

The Compelling Call

by A.W. Tozer

The true minister is one who has been called by God and has surrendered to the inward pressure, responding with faithfulness in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Exodus 3:11, 1 Corinthians 9:16

Topics: "Divine Calling", "Ministry Responsibility"

Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes that true ministers are called by God rather than choosing the ministry for themselves, often experiencing reluctance in their calling. He reflects on biblical figures like Moses, who resisted their divine commission but ultimately surrendered to the compelling call of the Spirit. Tozer warns against those who rush into ministry without understanding its sacred nature, highlighting that genuine ministers feel an inward pressure to preach the gospel, echoing Paul's sentiment of woe if they do not. The sermon serves as a reminder of the seriousness and weight of the ministerial calling, urging faithfulness to God's call.

Transcript

For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! --1 Corinthians 9:16

The true minister is one not by his own choice but by the sovereign commission of God. From a study of the Scriptures one might conclude that the man God calls seldom or never surrenders to the call without considerable reluctance. The young man who rushes too eagerly into the pulpit at first glance seems to be unusually spiritual, but he may in fact only be revealing his lack of understanding of the sacred nature of the ministry.

The old rule, "Don't preach if you can get out of it," if correctly understood, is still a good one. The call of God comes with an insistence that will not be denied and can scarcely be resisted. Moses fought his call strenuously and lost to the compulsion of the Spirit within him; and the same may be said of many others in the Bible and since Bible times. Christian biography shows that many who later became great Christian leaders at first tried earnestly to avoid the burden of the ministry; but I cannot offhand recall one single instance of a prophet's having applied for the job. The true minister simply surrenders to the inward pressure and cries, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" God Tells the Man Who Cares, 87-88.

"Lord, I'm here in this ministry not because I chose to be, but because I've sensed your call on my life. Help me always to be faithful to that call, in the power of Your Holy Spirit. Amen."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/the-compelling-call/>

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