

# 1 Peter 3:1b

by A.W. Tozer

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*The importance of conforming to truth and avoiding false teaching by having a correct concept of God.*

**Duration:** 10:13

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Jude 1:3

**Topics:** "Wives and Husbands"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of correct doctrine and teaching in accordance with the truth. He states that truth is simply acknowledging and conforming to the facts as they are, both in the physical and spiritual realms. Just as we cannot twist or manipulate physical facts, we should not distort or change spiritual truths. The speaker compares non-conformity to truth to a disaster waiting to happen, highlighting the significance of aligning our beliefs and teachings with the revealed truths in the Bible.

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## Transcript

I want to talk on that book of Jude this morning, bringing again, after the passing of some years, a bit of attention to this little but powerful book. Now, the man Jude, a brother of Christ, had planned to write an encouraging letter. Just as you might sit down to write to your friends a letter of encouragement, he had planned it, dealing with what he called our common salvation.

But he said it became necessary, rather, as he was moved and impressed by the Holy Ghost, to write something else altogether. An unpleasant circumstance had risen, which forced him to write quite another kind of letter from the good encouraging letter that he had planned. Certain men had crept in unnoticed.

Now, those men were, personally, men of evil lives. They were, and had been, foreseen and condemned by the Lord himself when he was with them. And they taught doctrine that was contrary to Christian faith.

Now, he writes to arouse the victims of these teachers to contend for the truth. Now, I want to talk just a little, because I want my emphasis to fall elsewhere, but a little about this false teaching. Not naming any false teaching, specifically.

And I do not use this because I think there's any false teaching here. We have had an amazing success under God in the last years in keeping from our fellowship those who would subvert us. They just don't feel healthy around here.

The atmosphere is not wholesome, and they don't stay very long. So this is general rather than specific, but because it is for the whole Church of Christ, it certainly is also for us. Now, what do we mean by false teaching? Well, it means teaching that things are otherwise than they are.

Now, things are, both physical things and spiritual things are. They are, you can put a period after that. And when we have discovered or had revealed to us the facts about them, either things material or things spiritual, then we are morally required to acknowledge those facts and to make our teaching conform to them.

Now, that's also very simple that I almost apologize for saying it. But it is the broad framework upon which everything else must hang that things are as they are. Whether we like them or not, that's the way they are.

God made things, and things are. Physical material things are, and spiritual things are. Now, it is our business to find out how they are, accept them as they are, and then make our teaching conform to them as they are.

Now, that's rather simple, isn't it? Now, correct doctrine, then, is of vital importance, because it is simply the teaching of things as they are. There are five there, and I say that's five. Ten over there, and I say that's ten.

It is July what today, third, and I say it's July third. That doesn't take genius, that's just stating things as they are. This is Chicago, Illinois, not Memphis, Tennessee.

This is Chicago, Illinois. This is July, not August. This is the third, not the ninth.

This is 1955, not 1957. This country is the United States of America, not some other country. Not England, not any of the Scandinavian countries.

And so, telling the truth about things is simply finding out what they are, and then conforming my statement to their facts. Now, it's so with spiritual truths. When a truth has been revealed in the book of God, our business is to find out what that truth is, and then in all of our teaching, conform to that truth.

Not edit it, not change it, but let it stand just as it is. It is the truth of God, declared as it is, and don't try to change it. It would be ridiculous of me to try, by some twist of logic or sophistry, to make this to be August when it's July, to make it to be the ninth when it's the third, to make this to be winter when it's summer, to make this country to be Canada when it's the United States.

Truth is just as it is. God Almighty has made the world to be a mathematical universe, and he runs all things according to mathematical laws. And he has a moral world which runs according to moral laws as exact and as unchanging as mathematical laws.

So nonconformity to the truth anywhere brings disaster. Let an engineer be wrong about a position, and let him build according to that wrong concept, and his building will collapse around it. Let a navigator be wrong about something, and he will run on a rock, and his old ship will shudder as it runs onto a sandbar or a rock, and will settle in the water and sink out of sight, because a mistake has been made.

The man has not gone according to the truth. Nonconformity always brings disaster, wherever it may be. And the vastness and hugeness of the disaster depends upon the high level or low level of the facts we

have before us.

If I started with a compass that was backwards, we were driving the other day in Mr. McAfee's car, and we went west all the time. No matter which way we turned, the compass said west. Something wrong with the compass.

Now, that didn't do us great harm, because there were markers, and we didn't go according to that. But if there had been something serious, and we'd had to know when our lives depended upon it, we might have left our bones someplace, because a compass went wrong. So, nonconformity, failure to stay by facts as they are, will bring disaster if we depend upon it.

Now, false teaching is the falsifying of data. It's falsifying of data about God, ourselves, sin, and Christ. First of all, any false teaching must begin with the wrong concept of God.

You can put that down in the back of your Bible, or the back of your memory. And any false teaching of any sort must begin with the wrong concept of God. It can't be otherwise.

Nobody who holds a right concept of God can go very far wrong with anything else. And all the basic, great mistakes that have been made, the great fundamental errors, have all rested down a wrong concept of God. Men are not willing to let God be what he says he is.

They're always trying to change God, and trying to make him to be other than what he is. God is, and we'd better accept him as he is. God is, and the angels want him to be what he is.

God is, and the elders and saints and heavenly creatures want him to be what he is. We'd better want him to be what he is, too, and conformed of what he is. Any structure that is crooked, or any foundation that is crooked, will bring the structure down in time.

It will either sink, or it will collapse, or lean, or fall over, but it will not stand long. For if it does, it will be lean, as the leaning tower there in Italy. Now, God, of all the foundations, God is the most important, because God is God, and made the heaven and earth and all things that are therein.

And it is a great error, it would be a great error, for a man or woman to go a lifetime thinking they were talking to the God of heaven and earth, and find that they were talking to a God which they had confounded out of their own imagination. It would be a tragic calamity to the human spirit for me to pray a lifetime and preach a lifetime about a God that wasn't a true God at all, but some other God, which was a composite of ideas drawn from philosophy and psychology and other religions and superstitions. No, God is what he is, and we had better learn what God is, and then conform our teachings to God.

If we take away any of the attributes of God, we weaken our concept of God. We do not weaken God, but we weaken our concept of God. Christian scientists have taken all the justice and judgment and hatred of sin out of the nature of God, and they have nothing but a soft God left.

There are those who have taken love and grace out and have nothing but a God of judgment left. There are those who have taken away the personality of God and have nothing but a mathematical God left, the God of the scientists. All these are false, inadequate conceptions of God.

While God is a God of justice, he's a God of grace, and while he's a God of righteousness, he's a God of mercy.

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