

Articles and Sermons :: Be Centred In God – And Not In Yourselves by Zac Poonen

Be Centred In God – And Not In Yourselves by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2010/10/9 11:18

There were two trees in the garden of Eden – and they represented two ways of life. The tree of life symbolized a life centred in God – where God would be the centre of every decision made by man. The tree of knowledge of good and evil on the other hand, symbolized a life where Self would be the centre, and where man would live without consulting God and would determine himself what was good and what was evil. God sent Adam and Eve into that garden and told them, as it were, “You can choose now which of these two ways you want to live by”. And we all know what Adam chose. He chose to live a life centred in himself.

All the misery, sorrow and murders and every other wretched thing that we see in the world around us, is due to man having decided to choose for himself what is good and what is evil. He doesn’t want God to tell him. And that is the reason for every unhappy marriage as well – even among Christians. Multitudes of Christians live with Self as the centre of their life – and they reap what they sow.

When God made Adam He wanted him to rule over the earth. Adam was created to be a king, not a slave. And God wanted Eve to be a queen beside Adam. But what do we see today? Men and women are slaves everywhere – slaves to their passions and to the corruptible things of earth.

When God created this earth He made everything beautiful. The forbidden tree was also beautiful. When Adam and Eve stood in front of that tree, they had to make a choice: Would they choose the beautiful things God had created, or would they choose God Himself?

That is the choice all of us have to make every day. If our life is centred in ourselves, we will pursue after God’s gifts (the things He has created) and not after God Himself. Most of the quarrels that take place in homes are over earthly things. Such quarrels arise because the husband and wife choose created things instead of God Himself – and they reap the consequences of their choice. They sow to the flesh and so they reap corruption. Man becomes a slave when he chooses created things over his Creator.

Jesus came to deliver us from this slavery. Man is a slave today to the power of money, to illegitimate sexual pleasure, to the opinions of others, and to many other things. He is not free. God created him to be like the eagle that flies high in the sky. But everywhere we find man in chains, unable to conquer his temper, unable to control his tongue, unable to control his lustful eyes. Jesus came, not just to die for our sins, but also to deliver us from this slavery.

The Bible says that God is Light and God is Love. God’s Love is His Light. In a dark room, the power of light drives away the darkness. God’s power is like that. Life without God’s power, without His love, will only be darkness.

Our whole life on earth is a period of testing and probation, to prepare us for a kingdom in eternity, where everything will be ruled by the law of love. Every situation and circumstance that God takes us through now is therefore designed by Him to test us in one area – whether we will live by the law of love. And that is why God allows so many trials and difficulties in our lives. God is Almighty and He could have made life on earth such that we never had any trials at all. But God in His great wisdom has ordained trials as a means by which we learn to love. If we overcome our selfishness and determine that love alone will guide our life, God will be able to prepare us to be rulers in His coming kingdom. We have to think about that now, or else we will find in eternity that we missed the opportunities that God gave us on earth – and never learnt what we were supposed to learn.

Re: Be Centred In God — And Not In Yourselves by Zac Poonen - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2010/10/9 13:55

Much of the Church today has been given a man centered gospel, and is it any wonder that so many Christians do not see God's ultimate purpose for their lives and for the Church.

Most of the Faith movement that I was involved in for many years is man centered. Its focus is how does the Word of God and the cross of Christ benefit man. When the main thing that we should be occupied with is what is God's purpose in sending His Son to die for our sins? Is it just so that we could be saved and go to heaven or is it that we would grow up into Christ in all things becoming more like Him?

It all begins and ends with God and not with us, and if we are trying to use God as a means to an end, we will be living our lives for self in the power of the flesh.

The two trees in the garden represent two kinds of life. We are either living the Christian life in the power of our own self life or we are allowing Christ to live His life in us and through us. "It is no longer I that lives, but Christ lives in me."

The reason why I love reading Watchman Nee and T. Austin Sparks is because they were both Christ centered in their preaching and writings. Another brother that is still living, and I have had the privilege of being in some of his meetings years ago in Richmond, is DeVern Fromke. All of his writings and teaching is Christ Centered. Three of his most Christ centered books are:

1. No Other Foundation (out of print)
2. Ultimate Intention
3. Unto Full Stature

Brief description of "Ultimate Intention"

"With an emphasis on the importance of God-centeredness for the normal Christian life, the author begins with an unfolding of God's eternal purpose which He purposed for Himself in eternity past. A God-centered view of reality is the only environment that can nurture proper spiritual growth. It is not an exaggeration to say that this volume has radically altered many people's understanding of the Christian life, lifting it beyond the pale of "self-interest" and into the only realm it was intended to be lived—with God as Center! The book includes a study guide which can be used for personal or group study. We highly recommend using it to spur spiritual growth in your church."

Mike

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2010/10/9 15:33

Quote:
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Re: , on: 2010/10/9 21:31

Ultimate Intention by DeVern Frommke is great. Thanks for mentioning it. Been a long time since I have read it. I think I will dust it off and peruse it again.