

Lesson #7
***The Pursuit of God*, by A.W. Tozer**

Chapter 9 – Meekness and Rest

1. A fairly accurate description of the human race may be found by taking the Beatitudes and turning them inside out. **Matthew 5:3-10**
 - Instead of poverty of spirit, we find incessant pride;
 - Instead of mourners, we find pleasure seekers;
 - Instead of meekness, we find arrogance;
 - Instead of hungering after righteousness, we find hungering after riches;
 - Instead of mercy, we find cruelty;
 - Instead of purity of heart, we find corrupt imaginings;
 - Instead of being peacemakers, we find men quarrelsome and resentful;
 - Instead of rejoicing at mistreatment, we find men fighting back with every weapon at their disposal.
2. Into a world such as this came Jesus with His wonderful and strange words. His words are the essence of truth. He is not offering an opinion. Jesus never spoke opinions; He never guessed. He knew, and He knows. He spoke out of the fullness of His Godhead, and His words are very Truth itself. It is wisdom for us to listen.
 - Jesus spoke directly to the issue of burden and rest. The burden He was referring to was not of political oppression or poverty or hard work. **Matthew 11:28-30**
 - The word *burden* means a load carried or toil borne to the point of exhaustion. *Rest* is simply a release from that burden. It is not something we do; it is what comes to us when we stop doing.
3. What is the source of our burdens?
 - **Pride** (self-love) – the heart’s tireless effort to protect itself from every slight, to shield its honor from the bad opinion of friend and enemy. It will never let the mind have rest.
 - **Pretense** – the desire to put the “best foot forward” and hide our real circumstances or inward poverty from the world.
 - **Jealousy & envy** – we can’t enjoy what we have if someone else has something larger or better.
 - **Artificiality** – the fear that someone will see into our poor, empty souls. As a result, we are never relaxed.
 - Our culture is continually playing on these desires to appear what we are not.
4. Jesus calls us to rest, and meekness is His method. In His meekness is our rest. **Isaiah 42:1-4**
 - The meek man doesn’t care who is greater than himself, for he has decided that the esteem of the world is not his desire. **Psalms 37:7,16; 2 Cor. 10:17-18**
 - The meek man has stopped being fooled about himself. He knows that he is as weak and helpless as God has declared him to be, **but** he also knows the great value and the esteemed place God has provided for him. **2 Tim. 2:24-26**
 - The meek man’s motto is, “In myself, nothing; in God, everything. **Phil. 1:21; Gal. 2:20**
 - The meek man knows that the world will never see him as God sees him, and he has stopped caring. **John 15:19**
 - The meek man rests, perfectly content to allow God to place His own values on him. **Phil. 4:11-13**

Chapter 10 - The Sacrament of Living

1. One of the greatest hindrances to internal peace for the Christian is the dividing of our lives into two areas – the sacred and the secular. As Christians, we do inhabit two worlds at once – the spiritual and the natural.
 - Our natural lives are lived on earth as children of Adam. This life is subject to the limitations and concerns of the flesh and our human nature. Living among men requires years of hard work and much care and attention to the things of this world.
 - Our spiritual lives are lived as children of God, where we have a heavenly status and can enjoy an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.
 - These two different worlds we inhabit, and the conflict within us it provokes (the sacred-secular antithesis), catches most of us in its trap. We try to walk a tightrope between two kingdoms and find no peace in either. As a result, our strength is reduced, our outlook confused, and our joy taken from us.
 - *Tozer*: This dilemma is not real. It is a product of misunderstanding, and has no foundation in the New Testament. A better understanding of Christian truth will deliver us from it.
2. The Lord Jesus Christ is our perfect example, as He knew no divided life. “I always do the things that please Him,” was His brief summary of His own life as it related to the Father (John 8:29).
 - Paul’s exhortation to “do all to the glory of God” is an integral part of the sacred revelation and is to be accepted as the very Word of Truth. **1 Cor. 10:31**
 - It opens before us the possibility of making every act of our lives contribute to the glory of God. Paul specifically mentions “eating and drinking”; if these everyday acts can be so performed as to honor God, then it becomes difficult to conceive of one that cannot.
 - The believer, who has already experienced repentance and new birth, is now living according to the will of God as he understands it from the written Word. Every act of our life is or can be as truly sacred as prayer or baptism or the Lord’s Supper, and thereby lifting up our every act and turning our whole life into a sacrament.
3. By one act of consecration of our total selves to God we can make every subsequent act an expression of that consecration. That we *see* this truth is not enough. If we are to escape from the trap of the sacred-secular dilemma, the truth must “run in our blood” and condition our thoughts.
 - We must practice living to the glory of God. By meditation upon this truth, by talking it over with God often in our prayers, by recalling it to our minds frequently during the day, a sense of its wondrous meaning will take hold of us.
 - We must offer all our acts to God and *believe* that He accepts them. Then hold firmly to that position and keep insisting that every act of every hour of the day and night be included in the transaction.
 - Practice making every act a priestly ministrations. Believe that God is in all our deeds, even the most simple, and learn to find Him there.
4. It is not what a man does that determines whether his work is sacred or secular; it is why he does it. The motive is everything.
 - Let a man sanctify the Lord God in his heart and he can thereafter do no common act. All he does is good and acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
 - For such a man, living itself will be sacramental and the whole world a sanctuary. His entire life will be a priestly ministrations.

Lord, make me childlike. Deliver me from the urge to compete with another for place or prestige or position. I would be simple and artless as a little child. Deliver me from pose and pretense. Forgive me for thinking of myself. Help me to forget myself and find my true peace in beholding Thee. That Thou mayest answer this prayer I humble myself before Thee. Lay upon me Thy easy yoke of self-forgetfulness that through it I may find rest.

Lord, I would trust Thee completely; I would be altogether Thine; I would exalt Thee above all. I desire that I may feel no sense of possessing anything outside of Thee. I want constantly to be aware of Thy overshadowing presence and to hear Thy speaking voice. I long to live in restful sincerity of heart. I want to live so fully in the Spirit that all my thoughts may be as sweet incense ascending to Thee and every act of my life may be an act of worship. Therefore I pray in the words of Thy great servant of old, "I beseech Thee so for to cleanse the intent of mine heart with the unspeakable gift of Thy grace, that I may perfectly love Thee and worthily praise Thee." And all this I confidently believe Thou wilt grant me through the merits of Jesus Christ Thy Son. Amen.