consciousness of guilt to get us down because of guilt concepts. We ought not to be too much bothered by religion.

Don't be bothered by it. There are a couple of people who are not bothered enough. One of the great leaders of a great church, of a great institution, a pre-community institution, that there's been a long war over that institution.

Somebody said to me, well, I said, I suppose there's a lot of the Christians involved in trouble over religion. He said, to the best of my knowledge, you all know that I have been head of this institution. I have never known one person to have a problem with religion.

But I have known hundreds of people here that could have been killed in here by religion. The only thing you've got to do is have a car. I'm ready to take that car away from your car.

Nobody on me needs to come to me and say, call me and say I'd like to see you and we're going to meet together. No matter. I expect you to come to me and I will come to you.

Well, I will do. I will. Sometimes I need an answer.

Maybe a friend needs to see me. She says she'd like to see me. Said she would be nice.

And he said, all right. And I came down here to the church. And I would come to this professor and he would never say to me, come down here and see me.

He would say, I don't want to see you. So I said to her, I want to see what I have now. She said, no problem, Mr. Turner.

I'll do what you want to do. She said, oh, I never meant it. And she said, um, she said, of course, it was all, it was all thoughts and, uh, emotions that had become physical.

And she said, of course, there's so much movement. And she said she'd be able to see other movements. She said that there was a movement that she wanted to see.

But she wanted somebody that could tell her she was all right. And I said to her, I said, Rosie, you're a victim of sodomy. She used to say, Rosie, the big one.

And I said, Rosie, you've been a victim of sodomy. That's about as bad as it gets. And I said, Rosie, I wouldn't take that gift from your godfather.

Oh, that's what I meant. And she told me, she said, it's the best thing you can do. It's the best thing you can do.

The reason for the security in California was that they told me that there were people who stood there. See, it doesn't stop anybody from doing that. I suppose I would have to admit that it would be illegal in that kind of way.

There were people who did this. But it didn't stop it from doing it. And it will never stop them from doing it.

See, see, wherever, see, wherever the devil has them, do them now. It will never stop them from doing it, and it will never stop the devil from doing it. See, every corner of the world, all of the things, see, they're going out to the sunrise.

And if the truth were known to all of God, those of us who have done that, as there is, in the sense, see, we're under pressure all the time, little by little, to get the message. And maybe right now, we're getting

our backs back, our heads back. And we're going to hit them with very, very awesome techniques, what you call the technique of total terror.

Total terrorist attacks. These are like lasers against the top, the very top, and in the front, and see such power. We've done too much to sit here and see this.

You just believe that all of right now is wrong? No. We must be a pure kind of people. We can be born into the world and not do a little bit of fucking cancer out of it.

No. Just because God doesn't let you do this, and God doesn't let the devil shine, and God doesn't let the devil fall to the devil's feet. Then what? Do you think that we want to do the things that God has never done? Do I want to make people that were desperate and in need of attention push the world to do ridiculous, ridiculous, God-awful work to tell them, God is watching, and say, I was wrong to tell you to do this.

I can find and break the pains of your conscience. You can make your life a little bit easier. Conscience? No, nothing.

Business? Better sell pills on the corner. You look good in business. But there's nothing about you that's the reason you shouldn't be here.

Closures? Closures. I told you I needed two. You can't conduct these services.

You can go astray. Why don't you go astray? What is the question? Let me go right now and I will show you something. All of this.

You and your family. All of the nation. All of the people of the nation.

All of the map of nations. The two unilateral contracts. Look.

Canada. The United States. Britain.

Canada. This covenant. That is the one that Canada has got everything it needs to have.

And it needs to be held into the wild. So the winner and the loser. and the people of the blood spattered all over the world for the peace we've taken on the ground.

All the nations, all the blocks of nations, have been given, have been, have been given the assurance of the power of the Supreme. The economy will not explode to the degree that we have, They're weak, they're bound, because they're weak. They're weak.

They're poor. They've been bound because they didn't look after their hearts. The nation that is in pain can go to the picture of God in heaven.

There will never be a nation on the outside that is in pain. Why not? Why not? Because they're weak. They've been too weak.

They won't help us, they're bound. They won't listen to us. I know it now from a place that's like me.

I've heard them tell us that it's too rough. We've learned that. They won't stop until I do that.

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