

The Hidden Life of Faith

by A.W. Tozer

The hidden life of faith is a spiritual ability to trust Christ by the Holy Spirit, imparted by God to those who have found a hiding place in the smitten rock.

Duration: 24:55

Scripture: Exodus 33:22, Psalm 91:1, Matthew 14:15

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the power of faith and obedience to God's will. He emphasizes that if a person obeys God's work, they will fulfill His will. The speaker also highlights the importance of faith in the gospel and how it is a gift from God. He explains that true faith allows a person to enter the kingdom of God and become part of the select circle of the elect. The sermon concludes with a story about the speaker's experience of preaching the gospel and the impact it had on the listeners.

Transcript

Here in this chapter, or the sections of the two chapters which we read this morning, there is the most charmingly beautiful scenes found anywhere in the entire Bible. And this I would not say is a type of anything, but I would say that it is a marvelously beautiful illustration. It doesn't preach to us, maybe, but it sings to us, and it sings to us the song of the hidden life.

I will hide thee in a cliff of the rock while my glory passeth by. And it's of the hidden life of faith, the song of the man, woman, who has found a hiding place in the smitten rock. Just in the gospel orator has certain clear specific results.

I say that faith is a gift of God to contact hearts. It is not a conclusion drawn from fact. It is a spiritual ability imparted by the Holy Ghost.

I keep bearing down on this and telling the people, because it is one of the doctrines that has been lost by us. It is not denied, it is de-emphasized with the result that it, for all practical purposes, does not validate Christian doctrine today, that faith is not a conclusion. We do not say, did God write the Bible? Yes.

This text is in the Bible, therefore did God write that text? Yes. If God wrote the Bible, this is in the Bible, and God is true, therefore is that text true? Yes. Well, then you're a believer.

Now, that faith certainly is a kind of intellectual conclusion drawn from a set of facts. But the faith in the gospel orator, formed man, is a gift of God, a spiritual ability to trust Christ by the Holy Spirit to the penitent man, and withheld from every other sort of man. A man of faith, that is, who has this real faith, this imparted faith, enters an immortal kingdom at once, into the kingdom of God, and he joins a select circle.

He joins the elect. It is not the ecumenical circle that we hear about so much recently. More than that, it's bigger than that.

It is the select circle. It is the circle of the elect, of the immortal kingdom. And when a man thus does enter that kingdom, he becomes what I might call man.

I will hide thee, said God. I will put thee in a cliff to the rock. And this was, I saw the type, but at least a beautiful illustration of the God-hidden life.

Now, I want to say four or five things about this man of faith, that he is a God-charmed man. If he's a real man, he's been wrongly taught. He lives in the center of the miracle, and he becomes, in one real sense, a true Bible mystic.

He feels that the whole world is his, and he comes to accord with it. When our Lord Jesus Christ was in the wilderness, it said that he was amiss. And I suppose the average reader of that passage might pity the Lord or say how wonderful that he was called Jesus.

But G. Campbell Morgan, in his book, the, I don't recall what he called it, *The Crisis of the Christ*, that's it, says this, that it's all wrong to think that he was surrounded by beasts bent upon destroying him. He said that those beasts did early creation, and that they recognized their maker, and that they were tame in his presence. He did not harm the one from whose hand they had come, so that the Lord among the beasts was as safe as the Lord among them.

That sentence, that was not from his book, but the idea there, that he was perfectly safe there as he would have been in heaven, because the beasts fell on her mane, said God, and they glorified him by lying down at the feet of his son. This God-charmed man sees the miracle, where everybody else sees no miracle at all, the crass laws of nature and matter and form. But the true child of God sees the miracle.

It is not a sign of senility or a sign that a man's mind is bad when he insists upon seeing God before a grain of sand, and of hearing the voice of God in the sighing of the wind or in the roar of a storm. Well, and he is in charge of it. And the God-charmed man finds he is charmed and entirely safe.

It was said about Jesus, you remember, that his hour was not yet come. He could not harm him while he walked among them, because his hour was not yet come. He was a child of God, a child of life.

In the Old Testament there is that passage, typical again, or at least a sample of how things were in the Old Testament, where Elisha was in Dotham, the city, and his servant became frightened. The great king had sent a great host with chariots and horses and soldiers against him. There they were, so a great host.

The margin says a heavy host. I don't know how many that would be. And the young inexperienced man hadn't learned that he was living a charmed life and inhabited a perpetual miracle.

He came running in excitedly to his master and said, O master. And the old man said, Don't worry, young fellow, they that are with us are more than they. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he

looked, and lo, in the mountains were a fire surrounding Elisha.

And Elisha went on and prayed, O God, send these men in temporarily blind. And they became temporarily blind. And he led them into Samaria and captured an army.

These two men, this preacher and his associate, they led the whole army and captured them. The Lord said, Father, what shall we do? Kill them? No. He said, Give them something to eat and send them back.

