

The Coming of the Holy Spirit (Formula for Spir)

by A.W. Tozer

To achieve spiritual success, one must magnify God, mortify the flesh, simplify their life, and serve their generation.

Duration: 43:44

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, Acts 13:36, 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, Colossians 3:22

Topics: "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of four key actions for spiritual success. The first is to magnify God, recognizing that any religious activities done without a genuine focus on God will be empty and meaningless. The second is to mortify the flesh, meaning to deny our selfish desires and strive to become smaller in order to grow spiritually. The third is to simplify our lives, avoiding unnecessary distractions and focusing on what truly matters. Lastly, the speaker urges the audience to serve their generation and not be parasites, but rather actively contribute to the world around them. The sermon is supported by various biblical texts, including Psalm 46, Colossians 3:22, and Acts 13:36.

Transcript

Tonight I do not plan to preach a sermon in the commonly accepted sense of the word, but rather to lay before you a formula for spiritual success, which I've given here and there. Somebody asked, Virgin, if you ever preach the sermon more than once, and he said, do you think I'd throw away the axe after I cut the tree down? And I have told people in my study, I've told them in private conversations, I've prayed about it myself, I've told audiences here and there, and tonight I want to talk to you about it. I have four texts.

They don't seem to be related, but they are. Psalm 40, 16. Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee.

Let such as love thy salvation say continually, the Lord be magnified. Then the second one is Colossians 3.5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth. Colossians 3.22. Servants obey in singleness of heart, fearing God.

And then a related text, Philippians 3.13. There's one thing I do, and there's Acts 13.36 for David. After he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on his feet. Now, first thing I want to tell you is that

you can take this down, these four points, and you can have them.

I might as well tell you that, because you'll probably take them anyhow. And I might as well relieve your conscience of it. You can have this, because I've had sermons lifted from me beautifully, and have nothing coming back.

And they didn't know it. Preachers didn't know it. But it's perfectly all right.

Nothing's copyright. I think that everybody ought to have a privilege, using any of the Lord's weapons belonging to any of the Lord's people, except their armor. And I'll never wear anybody's armor, except mine.

Shape I'm in, no other armor would ever fit me anyhow. Now, I believe that life is a serious thing, and that this is a serious world in which we live. And I'm encouraged to believe that there are serious-minded people left.

Now, there are not as many as lots of people think, but there are more than others think. There are serious-minded people still alive in the world, who realize the seriousness of life, and are honestly concerned how they can meet and conquer life and death, and how they can salvage something out of the wrecks of the world, and how they can save their own souls out of the disasters. Don't get shocked now and follow the Schofield Bible on this, because Peter did say, save yourselves, didn't he, from this untoward generation? Peter said that I can cautiously venture to whisper it, if an apostle said it, even if you don't find it in the margin of the Schofield Bible.

So, I think there are some who are wanting to save their souls out of this untoward generation, this coming disaster, and the crash and downfall of the world. And such as that would welcome counsel, and I want to give it to you. Welcome counsel not from a perfect man, but from somebody who's walked with God, and who's loved and lived in the scriptures for quite a while, and who hasn't any other motive except to do you good.

Nobody can get my fear or my respect if I know he's got a handout, that he's got his hand out for something from me. Nobody can get my ear. I won't listen to anybody.

I don't think it's a spiritual thing. I haven't any conscience about it at all. I'll plug my ears against the man that I have suspect of being out to get something from me.

But no man can preach too straight to me if I know he loves me and doesn't want anything I have. And no man can be too eloquent for me to walk out on if I have a suspicion that he wants something I have. Now, I don't want anything that you have at all, except my car, sir, and I'll get that, I'm sure.

But outside of that you can keep everything, get a commission. But there are four things that I'd like to say to you, that if you're going to save yourself from this untoward generation, and salvage something out of the world, or actually in the crash and fall of the world, you're going to have to do four things that I have before you here. First is, magnify God.

Second is, mortify the flesh. Third is, simplify your life. And the fourth is, serve your generation.

