

## Two Minds Towards Obedience 02-28-16

In a mature Christian, we have concluded that by Faith we obey God. But why do you obey God? Is it because you understand WHAT he has said and you do it, or because you understand WHY He has commanded and you obey? One of these ideas is superior to the other, and reflects the perfect will of God. Which one are you?

Faith is a form of comprehension. A study of Faith reveals that it is not blind, and that it is not self-originated. It is not a feeling or emotion, but is an active understanding summed up in the description: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). However, faith as understanding is not "I know **why** God has asked me to do....", but instead faith as understanding is "I know **what** God has asked me to do". We do not act by faith because we understand what God said, but because we understand what He has said. This distinction is found in a single word: TRUST.

Faith entails TRUST in God. This is seen in the lives of men of Faith. Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son in Genesis 22:2-12. He did not understand how this would fulfill God's promises, but he trusted God (James 2:21-22). Joshua was commanded to march around Jericho in Joshua 6:3-24. He did not understand how this would accomplish the purpose of capturing the city, but he trusted God. Moses did not understand how marching to the sea would deliver the Israelites, but he obeyed (Exodus 14:10-28). Finally, Naaman could not fathom how washing in the Jordan 7 times would cure his leprosy, but he acted and was healed (2 Kings 5:1-15). We must act because God said it, NOT because we understand or agree. This is mature Faith.

There are multiple applications for this understanding of faith. Consider our Christian relationships described in Colossians 3:18-4:1. We are not acting in accordance to observation, but by trust in God. Consider the works in the church mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:1-13. We do not second guess the meanings of these qualifications because we cannot understand why, but instead we simply obey. Finally, a difficult application of this idea is found in church discipline (Matthew 18:15-18, Titus 3:10, 1 Timothy 5:20). How many times have we tried to out think God by saying "if we don't associate with the fallen believer, they will not return to the Lord", and thereby nullify the commandment of God?

We need to learn to trust God. Consider that God is telling us some important facts: "I know what I am doing", when we do not; "I meant what I said", and we must listen; "I want the best for you", and sometimes we don't know what is best for ourselves. Trust God; He has proven ten thousand times over that His way is best. We need not understand the "why" to act in faith if we understand the "what".