

(The Chief End of Man - Part 9): The Object of Worship

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer explores the nature of worship and the significance of recognizing Jesus Christ as the Lord of all in the context of His relationship with the church.

Duration: 38:46

Topics: "Chief End of Man"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses a metaphor of a shepherd and his bride to illustrate the relationship between Jesus and the church. The preacher emphasizes that God loves us deeply and is the Lord of all aspects of our lives. He encourages the congregation to focus on God and worship Him. The preacher also discusses the importance of expecting God to work in our lives and to have a joyful and hopeful attitude.

Transcript

And I want to turn to the song of songs which is Solomon's. In the fifth chapter of that little classic, beginning of verse 8, I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved that you tell him that I am sick of love, then they ask, what is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved that thou dost so charge us? She replies, my beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand, his head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy and black as a raven, his eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with mint and fitly set, his cheeks are as a bed of spices, the sweet flowers, his lips like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh, his hands are gold rings set with beryl, his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires, his legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of gold, his countenance is as Lebanon excellent as the cedars, his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely, this is my beloved, this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem. Now this song of songs is a song of love, it's the song of the shepherd and his fair young bride-to-be, and it's complicated, as things often are, by a rival.

And this rival is a rich and worldly king, and this rival is seeking all the way through this book, the song, to win away this fair young bride-to-be bride. And the story then is, the song has to do with the bride being swayed a little, ruled by this rich and worldly king, who is always pushing himself upon her, and then getting a glimpse of the bride being, occasionally, the shepherd, the young shepherd whom she really

loved and was waiting for. But he was hard to pin down, he was here and he was gone, but he was always somewhere within distance, and she was always looking for him.

Now at last the story ends with the two of them together, she coming leaning upon the arm of her beloved, and everything turns out all right. Now that's the story, and it has been during all the centuries, held to be a story of our Lord Jesus and his church. Our Lord is this shepherd, and the redeemed church is the fair bride.

And in an hour of distress, where we break into the story, in an hour of distress, she tells the daughters of Zion, the daughters of Jerusalem among whom she lives, she said, I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him that I am sick with love. And then they naturally inquire, they say, now why all the excitement, everybody's got a boyfriend, everybody has somebody that they like, and why are you so worn and pale, and so wrought and distressed, and why are you sending out your friends to look for your beloved, and sending a message to come that you're sick of love? What is your beloved more than another beloved that thou dost so charge us? Now the world has a perfect right to ask that question of the church, a perfect right. If the church is going to say that the Lord is worthy, that he is a worthy lover, then the world has a right to say, what kind of lover is he, and why should you be inviting us to come to him? Why should you be promoting him, what is thy beloved more than another beloved? And she answered him, and you know that in the book of Psalms, David also, I began with the book of Psalms, the 45th Psalm, David was also talking about this.

He said, My heart's inditing wood matter, and I speak the things which I have made touching the king. My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. And he says, Thou art fairer than the children of men.

Grace is poured forth by thy lips. And he says that all thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cashew out of the ivory palaces for a prescription of this shepherd king, who is a shepherd and is to be a king, and who is wooing the young bride to himself. And then if you will ask Peter that question, what is thy beloved more than another beloved, he will say that he is Lord of all.

So I want to talk tonight about the object of our worship, which is none other than the Lord himself, the Lord our righteousness, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Lord of all. And just in order that we might get it before us, I want to talk to you a little bit about what he's Lord of and why you should love him.

Now I have said, and I repeat now, that we can worship Jesus Christ the man without idolatry because he is also God. He has united mankind to deity by the mystery of the incarnation, and he has taken humanity up into God so that he himself is God. He has joined in the beauty and wonder of the prophet human God and man in one, so that whatever God is, Christ is.

He that has seen me has seen the Father. And when you worship the Lord Jesus, you are not displeasing the Father, for you are worshiping the Father in him and through him you are worshiping the Father, so that you worship the Lord himself. What is this Lord, and who is he, and what is he Lord of? It is written that he is Lord of all, but I say that we will divide it a little bit so that we can understand it better.

I can say that he is the Lord of all being. You know that song that says, Lord, and this Lord of all being is more than Lord of all beings. I want you to get the distinction here.

The hymn writer did not say he's the Lord of all beings, but he is the Lord of all being, which is something else and something more. But he is that, and that is he. He is the Lord of all actual existence.

He is the Lord of all kinds of being. He is the Lord of all being. And when we worship him, then, we encompass all being.

I wish that all young people might see this. Some argue they give themselves up to science, and some to technology, and some to philosophy, and some to art, and some to music. But when we worship the Lord Jesus Christ, we embrace and encompass all possible sciences and philosophies and arts.

We encompass it all because he is the Lord of it all. So he is the Lord of all being, and the enemy of all not being. He is the Lord of all being, and he is the Lord of all life.

These are elementary, but they are fundamental to any right understanding. He is the Lord of all life. It is written in 1 John 1, the first chapter, that that word of life which was with the Father, he is of life, the soul fountain.