Now, there are the four texts, and that's what the four texts say. Let's look at the first one first. Let such as love thy salvation say continually, the Lord be magnified.

Now, I'm positively sure, after many years of observation and prayer, I'm sure that the basis of all of our trouble today in religious circles is that our God is too small, that God isn't big enough. And when he says magnify the Lord, he doesn't mean that you're to make God big, but you're to see him big. When we take a glass to look at a star, we don't make the star bigger, we only see it bigger.

And so you can't make God bigger, but you're only to see him bigger. Now, it's quite popular for us to talk about the liberals and the modernists, and you can just name them. All of them have a little God, and we life people have a big God.

We do have a big God, but most of us don't see him big. And so my first point is, see God big. Magnify God.

Now, the most important verse in the bible is not the one you think it is. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Lay that aside, that's not the most important one.

Nor is it the other one you think it is, John 3, 16. God so loved the world, that's not the most important one. The most important verse in the bible is this one, in the beginning, God.

That's the most important verse because that's where everything must begin. God is the fountain out of which everything springs, and he is the foundation upon which everything rests. God is all in all.

The archbishop said God is over all things, under all things, outside all things, within but not enclosed, without but not excluded, above but not raised up, below but not depressed, wholly above presiding, wholly beneath sustaining, wholly without embracing, and wholly within self. And I'm sure that if we saw God bigger, we'd see people smaller. This is the day of the magnification of slick personality, and just as we magnify slick personalities, we minimize God.

And don't you think that we've escaped the curse either in evangelical circles, and don't you think we've escaped the curse in full gospel circles, for we have not. We are a whole mediums go by in which we never see God at all, we only see his servants, that is all. And the curlier the hair of the servant, the more we see the servant.

And if he's been pardoned from murdering his grandmother's aunt, why, we magnify him still more. And if he's been half converted from movie acting, why, we magnify him still more. We've always got some big wheel that we're down in front of, kicking the toe of, as the Catholic kisses the toe of the Virgin Mary, and we wonder why the Holy Ghost doesn't bless us.

The Holy Ghost doesn't bless us for the same reason he doesn't bless the Catholics for kissing the toe of the Virgin. They've got their focus wrong. We respect the Virgin, but we don't worship her, and God would have us respect each other, but not worship each other.

And yet, there's an awful lot of hero worship in the Church of Christ. Magnify the Lord with me, and everybody say, be magnified. Now, God moves according to an eternal purpose, and he carries on after his own plan.

One time, a long while ago, when the Presbyterians were meeting somewhere over there in the Isles, I think in London, trying to work up what later was called the 39 Articles. They say that they could get a definition of doctrine, all doctrines but one, and that was the doctrine of God. Nobody could seem to come up with a definition, and I think I could guess why.

So, they were just about in despair, and one moderator finally said, and pointed to a young minister down in front and said, Brother, would you lead us in prayer one more time that God might give us light on what we can put down in the creed about God? The young fellow got up and grabbed the figurehead of him, squeezed his eyes shut, and shook his head, and prayed with great earnestness, and he said, O God, thou art spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in thy being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. Somebody said, now that's enough, that's it, and they wrote it down. So, here we have it.

God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. So, Novation says that the contemplation of God's majesty all else is dumb. He's always greater than anything that can be said about him, and no language is worthy of him.

He is more sublime than all sublimity, loftier than all loftiness, profounder than all profundity, more splendid than all splendor, more powerful than all power, more truthful than all truth, greater than all majesty, more mystical than all mercy, and juster than all justice, and more pitiful than all pity. And yet, nothing that anybody can say about him is enough. Back in Isaiah the 14th chapter, there occurs a passage, and I was too dumb to say it, but somebody pointed it out to me.

Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, and bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power, and not one failure. Now, until this was pointed out to me, I didn't see what was here.