He had inhabited a miracle too long. He didn't need to kill men. And he said, Now, Lord, let them see.

And every man saw. And they were in Samaria captured. Now that's an example, at least.

It's a sample of how God works. I have illustrations drawn from church history, which I shall not at this moment give you, but which could be given in proof of the fact that it was a charmed life. And I repeat what I have often said and hold as a part of my living creed, that if a man is charmed, he cannot die till his work is done, if he obeys God.

Now, if he leaves the way and goes among the wolves of his own sinful intention, I have no hope then that he shall fulfill the will of God. But if he obeys God, where God sends him, he is a safe man till he's ready to die. And who wants to live five minutes after the Lord says, Now, he is not a charmed man with a charmed life, but he's a God-descended man.

I get great help from Moses. When Moses was in a sudden jam with Israel, Korah or somebody was after him. It said in solemn, slow language, The cloud came and stood before the tent of meeting.

And Moses stood back behind and the angry murderous men and women that surrounded him with drools. When the woodsman builds a huge roaring fire, he could see their eyes shining in the dark, but not the one who dare come to the circle of a God-defended man. And the scripture says, And he says again, If the tongue that rises against thee is a true tongue that says about you is true, the Lord won't condemn that tongue.

But if it's not true, the Lord will condemn that tongue. He says, I will go before thee. L. B. Compton, whom I quote sometimes as being one of the greatest preachers, a native southerner from North Carolina, this man had experience.

Written up in the slow, stately language of the King James Version might well be misunderstood as a lost chapter from some of the books. Compton at one time was sued by a rich townsman for something or other of which, for which he was not to blame. And as you know, this man has influence on his side.

He has everything on his side. Why do you not get your witnesses going and do something? He said, I can't. God won't let me.

All God let me do was pray. So he prayed down to the wire, I believe, the day or not more than the day before the suit was to be aired in court. And everybody knew him, a poor preacher.

What could he do against an influential townsman who had brought suit against him? They lost everything to the man of God. But he waited on God in holy prayer. And the same day, I've forgotten which, but a few hours before the trial was to come up in court, there was a call.

This preacher, please come down and pray for a man who was desperately ill. He hurried down and, you guessed it, the ill man was the man who was suing him in court. He got down on his knees beside the bed and prayed for him.

The suit was called off and everything was made up. And everybody said, what has God wrought? And God defended man when he belongs to this charmed circle. But he's also a God taught man.

In Corinthians 2, 7, we speak the wisdom, which is of God, a hidden wisdom, a mysterious wisdom by God before the world for your salvation. And that wisdom of God sometimes leads men in a way we know little of. I think I'll tell you what I heard at conference.

I spent three days of last week at conference. A good brother, a man without much education, but a deeply spiritual man of God, that's sweet by the name of Olson, preached and he told us this story. So good that I must share it with you.

He said that when he was a younger preacher and was on the radio singing, he says he doesn't do it anymore, he's found he didn't know it, and he was singing. He said he got a call one day saying, would you please come out to such and such a home just out there and have a little meeting with us there? So he said, sure he would. And he took his guitar and his hymn books and a friend, and they drove out.

When they got there, the yard was full of cars and the house was full of scams and sitting around in borrowed chairs. He said when he walked in, they looked at him as if he had been an idiot. But he said that God had sent him, so he passed the hymn books around and got the key on the old guitar and sang.

Then he said he asked his friend to testify, which he did. Then he said he launched in and preached, or rather I don't suppose. Then he gave the order to call and they went down on their knees everywhere and began to pray.

And some of them found him, gathered up his hymn books, started for the car. Somebody ran up, he said, are you saved, your sister? No. Well, he said, you both get saved before I'll pray for her to be healed.

So he got them both saved. And he certainly knows that a large number of those who were saved that day still are walking with God, and some of them have died but lived to the end of their days. And he said after he had gotten safely away and the circumstances were known, he was in the wrong house.

And it was a family reunion of the Nelson clan. And nobody, but being good Scandinavians, they had enough religion somewhere. Here was a simple hearted fellow, a root of gin carrot.

But he did know the voice of God when he heard it. He said, I could near faint when I think about that now. Oh brother, he said, was I ashamed.

But the Lord had had his way with a man who, and God spoke to history, which was before the foundation of the world. And the man that's hidden is a God without a doubt, because he is led by a kind of instinct if he's a prayerful man. I have read, I have reason to believe they're true.

They're not all quite alike, but they have one central likeness, the story of the instinct of animals. I read not long ago of a female, a dog they had had around the place, and she was cherished and loved by all of them, but something happened and they sold her. And they took her hundreds of miles across the continent west.

And at the end of about those 21 days, she came limping in the pads of her feet and she herself, a complete wreck and skin and bone, but came her nose across the threshold and lay down and looked up and whimpered. She was back home. How did she find her way over the unknown highways for hundreds of miles? Nobody can tell you that.

