



## **God's Pursuit of Man: Tozer's Profound Prequel to The Pursuit of God**

*A.W. Tozer*

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*Salvation is from our side a choice, from the divine side [...] a conquest of the Most High God.* – A. W. Tozer

With words like these, Tozer shakes the soul. He crumbles the lies we believe and calls us to the more sure way.

In these pages, Tozer says what it means to truly be saved. It is not merely to assent to Jesus and go on our same old way, but to be conquered by the Almighty God and invaded by His Spirit. A saved person is a transformed person. Let Tozer upend you in this moving prequel to *The Pursuit of God*. And being upended, may you be found standing upright in an upside-down world.

## God's Pursuit of Man: Tozer's Profound Prequel to The Pursuit of God Details

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# From Reader Review God's Pursuit of Man: Tozer's Profound Prequel to The Pursuit of God for online ebook

## Sheila says

This is a profound prequel to Tozer's classic "The Pursuit of God." Tozer is unabashedly honest about his views that Christianity is not a mere 'religion', and pens a number of very insightful chapters on the Holy Spirit.

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## Chris says

"Are you sure you want to be filled with a Spirit who, though He is like Jesus in His gentleness and love, will nevertheless demand to be Lord of your life? Are you willing to let your personality be taken over by another, even if that other by the Spirit of God Himself? If the Spirit takes charge of your life He will expect unquestioning obedience in everything. He will not tolerate in you the self-sins even though they are permitted and excused by most Christians. By the self-sins I mean self-love, self-pity, self-seeking, self-confidence, self-righteousness, self-aggrandizement, self-defense. You will find the spirit to be in sharp opposition to the easy ways of the world and of the mixed multitude within the precincts of religion. He will be jealous over you for good. He will not allow you to boast or swagger or show off. He will take the direction of your life away from you. He will reserve the right to test you, to discipline you, to chasten you for your soul's sake. He may strip you of many of those borderline pleasures which other Christians enjoy but which are to you a source of refined evil..." (123).

Being so immersed in the world of espresso, I have been wrecked to inferior coffee. At times I ironically proclaim, usually to Elaine, that my coffee snobbery is my burden to bear. That is the way it is with the Spirit, says Tozer, He wrecks us. We no longer are satisfied with the "borderline pleasures," but long for something deeper and more real. The good and pleasurable Folgers or Maxwell House becomes "refined evil."

"Through it all He will enfold you in a love so vast, so mighty, so all-embracing, so wondrous that your very losses will seem like gains and your small pains like pleasures. Yet the flesh will whimper under His yoke and cry out against it as a burden too great to bear. And you will be permitted to enjoy the solemn privilege of suffering to 'fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ' in your flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church. Now, with the conditions before you, do you still want to be filled with the Holy Spirit?" (124).

Reading this my mind again wandered to a hot straight shot of espresso. Those of us who drink it, know that we don't do it for the fun of it. It is not a soft drink. No it is hard and rumbling. Its ultimate pleasure is through the suffering.

Dear God, wreck me for you. Bring me along the way of the cross!

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## **Nathan Albright says**

[Note: This book was provided free of charge by Moody Publishing. All thoughts and opinions are my own.]

Oddly enough, I got this book without asking for it from a publisher, as happens relatively frequently. When one reads as many books as I do--and this is the third book I have read by this author [1]--it seems fairly natural that one would read books that one had not requested. And though I had not requested this book, and though I stand in a very different point of view with regards to the nature of God and especially of the Holy Spirit than the author does [2], there is still much to appreciate in this book. It is striking, in light of the state of contemporary Christianity, that so many books have come across my attention that deal with the role of the Holy Spirit in the church. This book primarily deals with two subjects, namely the decisive role of God in conversion as well as the power and role of the Holy Spirit, and in both cases the author has a lot to say that will be a subject of controversy and contention in the present world.