Why, Isaiah, in a figure of speech that was probably the loftiest ever conceived by the mind of man, I don't think Shakespeare, Isaiah, ever had a lofty thought compared with this one, or David. This man, Isaiah, saw the stars in the heavens above as sheep on a green pasture field, and the great God Almighty, the shepherd, walking among them and calling them all by name. And if you're not afraid that your head will split open with the effort, try to conceive the infinite number of stars that dot the heavens above, and then think of God leading the stars as a shepherd leads his flock, and calling them every one by name, and not one of them faileth.

This is our God, and my brethren, God calls us to magnify him, to make God big. The meeting isn't big because a lot of people are present. The meeting is big because a number of people see a big God in the meeting, and the bigger God is seen, the greater the meeting is.

A friend of mine has a little saying, I'd rather have a big little meeting than a little big meeting. And there are a lot of big meetings that are little because the God in them is a small God, and there are a lot of little meetings that are big because God is big in the midst of them. I tell you, if you're a Christian and you're getting older in God, you ought to be getting nearer to God, and God ought to be becoming to you more and more, and other things less and less.

And if you still have to be chucked under the chin so many times a month by the pastor to keep you happy, you're a kind old goat, and you need help from God. My friends, if God isn't the biggest thing in the world to you, not all your talk will ever seem fresh to me. We ought to be where God is everything, where we walk into a meeting, and we see God, and we think God, and we feel God, and God's all around about us, and that God shuts down over us, and we see him in a bush in the cool of the day, and we see him on the mountain in thunder and fire, and we see him on the cross in blood and tears, and we see him coming down the sky riding a white horse, and we see him sitting on a throne judging the nation, but always we see God.

God is everything. I want you to pray about something for me. While you do this, I don't often introduce personal matters, but I want you to pray about something.

I wish you'd pray that God would help me and let me live long enough to write a book on the attributes of God's devotion reconsidered. I have that in my mind, and I want to do it, but I'm too busy with the weekly to do it, and I want to quit the weekly so I can do it, and if I quit, oh my, I'm all messed up. But you'll pray for me if the Lord will find his way, will you? I'd like to do this.

I'd like to leave to this generation an elevated and large conception of the great God Almighty in his three persons. I'd like to enjoy and let the world say, not wasn't told he's smart, wasn't eloquent, wasn't a witty, but to have them say, we praise thee, oh God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord, all-universe, magnified he, the Father everlasting. To the all-angels cry aloud, holy, holy, holy Lord God of heaven and earth, oh for the majesty of thy glory.

It's this that I want to do. I want to leave behind me a flavor of God, so the triune God gets all the credit. When I say God, brother, I mean the triune God.

Somebody accused me of this. He said, you talk about God all the time, and Simpson talks about Jesus all the time. That's the difference between you two.

Well, I didn't answer him. I never answer a critic. I'm afraid to.

I know how sharp my tongue is, so I keep my mouth shut. But I know this, that when I say God, I mean Jesus, and I mean the Father, and I mean the Holy Ghost. For there is one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, that was begotten of him before all worlds, God of God, light of light, very God to very God, begotten, not made.

And there's one Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who is the Father and Son together, worshiped and glorified. So when I talk about God, I don't split up the Godhead. You can't divide the Godhead, brother.

The old creed says that we're not to compound the persons nor divide the substance, and God can't be anywhere, partly present. Whenever God's at all, God's all there, and when one person's there, all persons are there, because you can't divide the substance of the Godhead. So that where the Father is, there also is the Son, and there's the Holy Ghost.

And where the Son is, there's also the Father, and there's the Holy Ghost. And where the Holy Ghost is, there's also the Father and the Son. So the blessed Trinity is here in this meeting house tonight, and he's all here, and he's not partially here, but he's all here.

God doesn't send representatives. God is here, and if that isn't good news to you, you need to be born again. Now, that's the first thing.

Magnify God, and your ministry will be little, and you'll be little, and you'll die a little unless you have a bigger God. And God gets bigger in your eyes every day. Great God, I pray that he'll make himself big in our eyes.

So, when we need it, it won't be sharp talk. It'll be all about God. Well, the second thing is mortify the flesh.

That's that Colossian verse. Now, you Christians might as well admit this. There's a reality you've got to reckon with, and that's your flesh.

