

The Primacy of Self

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of facing reality and understanding that selfishness is the root of sin.

Scripture: Psalm 34:11, Psalm 119:38, Proverbs 1:7, Proverbs 8:13, Proverbs 15:16, Jonah 1:16, Acts 5:5, Acts 9:31, Romans 3:18, Ephesians 6:5, 1 Timothy 5:20, Revelation 18:10

Topics: "Fear Of God", "Reverential Awe"

Description

In this sermon on Fear, the preacher delves into the various uses of 'phobos' in the Bible, highlighting how it can describe both positive and negative senses of fear. While fear can be associated with terror and dread, it can also convey a sense of reverential awe and respect, especially in the context of God's divine works. The sermon emphasizes the importance of reverential fear of Jehovah, which leads to wisdom, motivates godly behavior, and produces strong confidence, holy conduct, and Christ-honoring obedience.

Transcript

Selfish personal interest, says the Greek moral philosopher Epictetus, is the motive behind all human conduct. The children of the world, Christ tells us, are often wiser than the children of light. In his discovery of the springs of human conduct Epictetus reveals an understanding of mankind far beyond that of the average Christian; and this in spite of the fact that the Christian claims to possess the Spirit of truth and the Greek did not. If we would be wise in the wisdom of God we must face up to the truth no matter how uncomplimentary it may be to us.

It would be more comfortable to shrug off what our eyes behold and loyally declare our belief in the intrinsic goodness of all men; but our eternal welfare forbids that we deal dishonestly with reality.

The truth is, men are not basically good; they are basically evil, and the essence of their sin lies in their selfishness. The putting of our own interests before the glory of God is sin in its Godward aspect, and the putting of our own interests before those of our fellow men is sin as it relates to society. We know men are sinners because when they must choose between others and themselves they choose themselves every time. Personal interest sees to that.

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