

“Discipleship”

A.W. Tozer

Handout 3

Chapter 3: “Accepting” Christ

*The Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in Him. -
John 3:14-15*

Minimizing God or Making Him Sound Inferior

- How we speak of “accepting” Him
 - “Now, the particular attitude revealed here about "accepting Christ" is wrong because it makes Christ stand hat-in-hand somewhere outside the door, waiting on our human judgment. We know about His divine person, we know that He is the Lamb of God who suffered and died in our place. We know all about His credentials. Yet we let Him stand outside on the steps like some poor timid fellow who is hoping He can find a job. We look Him over, then read a few more devotional verses, and ask: "What do you think, Mabel? Do you think we ought to accept Him? I really wonder if we should accept Him." And so, in this view, our poor Lord Christ stands hat-in-hand, shifting from one foot to another looking for a job, wondering whether He will be accepted. Mean-while, there sits the proud Adamic sinner, rotten as the devil and filled with all manner of spiritual leprosy and cancer. But he is hesitating; he is judging whether or not he will accept Christ.” (page 34)
 - God holds the world in His hands.
 - He holds the stars in His hands.
 - It will be at His word that the graves shall give up their dead and the dead shall come forth alive evermore.
 - At His word, fire shall burst loose and burn up the earth and the heavens and the stars and planets shall be swept away like a garment.
 - “The question ought not to be whether I will accept Him; the question ought to be whether He will accept me!” But we don’t have to worry.
 - “And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out”
(John 6:37)
 - “Easy acceptance” has been fatal to millions of people who may have stopped short in matters of faith and obedience.” (page 39)

“It is interesting to note that many groups of Christian workers and preachers and evangelists everywhere are calling for revival. Spiritual life in many areas seems to be in a low state and in many cases people are passing along the word about "prayer for revival!" But here is the odd thing; no one seems to stop and raise a question, such as: "Perhaps the reason we need revival so badly is the fact that we did not get started right in the first place." This is why I have questioned the wide use of the soul-winning catchword, "Will you accept Christ? Just bow your head and accept Christ!" I cannot estimate the number, although I think it is a very large number, of people who have been brought into some kind of religious experience by a fleeting formality of "accepting Christ", and a great, great number of them are still not saved. They have not been brought into a genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ. We see the results all around us--they generally behave like religious sinners instead of like born-again believers. That is why there is such a great stirring about the need for revival. That is why so many are asking, "What is the matter with us? We seem so dead, so lifeless, so apathetic about spiritual things!" I say again that I have come to the conclusion that there are far too many among us who have thought that they accepted Christ- but nothing has come of it within their own lives and desires and habits.” (pages 39-40)

“I am not trying to downgrade anybody in his or her efforts to win souls. I am just of the opinion that we are often too casual and there are too many tricks that can be used to make soul winning encounters completely painless and at no cost and with no inconvenience.”

- Bible examples to read and highlight from the book:
 - The Passover
 - The Prodigal Son
 - Peter (from “My Utmost for His Highest” by Oswald Chambers)
 - “Natural devotion may have been enough to attract us to Jesus, to make us feel His irresistible charm, but it will never make us disciples. Natural devotion will deny Jesus, always falling short of what it truly means to follow Him.”
 - Concerning the first time Christ asked Peter to follow: “The first “Follow Me” was nothing mysterious; it was an external following. Jesus is now asking for an internal sacrifice and yielding (John 21:18). Between these two times of being asked to follow, Peter denied Jesus with oaths and curses. But then he came completely to the end of himself and all of his self-sufficiency. There was no part of himself he would ever rely on again. In his state of destitution, he was finally ready to receive all that the risen Lord had for him.”

Have You Really “Accepted” Christ?

Means to have an attachment to the person of Christ that is revolutionary, complete, and exclusive. (Page 44) It's more than getting in with a crowd you like. Attending a church where you like the preacher. Being a part of a group that does a lot of things or things together. Those things aren't wrong, but aren't saving in and of themselves.

“Accepting” Jesus means (page 47):

- *Reverses one's life*
- *Transforms it completely*
- *Attachment to Christ*
- *Leave NO part of your life unaffected*
- *Involves the total being*
- *Means Christ is not one of several interests. He's the ONE interest.*
- *To accept His ways as our ways*

Terms of Jesus:

“If you have other relationships in life which are more important and more exclusive than your spiritual relationship to the eternal Savior, then you are not my disciple.” (page 46)

Things We Take for Granted

- Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners
- Saved by faith in Christ alone, without our own works or merit.
 - It's here I would reword Mr. Tozer and say we're saved through Christ alone, and not on our own worthiness.