And by your flesh, I don't mean your body. That old monastic idea that God is angry with your body, just as silly as it can possibly be. Your body is just a donkey right around on, that's all, and it isn't either good or bad.

It's just your bones and flesh and blood, that's all. It's what the thinkers and the theologians call amoral. That means not moral or immoral, just negative, just neutral.

So, your body isn't good or bad. Your body's just a hunk of flesh. So, when the Bible says, mortify your flesh, it doesn't mean mortify your blood, and your bones, and your epidermis, and your hair, and teeth, and eyes, and stomach.

It doesn't mean mortify your physical body. God isn't mad at your physical body, brother. When the Bible says, mortify your flesh, it means mortify your ego, your old man, the self, that evil that's in you, that brunch day present you got from the devil when you were born.

That inward thing, that's your flesh, that's what it means. That's you. Now, if the old man was something that could be lifted out like an onion could be pulled out of a garden bed, then we'd all feel very proud of the fact that we've been de-onionized and debunked.

But the terrible part about this crucifying the flesh is that the flesh is you, that the flesh is you. And when the Lord says, mortify the flesh, he doesn't mean abuse your body, starve it, or make it to lie on beds of nails. It means put yourself on the cross, and that's what people don't want to do.

The Alliance grew up and started out, went for a while on the doctrine of self-crucifixion, or at least crucifixion, putting of ourselves to death, mortifying the flesh through the cross of Jesus. But that's all old stuff now, and it belongs back there with the horse, and the buggy, and the buckle, and the high button shoes. Nobody believes it anymore.

If they do, they don't live and I think it's better not to believe it and say so, like some of our good Calvinist friends do, than to say you believe it and then live in spite of it in defiance of it. Amen, and amen, and amen. Now, there's a lot of people trying to get away with the old man.

What do I mean by the old man? I mean your pride, and your bossiness, and your nastiness, and your temper, and your mean exposition. And what do I mean, man? I mean your bearishness, and your ghostishness, and your lustfulness, and your wolfishness, and your quarrelfulness, and your pride. What do I mean, reverend? I mean your strife, and your hunting for a bigger church, and your being dissatisfied with the offering, and blaming the superintendent because you can't get called, and when the reason you can't get called is nobody wants you.

That's what I mean, reverend, and you deacons, what do I mean? Sitting around the wall of the boardroom, putting steak, comb, and Vaseline, and tonic on the wall, into the fire, into the night, when you're too past your hour, because you're too stubborn to humble yourself and make you wrong. That's what I mean, Vicky boy, that's what I mean. What do I mean, you musicians? I mean that jealousy that makes you hate somebody that can sing a little better than you can.

I mean that jealousy that makes you want to play the violin, and when everybody knows that you couldn't play the violin, and facing the choir director, and you hate him, wish he was dead, because he couldn't play, then you'd get called upon to Tony, when the trouble is you just can't play. Now, that's what I mean, and all of this may be under the guise of spirituality, and we may learn to put our head over on one side,

fold our hands gently, put on a beatrific smile like Francis of Assisi, and still be just as kind as they come. My brother and sister, I don't know what your theory is about sanctification.

I don't care about that, but I do say this, that you'd better modify your flesh, or your flesh will do something terrible to you. These terrible days in which we live, we've not only accepted the flesh in its more refined manifestation as being quite copper, but we have created a ignoble theology of extenuation, and we've used the flesh. People don't hesitate anymore to say, oh was I mad, was I mad.

All right, leave him there brothers, and one minute after he told somebody how mad he was, he'll leave him there. He'll get mumbling words. I have no confidence in a man who loses his temper, and I don't believe that the man who blows up and loses his temper is a spiritual man.

I don't care if he's a preacher, a bishop, a pope, or what he is. He's a carnal man, as carnal as a goat, and needs to be cleansed by fire and blood. Well, we've excused it.

