

The Inner Witness of the Spirit

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer explores the workings of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers, emphasizing the importance of recognizing divine witness and the new birth.

Scripture: John 3:3, John 14:26, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:16, 1 Corinthians 12:7, 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, Galatians 4:6, Ephesians 1:13-14, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, 1 John 5:10

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "New Birth"

Description

A.W. Tozer explores the concept of the inner workings of the Holy Spirit, particularly focusing on prevenient grace, which manifests as a deep longing for God, conviction of sin, and a desire for spiritual deliverance. He emphasizes that while many divine operations occur without our awareness, the new birth and the anointing of the Holy Spirit are experiences that we recognize. Tozer highlights the importance of the Spirit's testimony within us, affirming our identity as God's children, and cautions against subjective interpretations of spiritual experiences that can lead to confusion in the faith community.

Transcript

Then, there is another kind of divine working that may occur without our being aware of it, or at least without our recognizing it for what it is. This is that wondrous operation of God known in theology as prevenient grace. It may be simple "conviction," or a strange longing which nothing can satisfy, or a powerful aspiration after eternal values, or a feeling of disgust for sin and a desire to be delivered from its repulsive coils. These strange workings within are the stirrings of the Holy Spirit but are rarely identified as such by the soul that is undergoing the experience.

But there are two acts of God within the life of the seeking man that are never done without his knowledge. One is the miracle of the new birth and the other is the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Of the new birth, Paul explicitly states, "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit, that we are God's children" (Romans 8:16), and John says, "Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart" (1 John 5:10). These passages declare the fact of a divine witness but do not state the nature of it. This has made it possible for various people to read into it their own peculiar psychological reactions and set up those reactions as criteria by which they judge the spiritual claims of everyone. Some at the time of their conversion have felt unusually light on their feet; others have heard voices or seen lights or felt an unseen hand pass over them. In some places, the new convert must shout aloud or his profession is not accepted.

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