Overall, this book is a short volume of about 140 pages or so divided into ten chapters. About half of the chapters look at God's pursuit of mankind and about half of them deal with the topic of and nature of the Holy Spirit. In both cases the author makes a direct challenge to others. In speaking about God's role in conversion, the author resolves an apparent contradiction between the Calvinist and Arminian view by pointing out that what is a choice on our part is a conquest on the part of God, showing that divine providence and human will are ultimately two sides of the same coin, namely the active and passive aspects of a single relationship. Likewise, the author's discussion of the lack of active presence of the Holy Spirit reminds me that the concern over continuation or cessation of the Holy Spirit is by no means a concern only of our times, but one that has been going on for the better part of a century. The author's discussion of the sterility of a belief in the text of the Bible without the motivating power of God's Spirit is an immensely worthwhile and relevant one.

Ultimately, as a reader, this book led me to ponder some aspects of the author's argument and the way it is heard and read in contemporary times. This is a book full of ironies. For one, this is a book written by someone who mistrusts the overreliance of many people on books rather than the experience of a life lived in faith and obedience. Likewise, the author's view of God's pursuit of mankind has elements of that feeling of "divine rape" that people associate with Calvinist thought and that has made mainstream Calvinism immensely unpalatable to a large part of the population and even fatal to the political hopes of Calvinists within the United States. Additionally, the author's toughmindedness concerning other people appears to lack a sense of love and compassion for others. The author seems to struggle with showing love to sinners with a fervent hope for their repentance and a hatred of sin, even if it can be found within ourselves as it so often is. Even so, this is a book that certainly provides tough love, and a rebuke of many contemporary religious trends, and there is definitely a point in that.

[1] See, for example:

<https://edgeinducedcohesion.blog/2015...>

<https://edgeinducedcohesion.blog/2016...>

[2] See, for example:

<https://edgeinducedcohesion.blog/2011...>

<https://edgeinducedcohesion.blog/2011...>

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## **Rose on aish says**

Tozer's holy zeal is for nothing more than for the believer to have an experience with the living God, and not be content with the average. Tozer begins with Ecclesiastes 12:12 "And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." A.W. Tozer's writings are on an altogether higher spiritual level. His love for God is without pretense. His one aim is to "know Him in the power of His resurrection and in the fellowship of His sufferings." Tozer writes about "the Adamic ego." ...whether it refers to this as "the flesh," or the "old man," the fact remains that there MUST be a death if we are to ever become what God ordained us to be.

Tozer writes more about the absolute need for separation from the world and warns about the different view which we have about the world. He talks about the Pharisaical spirit as one with which Jesus faced during His entire ministry on this earth. He further develops truths about what is asked for an intimate communion between a redeemed man and God by shifting his focus from man to God, but not entirely. He still writes a bit about the man's part, particularly God's command that His own children be separate from the world and their own uncompromising obedience to God.

Something very important what we need not forget that God is not just jealous over us, as individual children of His, but as the ideal husband is jealous over us as His bride. He desires to keep us pure and holy unto Himself and Himself alone. I highly recommend Tozer's books!

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## **Jimmy Reagan says**

A. W. Tozer turned out an incredible amount of probing, moving, and spiritual writings. His classics "The Pursuit of God" and "The Knowledge of the Holy" are two of the most important Christian books that we possess today—Something like a 12 on a scale of 1-10. This volume is only slightly below those venerable books. Not agreeing exactly with the Calvinist or the non-Calvinist, he never demonstrates the fear of man and writes what he got from intimate communion with his Lord.

To my mind, he writes mostly on what salvation is, what it is not, why we often have a superficial view of it. The second half of the book he moves on to the Third Person of the Trinity—the Holy Spirit. I heard echoes of his theological masterpiece, "The Knowledge of the Holy." Actually, this book is intended to fill in some of the gaps, as well as be a counterpart to "The Pursuit of God."

I can't really think of a downside to the book and was personally moved by it. Some might think they find a few strands of legalism in it, but please notice there is nothing of the Pharisee's heart from his pen. This book is a winner all the way.

I received this book free from the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I

have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.

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### **Greg Miller says**

More of a 4.5 but 5 will work. Its interesting, substance filled, and despite minor flaws, is definitely beneficial for all seeking a good read

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### **Reet Champion says**

Another great read by A. W. Tozer. In this book he tackles the issues man has with giving his all to God. A great companion to *The Pursuit of God* I remember reading this book soon after the former and falling in love with it. I recommended the book to anyone who would listen. It was just the thing I needed and got my thoughts turning over and over in my mind, processing what I had read. If you're in a slump right now with your Christian walk, or just anyone really, this is an absolute must read. It helps you refocus on your journey and realize how small everything is in comparison to God. Great book, great minister. Easy five star book.

