

Devotional Thoughts :: The Psychology of Impermanence by A.W. Tozer

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The Psychology of Impermanence

Time may show that one of the greatest weaknesses in our modern civilization has been the acceptance of quantity rather than quality as the goal after which to strive. This is particularly evident in the United States. Costly buildings are constantly being erected with no expectation that they shall last more than one short generation. . . . Not only in our architecture but almost everywhere else is this psychology of impermanence found. A beauty salon ad recently defined a term which has long needed clarification.

It read: "Permanent Waves. Guaranteed to last three months." So, permanence is the quality of lasting three months! These may be extreme cases, but they illustrate the transiency of men's hopes and the brevity of their dreams apart from God. The church also is suffering from a left-handed acceptance of this philosophy of impermanence. Christianity is resting under the blight of degraded values. And it all stems from a too-eager desire to impress, to gain fleeting attention, to appear well in comparison with some world-beater who happens for the time to have the ear or the eye of the public. This is so foreign to the Scriptures that we wonder how Bible-loving Christians can be deceived by it. The Word of God ignores size and quantity and lays all its stress upon quality. Christ, more than any other man, was followed by the crowds, yet after giving them such help as they were able to receive, He quietly turned from them and deposited His enduring truths in the breasts of His chosen 12.

He refused a quick shortcut to the throne and chose instead the long painful way of the cross. He rejected the offers of the multitude and rested His success upon those eternal qualities which He was able to plant in the hearts of a modest number of redeemed men.

The ages have thanked God that He did.