People say I was mad. Well, if we were mad we were sinning, but we've incorporated the flesh into our orthodoxy, and instead of being humble, we magnify the cloud, fellow. You know, years ago God gave me an ice pick, and he said, now son, among your other duties will be to puncture all the inflated egos that you see.

Go stick an ice pick in them, and there'll be more pops than hitting around as the air hits out of egos. People hate me for that, but I love them for the privilege of whittling them down the side. Because if there's anything that we ought to forget to say is how little we are.

When I was a young fellow, I always loved guns. I got a .22 revolver, and loved to shoot. This was fun, you know, and nothing else to do, and that rarely.

But I was out shooting with another fellow, and we shot at what they called a mud hen. Now, I'm not sure what a mud hen is, actually, but they call it mud hen out in Ohio. We thought it was a great big duck, and we peeled the thing, you know, fixed it, plucked it, got rid of its feathers.

It was the biggest piece of trick you ever saw. It was practically all feathers. It wasn't much bigger than an oversized robin when we got down to the real duck.

But when you looked at it, it was all puffed up and swollen out, and that describes most Christians. We fanned our feathers on in, so people don't know how small we are, you know. Listen, mama, did you ever give your dog a bath? You know how your dog, your woolly dog, your little fluffy fellow, shakes himself and stands up there, he's so soft and fluffy, and you give him a bath, and boy, he shrinks down two-thirds.

Well, that's most of us. There's this fur we got, this fluff, this exterior. It just needs to be reduced, that's all.

Mortify your flesh. And mortify comes from the same Latin word mortuary, comes from a place where you put dead people. It means to die.

But we don't talk about that much anymore. You can get by it, you're just able to tell the board of examiners what Nyack teaches about it. The only word they can give you is church, unless you ruin another congregation.

But we don't believe much in it anymore. We just talk about it, but we don't believe in getting a result. But you will never be a spiritual man until God reduced you to your proper size.

He cuts you down to your right size. Mortify is a New Testament word. Turn your back upon yourself, and reckon yourself to be dead indeed, and crucified with Christ, and then expect the blood and the power of the Holy Ghost to make real what your faith has reckoned, and then begin to live it.

Some people go to an altar and get sanctified, but they're still resentful, they still have a chip on their shoulder, they still love money, they still got a temper, they still look where they shouldn't, and then they're sanctified. No, my friend, they're not. They are just pretenders, or worse than that, they're deceived persons.

So, either we'll mortify the flesh, or the flesh will want to harm us to a point where we'll have no power, no joy, no fruit, no usefulness, no victory. And now, third is simplifying your life. Now, practically everybody has too much, knows too much, sees too much, goes to too many places, and comes back from too many places.

I'm writing an editorial just now on this very subject. We've got to simplify our lives, or we're going to lose terribly. But most people won't simplify themselves.

Life has a center and a perimeter, you see. At the center of the soul is God, and then as we grade out from the center of the soul, we get out into what's just like a great temple, with God glowing in the middle of the temple, and then there's the outer courts, and then there's the fields, and then there's the woods, and then there's the deserts beyond. And most people do not live in the center of their lives.

Be still and know that I am God is the great Bible word, but most people would be afraid of backsliding if they could yell it. If they got still just long enough to listen for the voice of God, they'd feel that there was the coldest meeting in all the wide world. You know, brothers, some of the most wonderful meetings in the world is where God is there in such awful power, people are afraid to speak.

Some of the most wonderful meetings I've ever been in have been meetings where nobody could even whisper. The mighty power of God was there, and nobody dared open his mouth. He was breathless.

When I'm praying the most eloquently, I'm getting the least accomplished in my prayer life, but when I stop getting eloquent and giving God a lesson in theology, shut up and just gaze upward and wait for God to speak to my heart, while then he speaks with such power that I have to grab a pencil and a notebook and take notes on what God's saying to my heart. Oh brother, we can only simplify our lives. Now, the further we get out from the center of our lives, the more speed we get, and the less power.

Everybody knows machinery, that if there's a moving power shaft, you know that if you have a little wheel on that power shaft, you have less speed, but you have more power. But if you have a big wheel on the power shaft, you have more speed, but you have less power. Now, that's why you shift gears in your car.

