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Orcutt Christian Church's Response to COVID-19

5th Meditation

“A frightened world needs a fearless church”

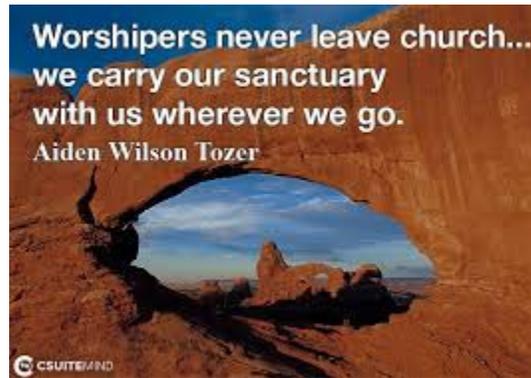
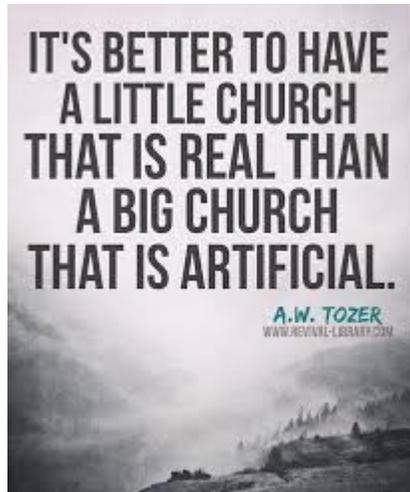
I'm sure you've noticed that is a quote. It is one of the hundreds of quotes by A.W. Tozer. Another his quotes is “*One hundred religious persons knit into a unity by careful organization do not constitute a **church** any more than eleven dead men make a football team.*” And, I would say Tozer is right. If the church is “knit into a unity” by “careful organization” it is missing the glue that binds us together. You know that is LOVE and FAITH.

Tozer grew up in Akron, OH, and in 1913, at the age of 15, he was on his way home from work with the Firestone Tire Company, when he felt the need to turn his life over to God. As was common in those days, he never finished high school. God had gifted him with intelligence and inquisiveness. He threw himself into the study of the Bible, so when he wasn't working for the Tire Company, he was studying. He began sharing what he was learning with the congregation with which he worked. When he was 19, that congregation made him their minister. He never finished high school, never attended a bible college or university, but he became one of the best known Christian writers.

Among the more than 60 books that bear his name, most of which were compiled after his death from sermons he preached and articles he wrote, at least two are regarded as Christian classics: *The Pursuit of God* and *The Knowledge of the Holy*. From the several of Tozer's books I've read, he is having the reader focus on the possibility and necessity for a deeper relationship with God.

He died of a heart attack at the age of 66, while preaching for the Avenue

Road Church in Toronto. That was the days of the Cuban missile crisis and the cold war. People were digging bomb shelters in their backyards. I wonder whether he wrote those words during the time the world experienced the kind of mass fear gripping it today.



Here are a few internet resources for your inspiration. Place your cursor on the link, and press “CTRL” and CLICK at the same time.

Tozer Devotional

[Works by A. W. Tozer](#) at [Project Gutenberg](#)

[Works by or about A. W. Tozer](#) at [Internet Archive](#)

[Works by A. W. Tozer](#) at [LibriVox](#) (public domain audiobooks) 🔊

Tozer Audio Sermons

This is day eight of our self-isolation. I'm wondering how you are handling it? One person I spoke with yesterday said they spent most of the time taking naps, and that one day merged into another. Another person yesterday said the loneliness was really getting to her.

How are you using this time of self-isolation?

Do we not know that the One who brought Jesus back to life is present with us? That is a reflection to praise God for.

Paul says

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (GW)

16 That is why we are not discouraged. Though outwardly we are wearing out, inwardly we are renewed day by day. **17** Our suffering is light and temporary and is producing for us an eternal glory that is greater than anything we can imagine. **18** We don't look for things that can be seen but for things that can't be seen. Things that can be seen are only temporary. But things that can't be seen last forever.

What we are now experiencing in this present tribulation will pass. It will end. But our day by day way of handling it may last. One of the things I have to deal with as a minister is the "I don't care," or "It doesn't make any difference to me" attitude, words that are symptomatic of self-pity. Do we not all know intuitively that **Feeling Sorry for YOURSELF only Makes it Worse.**

"I don't care," "Whatever," has become a parasite on something much more forceful: "IT doesn't matter." Topics of God, church, love, community, spiritual discipline, theological conviction, relational faithfulness, life, work, family, friends, whatever . . . all receive a definitive, self-assured, swank, up-to-date "Meh."

The ancient church "fathers" used to preach on something which in the Greek language was called "akedia." It refers to "the I don't care feeling." It's the attitude that you know you need to wash your cloths, but you say you are feeling over whelmed today, so you watch TV instead. It's knowing you need to reach out to one of our members, but you decline because you think to yourself "I don't have anything to talk about." Students who know they have a paper to write NOW, say to themselves, "I'll go fix myself a snack to give me energy." It's the temptation to avoid your personal relationship with Jesus.

Psalm 91:5-11 (MSG)

5 Fear nothing—not wild wolves in the night, not flying arrows in the day, **6** Not disease that prowls through the darkness, not disaster that erupts at high noon. **7** Even though others succumb all around, drop like flies right and left, no harm will even graze you. **8** You'll stand untouched, watch it all from a distance, watch the wicked turn into

corpses. ⁹ Yes, because GOD's your refuge, the High God your very own home, ¹⁰ Evil can't get close to you, harm can't get through the door. ¹¹ He ordered his angels to guard you wherever you go.

I think David's point here is not to get so side tracked that you lose track of the central point - God cares about you, and is with you. We have all know people who wallow in self-pity. In fact, each of us has had times when we feel sorry for ourselves. We figure that of everyone we know, we are the most miserable. Our circumstances are bad. We can never do anything right. Such thinking and feeling does make us miserable. Such thinking is selfish and wrong. What makes us think we are the only ones who have ever suffered? Deep down we know that not literally everyone is against us. Even if that were true, God is for us. Self-pity shows a lack of trust in God.

For that person who had sunk into the despair of “I don't care,” the early church fathers preached an interesting remedy: “Hang in there, don't give up, endure. The despair cause you to want to “flee the stadium,” or walk away from spiritual effort. The simplest way to respond is simply “get on with it.”

And...Practice smiling...

Proverbs 15:13 (MSG)

¹³ A cheerful heart brings a smile to your face; a sad heart makes it hard to get through the day.

Even if we are not assembling, our congregation still needs your spiritual, prayerful, financial support. You can mail your personal check to

Orcutt Christian Church

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