What was it that Charles Wesley said? Thou of life, the fountain art pretty, let me take of thee, spring now up within my heart, rise to all eternity. He is the Lord of all life, so that as the Lord of all essential possibilities of life, he is the Lord of all kinds of life. You know there are many kinds of life.

Pretty soon the buds will be coming out. Some of them are already out up our way. That is, they are pushing out and extending themselves, though they have not burst yet.

But they are pushing themselves out, getting ready for the spring, and pretty soon there will be flow. He is the Lord of that kind of life, and that will bring back the birds. I have never forgiven the birds.

They are such fair-weather friends. When we need them to rest, they are in Florida. And when we don't need them, they are singing all over the place.

They will be back anyway, and that is another kind of life. And the rabbits will be out, and you will see the animals. Well, that is another kind of life.

And he is the Lord of that kind of life. And then we have the intellectual life, the life of imagination and reason, and he is the Lord of that kind of life. And we have the spiritual life, and he is the Lord of that kind of life.

He is the Lord of angels, and he is the Lord of the cherubim and seraphim. So he is the Lord of all life, and he is the Lord of all sorts of life, I say. And he is that, this Jesus, who, what is thy beloved more than another beloved me? And he is the Lord of all wisdom.

I want to tell you, and I hope that you will let it enter your heart, that all deep eternal wisdom lies in Jesus Christ as a treasure hidden away, and there isn't any kind of wisdom outside of him. All the deep eternal purposes of God are in him, because his perfect wisdom enables him to plan ahead, and all history is the slope of doubt. Today all we see is the laborers at work.

We see the rough, the external scaffoldings, and things don't look very good. And they're bringing things about, even the devil's righteousness, and all concepts of righteousness, and all possibilities of righteousness. I want you to see that he is wisdom and righteousness.

And as wisdom and righteousness, there isn't any book that can tell you anything. In the Old Testament, when the high priest went into the holy of holies to offer sacrifices once a year, he wore a holiness unto the Lord. And this Jesus Christ, our Lord, is righteous.

Then he is the Lord of all mercy, for he establishes his kingdom upon rebels, but first he renews the rebels, and he is the Lord of all beauty. God put something in the human breast that made it capable of understanding and appreciating beauty. He put in us the love of harmonious forms.

He put in us the love of an appreciation for. He put it in us. It's in everybody.

And he put in us also the love of moral forms. For remember that all beautiful things that are beautiful to the eye and to the ear, are only the external counterparts of that internal beauty which is moral beauty. There is such a thing as moral beauty.

Jesus Christ, our Lord, it was said of him physically that there is no beauty in him that we should desire him. The artists have painted Jesus as a very pretty man, a very pretty man, with a tender, feminine face, and clear, beautiful eyes, and an open, delightful countenance, with curly hair streaming down his shoulders. They had completely forgotten that there was no beauty in him that we should desire him.

They had forgotten that when the high priests would crucify him, they had to have an arrangement to betray him. And Judas Iscariot, to get his dirty pieces of silver, didn't say, when that company comes, pick out that beautiful one with his back and the light on his face. Pick him out, and he is the one.

They were all together there with their typical Jewish haircuts and their typical Hebrew garments, and all looking a good deal alike. So he said, The one I kiss, that will be the one. They didn't know.

The one I kiss, that will be the one. So when Jesus came, Judas passed by Peter and John and Philip and the rest, and he went to this man and kissed him. He said, That's the man there, the one he's kissed.

Now, if he had looked as beautiful physically as they painted him, why would it be necessary that he had to be betrayed with a kiss? He simply didn't look like that. There was no beauty in him that we should desire him, and he was another man among men. But the beauty of Jesus that has charmed the centuries is a moral beauty.

Even his enemies admit his moral beauty. You have never heard Khrushchev say anything against Jesus. You've never heard Stalin, at least I never had a quotation against Jesus.

Nietzsche, the great German philosopher, perhaps he's a great nihilist, one of the greatest antichrists that ever lived in the world, who died finally beating his forehead on the floor of itself. He said, That man, Jesus, I love. So there was a moral beauty, of moral form and liniment and moral texture.

He is the Lord of it all. Now, sin has scarred the world, poor old world. Sin has scarred it, made it inharmonious and unsymmetrical and ugly, and filled hell with ugliness.

If you love beautiful things, you'd better stay out of hell, for hell will be the quintessence of all that is morally ugly. And I believe also that it will, because usually the spirit of things determines the external manifestation of that spirit. And I believe that hell will be the ugliest place in the world when rough men say something is as ugly as parison, because hell is that against which all ugliness is measured.

But heaven over against that is the place of supreme beauty. Heaven is the place of harmonious numbers. Heaven is the place of loveliness.

Heaven is the place of beauty, because the one who is all beautiful is there. He is the Lord of all beauty, and earth lies between all that is ugly in hell, and all that is beautiful in heaven. Earth lies between it, and

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