You have more power when you're in low gear, but you have more speed when you're in top gear, because you're out further from the center. It's always so with God's people. The further you get out from the center of your heart, and from the presence of God, and from the sanctuary of your soul, the faster you go, but the less power you have.

Most people like to go fast. They don't care for power. I remember old Socrates, God bless his old bald head.

Old Socrates was in Athens. Somebody took him around. You know, he didn't have any shoes.

He went around barefooted, trying to prove to people he didn't know anything. That's what they finally killed him for. And they took him around Athens, ten cent stores, you know, and after half a day of it, paddling around in these old bare feet, they let him out after seeing all the marketplaces, and they said, well, Socrates, what do you think of it? He said, I never knew before how many things there are in Athens that I don't want.

I like that, don't you? He didn't want it. He was looking for things he didn't want, and that's the way it was. Well, we were too busy, we know too much, we lived too many things.

There's something, let me give you some advice. Now, some people would like this. You're saying I'm radical, but I've been called radical now since I was 19.

But, let me give you some advice. You ought to know how you can have a stepped-up revival in your soul. Go home and pull the plug out on your radio and tv set, and leave it out for 10 full days.

Go home, pull it out. Now, I don't say throw out these things. I don't have a tv.

I wouldn't have run around the place. I have a little radio. I get the news and a few things on it.

But, if you really want to meet God, I almost said go home and pull the plug out of the telephone, but I won't say that. Maybe that's a mistake. But at least go home and pull the plug out on your tv and radio.

Listen to yourself. You touch with your own voice. Most people don't know what their own voices sound like anymore.

They're so used to somebody else's voice cutting in on them. Why, some people are so exquisitely dumb that they won't even pull the plug on the tv when the pastor comes. Ed Maxis, who was the third man on the totem pole over at our church, third, second to third from pastors, he went somewhere to visit a man, and the fella left the tv on.

And Ed stood there in the midst and said, I'll come back at a more convenient time, sir, and walked out on him. I like that. That's the way to do it.

Don't play second cedar to a shadow. And that's what he wanted him to do. Well, anyhow, I'm sure that some of you women, that the faith, faith of Asher Godfrey is more familiar to you.

Sure. You know, what an old redheaded artist. Pray for your husband, sister.

Why, you're a stumbling block in his way. Now, you have to pray for him until you get right. Now, in the gifts and many things we don't need to know, you don't have to read everything, not even all that's in the last weekly.

Read more Bible, less reader's digest, less Pittsburgh Sun-Telly, and less Time and Life and Newsweek and all that. Just read less on that. I don't say it's bad, I just say that all it does is confuse you and fill your head with spun yarn, or just win.

Just take a little time out to talk to God all by yourself. Never try that, brother. Simplify your life and get back to the simple things of life.

Be still and know that I am God, and learn how strong simplicity is. To be simple, not to push and boast and bloat and puff out. You heard, didn't you, about Toad, about the mama Toad that came home and said, I think it was a frog instead of Toad, and said to the father Toad, now this isn't anything funny, this is real, and this was the old Aesop's old day, and she said, you know, honey, said to her frog husband, she said, you know, honey, I saw a bull today.

Said, you did? Was he bigger than I am? She laughed, said, bigger than you are. I should say he was bigger than you are. Oh, he said, I'm not too sure about that.

He said, was he this big? And he puffed himself up, and she said, bigger than that. He said, was he this big? And he puffed himself up still more, and she kept saying, ah, you're a bunny, you're no size compared with him, and he puffed and puffed in front of me, and it was a loud bang that she was a widow. Old Aesop told that back before the time of Christ.

Even that old goose saw through a lot of this, and he'd come here and smile at a lot of us, thanks if I'd puffed up frogs. Full of unfragrant wind and confusion, and a million things we don't need. You don't need to know so much, brother, and you don't need to have so many things, sister.

You just have to dust them anyhow. So, simplify your life. The use of things gives me a single eye looking alone into thee.