*DISCLAIMER: In accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising" we would like to note that we received a hard copy of "God's Pursuit of Man" provided by the publishers, Moody, in exchange for our honest review.*

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### **Greg says**

As are all Tozer's books, a MUST READ for every Christian

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### **Kristian Kilgore says**

AW Tozer has a unique quality in his writing. He has the ability to put off the lofty ideas of scholarly pursuit and elevate the pursuit of the Divine as central and singular. He does this, ironically, by approaching spiritual things in a scholarly way; and he accomplishes this feat without the slightest hint of hypocrisy or contradiction.

I cannot deny that I am not exactly biased when it comes to works by AW Tozer. His style, his passion, and the depth of his thinking have a way of rooting into unexplored places inside my mind and heart and touching previously unknown nerves in my spirit. He is, for me, addictive. I don't always agree with his social commentary, I believe that he was concerned, to certain degree, with protecting a way of life that he viewed as beneficial and so he condemned certain cultural things that I consider to be quite neutral with regard to righteousness and holiness. But the thing Tozer does that endears him to me, even in those moments when I disagree with some bit of application, is this: he always speaks in a way that convinces me that he is only interested in the depths of the Christian walk and knowledge of God. Though he "preaches" it is never "preachy" because it is always rooted and grounded in both his and the reader's ultimate joy. This book, "The Pursuit of Man" is no different.

In the opening chapters he makes reference to some mechanics of knowing God and how we can know Him and why we should know Him.

"The man who would know God must give time to Him."

He moves into a classic Tozer segment that appears in all of his books at some point and in some way where he deals with the importance of separation from the world. He diagnosis, in abstract and poetic strokes, the modern condition as opposed to the Biblical expectation in passages like this:

"Are there then two crosses? And did Paul mean one thing and they another? I fear that it is so, that there are two crosses, the old cross and the new...if I see it right, the cross of popular evangelicalism is not the cross of the New Testament. It is, rather, a new bright ornament upon the bosom of self-assured, carnal Christianity whose hands are indeed the hands of Abel but whose voice is the voice of Cane. The old cross slew men, the new cross entertains them. The old cross condemned, the new cross amuses. The old cross destroyed confidence in the flesh, the new cross encourages it. The old cross brought tears and blood, the new cross brings laughter.

The last half of the book is focused on the Holy Spirit. As the title of the book suggests, there is a pursuant aspect to God where He seeks us and searches us out. Tozer asserts that the agent responsible for this is the Spirit of God. This is another place where Tozer tends to shine. Though he is not a Pentecostal he is more apt to speak about the Holy Spirit than many so called Charismatics. His scathing commentary is encouraging and offered in authentic love, but it is not powder coated or blunted in any way.

"However culpable the liberal in denying the Godhood of Christ, we who pride ourselves on our orthodoxy must not allow our indignation to blind us to our own shortcomings. Certainly this is no time for self-congratulations for we too have, in recent years, committed a costly blunder in religion. A blunder paralleling closely that of the liberal. Our blunder, or shall we frankly say, our sin, has been to neglect the doctrine of the Spirit to a point where we virtually deny Him His place in the Godhead. This denial has not been by open doctrinal statement, for we have clung closely enough to the Biblical position wherever our credal pronouncements are concerned. The formal creed is sound, the breakdown is in our working creed."

As I said in the beginning, I am biased toward Tozer's writing, but that doesn't change the fact that this is a powerful work that is more than worth the time to move through it. It is, as many of Tozer's books, a short volume, around 140 pages, and it isn't a difficult piece to read. But there are many places where, though the reading isn't troublesome, the content is dense and must be processed. There are implications, both personal and corporate, that Tozer brings up, hands to the reader, and then walks away leaving us alone with a ticking package and a sense of urgency that "this is important right now".  
Read this. Consume it.

