

Believing the Declaratives and Obeying the Imperatives

by A.W. Tozer

To understand and apply God's truth, we must believe it, surrender to love, come to the Word with childlike faith, and obey it as we see it.

Scripture: Isaiah 55:8, Matthew 28:19, John 14:3

Topics: "Faith and Obedience", "Understanding God's Truth"

Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between declarative truths that are to be believed and imperative truths that require obedience. He illustrates that some statements, like Jesus' promise to return, are meant solely for belief, while commands such as the Great Commission demand active obedience. Tozer outlines four key points: truth is spiritually discerned, love is essential for understanding God's truth, faith must be childlike, and obedience to truth is crucial for spiritual growth. He warns against the confusion that arises when believers fail to recognize the difference between believing and obeying God's Word.

Transcript

The last cause I shall name is nonobedience. Truth is given to be believed and obeyed. Certain truths can only be believed, the reason being that they are revelations of fact and contain no command or instruction to be carried out. Other truths must be obeyed or for the hearer they have no meaning.

"I will come back" (John 14:3) is a statement of fact which cannot in the nature of it be obeyed; there is nothing in it to obey; it can only be believed. "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19) is a command which can only be obeyed. It is addressed to the will, and the only proper response is obedience. We cannot possibly discharge our obligation to such a passage by trying in some dubious manner to "believe" it, though I am sure many try to do just that. Is it any wonder that confusion arises?

We will go far to simplify our religious concepts and unify our lives if we remember these four points: First, truth is a spiritual entity and can be grasped in its inner essence only as the Spirit of truth enlightens our hearts and teaches us in the deep, mysterious recesses of our souls. Secondly, since God is love we must surrender ourselves to love or we can never know the truth of God in its higher meaning. Thirdly, we must come to the Word with the simple faith of a child, ready to believe it whether we can understand it or not. And lastly, we must obey the truth as we see it, trusting God with the consequences.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/believing-the-declaratives-and-obeying-the-imperatives/>

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