All for a single eye. Not want very much. For twenty-some years I haven't owned an automobile, and I'm the only man in the United States of America except two bums down on Skid Row that don't have one.

And they won't believe it, you know. They say, what? An intelligent man living in the United States of America in 1956 doesn't own an automobile? Well, they're more trouble than a pair of twins. You have to be always scrubbing them, gassing them, oiling them, and putting tires on them, and having licenses for them.

Well, I know people that actually think more of their cars than they do of their wives. And I've got so many friends that have cars that are going where I want to go, why should I bother with one? Well, this will probably slip over your head, but I am telling you, simplify your life. Come home and decide before God.

Now, don't come to the altar and try to do this here while somebody beats you over the head. Don't do it that way. Get somewhere with your Bible and God.

Get alone. Get after God free, and then let some out of your living room, and give yourself a chance to be still and know that I am God, and talk to God about things. Then the fourth is, serve mankind.

David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, he fell on his feet. Now, David was a man in life's fashions the same as we are, but when David died, God blew the whistle and rang the bell. Because he served his generation by the will of God, and then he fell on his feet.

Christ became a servant, for the Son of Man has come to speak and to say that which was lost. And when Jesus said it's finished, he didn't mean only that his preaching ministry was finished, but he was helping, and healing, and feeding, and comforting, and blessing everywhere that he went. Jesus was a servant.

He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. You know what you are? You're a servant. You ordain men that now like to think of themselves as a minister.

You know what the word minister means? It means a servant. It means a servant. It doesn't mean somebody to be looked up to.

It's somebody that's to be there to help out. You're a servant. Serve your generation.

Now, no man has any right to die until he has served his generation. No man. A lot of us would say we'd like to die.

Even Paul wasn't willing to die. Paul said, I'd like to die and go to be with Jesus, which is far better. But he said, I'm not going to yet, because there are people down here that need me.

And he was a debtor, and until he squared the debt, he wasn't going to die. No man, no Christian has any right to die until he's put the world in debt to him. When Charles Wesley, John Wesley came into the world, they were in debt to their mother, they were in debt to their father, they were in debt to the nurse, they were in debt to everybody that served them.

But they didn't die until they turned the tables on the world. And now the world's in debt, and the Church of God's in debt to Charles and John Wesley. You can hardly have a service if somebody doesn't lead off being one of Charles Wesley's hymns.

The world is in debt, the Church is in debt to Charles Wesley. He'll live until he'll reverse the tables and put the world in debt to him. When Livingstone came into the world, and the Livingstone at home, Mama Livingstone hugged the little fellow to her chest and said from her breast and loved him, and looked after him, and helped him on to grow up to be a little man.

And he was in debt to her, and in debt to his father, and in debt to everybody. But when Livingstone died kneeling in prayer in a little hut over in Africa, he had made the world to be his debtor. And a grateful world remembered him and buried him in Westminster Abbey among England's great.

And when Jaffrey, R.A. Jaffrey, was born in a Canadian home in Canada, by his well-to-do parents had it all fixed up for little Robbie. They had a little lair for him, and beds, and bottles, and all that he needed. He owed them everything.

But when he lay quietly on the cot there in that prison above Newcastle, and breathed out his last in the service of his God, whole sections of the world were in debt to R.A. Jaffrey. And so was Simpson, and so was so many more. So was Daddy Whiteside that watched grace this platform with his little quiet holy presence.

When he was born into the Whiteside home, of course he was in debt to everybody. But when they laid him away, everybody was in debt to him. He served his generation by the will of God before he fell on sleep.

The trouble with a lot of lazy Christians is they want to fall on sleep before evening. They're quick before the whistle blows. Well, I'll tell you this too.

If you'd serve your generation, you'd better get at it, because your generation isn't going to be around very long. You can't serve last generation, and you can only indirectly serve your next generation, but you can serve this present generation. Some of us are just religious sponges.