When a man is lost, he doesn't try to find his way home. He speaks to his horse, puts the reins on her, and braces himself against the storm. And she finds her way home.

The bird finds his way back. And nobody knows how. There is a spiritual instinct that likes that, that's like that.

You're so puzzled, you're a thing, you're combed, you're intellect, nothing registered. And after a few years have gone by, right thing. Why did you do the right thing? There is a hidden mystery.

We'll keep him right. I've been meeting men, the world literally, meeting men, and I find a wonderful thing. I find that God is speaking to them and he's been speaking to me over the last 10 years and is saying to me the same thing.

And I get letters from people and they're hearing the same voice, the same direction. A few aren't. Occasionally somebody will barge in and take over who is in the rut and who has heard no voice for years except by heart.

But those who listened and none of the other world, they're saying about the same thing here and there. But the day Dan Lowe met me and informed me yesterday morning in the station downtown, he told me of a Christian businessman, one of the leaders of the CBMC, who I, on the same thing he's been talking to you and me on. Another man writes me some address about it.

And they're way over there and tells me in a long letter what God, the same thing he's been saying to us. And I run into the African mission crowd at Keswick and we pray and talk together. God's been saying the same thing.

He's not, he's saying it to them. And now comes our 20 years ago, they couldn't have got past Cicero for Hammond. He would have been down there and had them all in jail.

Nobody would believe in the second work of grace and the victorious life. But we're in there now and they're bringing men here who believe that very doctrine. And I'm there in their program preaching that which this church has stood for for 25, nearly 26 years of my performance.

God's speaking and there's this mysterious wisdom that's moving among men. And God is saying, if you don't get your bones, you'll rattle yourself to death. And he's beginning to give life back to us again.

And if the Lord lets some of us live a while, I believe the day will come when we'll yet direct, even get away from Hollywood and away from hard dispensationalism back to the spirit-filled life that God blessed us. I may be too optimistic, but I am. I might say he's a God-fed man, though I'm going to skip that.

The hidden manor. I will give you the hidden manor. Isn't that Deborah Ravens? And the sixth is, he's a privileged man.

How privileged he is this man. For he knows and is not known of anybody. It says that in 1 Corinthians, the 2nd chapter, that we are, how does it word it there exactly? I read so many versions I don't always

remember.

He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. He knoweth the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him, but we have the mind of Christ. And here is the God-privileged man, man of mystery, who lives in the circle hidden under the hand of God.

And he lives a flesh to analyzing. I've just been reading a book over the last couple of weeks, an expose, psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis, you know, that has spawned this psychiatry and psychiatry and I don't.

But for 25 years I have been familiar with psychoanalysis. And they're supposed to know all there is to know about you. But brethren, there is a place where Sigmund Freud and his favorite penetrate.

When they come up and begin to take us apart and pull us bone from bone to see what makes us holy, ghosts come down as a cloud and fire and they stand and stare and say, behold these Christians, what weird people. We can't analyze them. They won't talk.

They'll pray. They know God in a mystery. I might point out that he's a God-enriched man.

I will give you, says the Holy Ghost, the treasures of darkness. He'd have said the treasures of light. Who would have thought of the treasures of darkness? It took God to think.

I will give you the treasures of darkness. Not in the darkness do men usually hope to find treasure, but God says, I will enrich you by the darkness. And the very troubles that come to you are that that will break in blessing on your head.

And I close with the text, I flee unto thee. Will you this morning find the hidden place? Maybe you've had a tough week this week. Doesn't always go as well.

Maybe you've had a tough week. Well, and maybe you didn't equip yourself quite as well as you wish you had about it this morning. Don't stop there and don't let that get you down.

I will flee unto thee. Moses didn't always come off in the most saintly fashion, but he was a God-hidden man. Will you be? In every stormy wind that blows, from every swelling tide of woes, there is a calm ashore that is found beneath the mercy seat.

There is a place where Jesus sheds the oil of gladness on our heads, and all the world more sweet. It is the blood-stained mercy seat. Will you, CC, with me this morning? We're going to have communion now, and it's for all the Lord's born.

You don't have to like me to receive communion. Lots of people don't like me, and they've got good grounds. You don't have to believe everything I've said to receive communion.

You don't have to agree with everything. It's your God's time, and you've entered by faith into the kingdom of the elect, where God rules. You have a right to examine himself, and so let him take you.

I trust that we can make it 100 percent. I trust we'll forgive everybody that has ever done anything against us. I trust we'll forgive the people and pray for the people we don't like, if there are such people.

One great humorist once said, seriously, I never met a man I didn't like. I have. No doubt you have.

But don't let's let those things hinder us. Let us trust the Lord to forgive us and cleanse us from all the things that aren't good, and today flee unto thee to hide me. We take together what was broken and hide ourselves under the

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