

Lovingly Embracing Truth

A.W. Tozer:

Now lest I be misunderstood and so succeed only in confusing things still further, let me assure my readers that I am and have always been a staunch advocate of theology, and regularly teach doctrine systematically in pursuance of my pastoral calling. I joyfully recognize that there is an outline of divine truth fitted to the human mind and intended by its Author to be received by it. I think no one can become a strong Christian who is not a theologian of some sort, but it is altogether possible to be a theologian and not be a Christian at all. Bible doctrine without love is but a shadow of truth; doctrine held in love is very truth indeed, and we dare not allow ourselves to be satisfied with anything less.

Another source of religious confusion is unbelief. The writer to the Hebrews attributed Israel's failure to benefit by the truth to a breakdown in their faith. "But the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith" (Hebrews 4:2). The thought of holding holy truth in unbelief is a frightening thing. For the unbelieving mind to tinker with the truth of God is as terrible as was the unauthorized act of Saul when in fear and unbelief he offered a burnt offering at Gilgal. "I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD's favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering" (1 Samuel 13:12). So the king explained his act, but there is something spine-chilling about it all. An unholy man tried to do a holy act and tragedy followed. From that hour Saul's life degenerated till at last, deserted and terrified, he died by his own hand.