We absorb and absorb and absorb, and that's about all there is to it. But the Lord wants us to serve, to do things for people, to put people in debt to us. Why I have people, now this gets back to my church, I don't mind at all, but I have people in my church that give to missions very heavily, and they pray for missions very faithfully, and they know the names of the missionaries, and the new babies, and all the problems of the missionaries, but they've never washed anybody's floor, nor washed anybody's feet, nor carried a bowl of soup to a sick widow.

They've never done anything like that, and they wouldn't speak to it. They buy their way out by giving heavy to missions. It's termed God by proxy.

A lot of us Alliance people, we buy our way out by giving to missions and putting the pictures of missionaries on our walls, but you couldn't get us to do anything really humble. We had a little girl who's three years with us in Chicago who was a deaconess, Beatrice Shrum. She's now Beatrice Cottmell of India.

She married Mr. Cottmell after she got to India. Well, Beatrice is from around this area somewhere, isn't she? Yeah, out there somewhere, out somewhere in this area. But anyway, Beatrice came to us, and she visited, and she did all sorts of things.

You know, the intangible things you can't pin down. You're not sure whether you're accomplishing anything or not. So a blue baby, she'd grown up to be about, I think, maybe 14 years old, but she was still a blue baby, and she was nine.

And Beatrice went out to see her. Somebody went out, and here was Beatrice down on her hands and knees in the kitchen scrubbing the floor. And I said, Now listen, Beatrice, we didn't call you to Chicago to scrub floors.

She said, Oh well, you know sometimes I like to see, to do something that you can see you've accomplished something. I like that. And so Beatrice went to the field, and there she is, and they say one of the finest missionaries that ever went to India.

But she wasn't too proud to get down on her knees and scrub a floor in a home where the sick girl lay. Now, you can't buy yourself off by giving \$181.30 commission. You can't buy yourself off by playing regularly with that blue book in your hand, naming the names over it that you don't know anything about.

That's all right if you want to do that, but that's an awfully poor way of serving your generation. Serve your generation with your lily white hands, honey, and God will believe you mean what you say. You know, there are people that need your help.

Tomorrow morning I'm going to preach to the prisoners out here. I go occasionally preach to bums, where you almost have to hold your nose. I do it because I don't want to become a white-handed pastor, one of these smooth-cultured fellows with a smooth hand and a proper word.

I like to get down to the grassroots and serve people where they really live. Serve your generation by the will of God. Sisters or anybody that needs a bowl of soup out your way, or anybody, man, that needs your actual, needs your help out your way, you're better thinking about serving your generation now while you can.

For time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away. This life forgotten as a dream dies at the opening day, and your generation's passing fast away, fast, fast away, so you'd better get at it. Now, I'll summarize these four points.

Magnify God, or all you do in religious circles will be wood, hay, and stubble. Mortify the flesh, or you'll shrink and shrink and get smaller and smaller, trying to get bigger. Simplify your life, or you'll waste it.

Serve mankind, or your existence hasn't been justified. If you want to justify your existence, get some calluses on your hand, get out and serve your generation. Don't be a parasite.

You've got a good preacher now here in this city. You've always had good preachers, but you've got a specially good-acted man. Now your temptation is to be a parasite.

Fasten yourself onto him like a tick on a dog's ear, and drink his blood, and live off his spirituality and zeal. Don't be like that. Get your own feet down on the ground, and get a sucker down onto that earth so you can get something for yourself.

Serve your generation. Don't be a spectator, be a participator. Nobody can give an order call after a talk like this, but if I didn't talk like this, I'd be unfaithful to my own soul.

So, I've told you some things, and you've been remarkably quiet, but it won't hurt you a bit. So, amen? Tonight, I do not plan to preach a sermon in the commonly accepted sense of the word, but rather to lay before you a formula for spiritual success, which I've given here and there. Somebody asked Spurgeon if he ever preached a sermon more than once, and he said, Do you think I'd throw away the axe after I cut the tree down? And I have told people in my study, I've told them in private conversations,

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/5/SID5035.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/the-coming-of-the-holy-spirit-formula-for-spir/>

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