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## **Josh Miller says**

Tozer has a power about him when you read his words. He is strong, yet humble; powerful, yet gentle. In the foreword, I found a statement that resonated with me. William Culbertson, a former Moody Bible Institute president, spoke about how there will be some who disagree on certain points with Tozer in this book. He then made this statement: "Don't miss the pith because you are engrossed in the study of the bark." I love the

truth there!

The first four chapters were my favorite. Chapter one, The Eternal Continuum, made me think deeply about God and His presence. Here are some quotes from that chapter:

"Nothing of God dies when a man of God dies."

"It is well that we accept the hard truth now: The man who would know God must give time to Him."

"Wherever faith has been original, wherever it has proved itself to be real, it has invariably had upon it a sense of the present God."

"Whatever else it embraces, true Christian experience must always include a genuine encounter with God."

"It cannot but be a major tragedy in the life of any many to live in a church from childhood to old age and know nothing more real than some synthetic god compounded of theology and logic, but having no eyes to see, no ears to hear and no heart to love."

"We should seek to be cleansed of the childish notion that to have lived in Abram's day, or in Paul's, would have been better than to live today. With God, Abram's day and this day are the same."

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### **Nathan Good says**

I would highly recommend this book to any honest seeker of God. Unfortunately, the book is explicitly addressed to American evangelical fundamentalists, so while the message is timeless and universal the content must be understood through the lens of the author.

Overall, the book is well written and the Spirit of God pours out of the words. It is obvious that the author is not writing from a merely intellectual and academic position, but rather he is putting down truths that have been searched out and lived out in a real life. I found that each chapter left me with a burning desire in my heart to seek God and to know God.

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### **Kris says**

Felt like the scattered musings of an insightful theologian. It should have been much better, had the author taken the time to revise, add, and rewrite.

I should give this three stars, because there are some good truths here. But it's mostly a forgetful book. Nothing struck me. While the main focus seemed to be on the Holy Spirit (I think?), it wanders in several directions over the course of 150 pages. I wanted more focus and conclusions.

I received a free copy of this book while at Book Expo America in New York City in summer 2017.

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## **Nick says**

Another great book on the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer by Tozer. Now this book is published under the title *The Pursuit of Man*, but both titles capture the essence of this book: The Holy Spirit pursues the souls and lives of people to conquer them for God.

Over the last few years, I have heard or read the statement that there are few good books on the Holy Spirit. If so, this is one of those good ones. This book didn't have the same momentum that *The Tozer Pulpit* vol. 2 did, though. It read a bit slower. Here, also, he unleashes his feelings about "entertainment" and high society living. Let me just say that he doesn't have a lot of love for things like TV or the theater. He didn't become known as a prophet without reason.

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## **Stephen Willcox says**

Another great book by Tozer.

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## **Kurt Nelson says**

This book is much deeper and harder to understand than the previous Tozer book I read. The text below are key parts of the book that were key to help with my understanding of election.

Our "accepting" and "willing" are reactions rather than actions. The right of determination must always remain with God. God has indeed lent to every man the power to lock his heart and stalk away darkly into his self-chosen night, as He has lent to every man the ability to respond to His overtures of grace, but while the "no" choice may be ours, the "yes" choice is always God's. He is the Author of our faith as He must be its Finisher.

We bear within us the seeds of our own disintegration. Our moral imprudence puts us always in danger of accidental or reckless self-destruction. The strength of our flesh is an ever present danger to our souls. Deliverance can come to us only by the defeat of our old life. Safety and peace come only after we have been forced to our knees. God rescues us by breaking us, by shattering our strength and wiping out our resistance. Then He invades our natures with that ancient and eternal life which is from the beginning. So He conquers us and by that benign conquest saves us for Himself.

A man can die of starvation knowing all about bread, and a man can remain spiritually dead while knowing all the historic facts of Christianity.

The doctrine of the inability of the human mind and the need for divine illumination is so fully developed in the New Testament that it is nothing short of astonishing that we should have gone so far astray from the whole thing.

For a man to understand revealed truth requires an act of God equal to the original act which inspired the text.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all

things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. (1 Corinthians 2:9-12)

We need to learn that truth consists not in correct doctrine, but in correct doctrine plus the inward enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

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