

**General Topics :: No Competition ~ A.W. Tozer**

**No Competition ~ A.W. Tozer - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/2/19 10:01**

It is inherent in the nature of the religion of Christ that it cannot be promoted by competitive acts.

The essence of Christianity is selfless love. This was expressed first by our Lord in His redemptive suffering and has been expressed again and again since in every artless deed of kindness done by His followers for each other and for a suffering world. The essence of competition is self-love. Men compete to gain something for themselves, and in doing so they must of necessity cause someone else to lose what they gain. From this we gather that the two spirits are opposed to each other. We cannot be selfish and selfless at the same time.

Nothing spiritual can be gained in competition. The very idea of struggling with another for some eternal treasure of the soul is unthinkable. John D. Rockefeller used to enjoy throwing a handful of shiny new dimes to a crowd of children and watching them scramble after them, each one struggling to grab as many as possible. The gifts and graces of God are not thus obtained. Each one of God's children can have all of Him and no one need receive less because another receives an abundance.

When two men step into a prize ring they know that only one can win, and whoever wins can do so only by forcing the other to lose. When five men line up on the track for a race they know that only one can come in first. Four men must lose that one may win. It is not so in the kingdom of God. Christians do not run against each other. All can win the race. Paul likens a Christian to a fighter, but the Christian's fight is not with other Christians. Each one can win and no one need lose. The man of faith fights against the devil, the flesh and the world. He wins as they lose; but he never wins anything truly spiritual in competition with a fellow believer. In the nature of things he cannot. To think so is to entertain an absurdity.

Whatever religious activity is, or even can be, promoted in a spirit of competition is of the flesh and must perish with the flesh; in the day of Christ nothing will remain but self-reproach and disappointment. Yet there are forms of religious promotion that lend themselves to selfish uses. The earthly scaffoldings of the Christian faith are often constructed from motives no higher than jealousy and personal ambition. The eternal part is above the reach of carnal men; the temporal elements are subject to the manipulations of ambitious leaders who seek glory for themselves. And verily they have their reward.

Circumstances being what they are the Christian minister is the one most tempted to carry on competitive religious activity. Even where his self-respect and good taste will not allow him to engage in an obvious race for numbers or publicity or fame he may yet harbor the spirit of envy within his heart and so be as guilty as the coarser and less inhibited bellwether who openly seeks to excel. He can get deliverance from the spirit of religious rivalry by going straight to God and having an understanding about the whole thing. Let him humble himself in the presence of God and in all earnestness pray somewhat like this:

Dear Lord, I refuse henceforth to compete with any of Thy servants. They have congregations larger than mine. So be it. I rejoice in their success. They have greater gifts. Very well. That is not in their power nor in mine. I am humbly grateful for their greater gifts and my smaller ones. I only pray that I may use to Thy glory such modest gifts as I possess. I will not compare myself with any, nor try to build up my self-esteem by noting where I may excel one or another in Thy holy work. I herewith make a blanket disavowal of all intrinsic worth. I am but an unprofitable servant. I gladly go to the foot of the class and own myself the least of Thy people. If I err in my self-judgment and actually underestimate myself I do not want to know it. I purpose to pray for others and to rejoice in their prosperity as if it were my own. And indeed it is my own if it is Thine own, for what is Thine is mine, and while one plants and another waters it is Thou alone that giveth the increase.

The man who walks according to the spirit of this prayer will find himself free from all envy and all rivalry and will be at liberty to serve God in the simplicity and power of the Holy Ghost. Such a man will build with gold and silver and precious stones and will escape the tragedy of discovering too late that he has built of wood, hay and stubble.

**Re: No Competition ~ A.W. Tozer - posted by Lor\_E (), on: 2008/2/20 14:24**

Quote:  
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AMEN!

May we all hide this prayer in our hearts! What a glorious thought, that if this prayer were in the hearts of God's children, His sons and daughters, what peace, what love, what glory would be given to the God we serve!!

Thank you brother for sharing this wonderful piece of a man of God!

Lori

**Re: No Competition ~ A.W. Tozer, on: 2008/2/20 16:17**

crsschck wrote:

"John D. Rockefeller used to enjoy throwing a handful of shiny new dimes to a crowd of children and watching them scramble after them, each one struggling to grab as many as possible. The gifts and graces of God are not thus obtained. Each one of God's children can have all of Him and no one need receive less because another receives an abundance."

I confess I've often taken this competitive attitude toward spiritual things. What a freedom it would be to not see ourselves in competition with any other Christian. How many unneeded problems and troubles would that realization solve? The wisdom in this article is much needed and really spoke to me. Thanks

**Re: - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2008/2/23 13:48**

If we would heed Paul's admonition to esteem others above ourselves, and do nothing from selfish ambition; we would do well. Let us take this wise prayer of Tozer to heart and make it our own!!

**Re:, on: 2008/2/23 16:43**

I pray no one minds me posting this again, but it's such a beautiful lesson from our brother - I feel we can't see into this thought/reality too much.

Thank you.

([http://www.voidspace.org.uk/spiritual/watchman\\_nee.shtml](http://www.voidspace.org.uk/spiritual/watchman_nee.shtml)) "The Body of Christ: A Reality"

**Re: No Competition ~ A.W. Tozer, on: 2008/2/23 18:17**

Right at the heart of the matter! Straight at my heart. I didn't quite imagine myself as a little boy scrambling for a shiny dime or two, but that is who I am. This is such a rich, abundant text, a goldmine.

Quote:  
-----The man who walks according to the spirit of this prayer will find himself free from all envy and all rivalry and will be at liberty to serve God in the simplicity and power of the Holy Ghost.  
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Oh son of David, hear me!

May we be always reminded--if not experientially aware--of the root from Whom all blessings flow.

**Re: - posted by StarofG0D (), on: 2010/11/27 21:50**

This is old...but this article is really good. So I guess i'm bumping it back up! :p