

FAITH

Dietrich Bonhoeffer BELIEF AND OBEDIENCE

Only the believer obeys and only the obedient believe.

It is really unfaithfulness to the Bible to have the first statement without the second. . .

First there is faith, than obedience.

If this meant only that faith alone justifies us and not deeds of obedience, then it is a true and necessary precondition for every thing else.

But if it meant a chronological sequence, that faith would have to come first, to be followed by obedience, then faith and obedience are torn apart, and the very practical question remains open: when does obedience start.

Obedience remains separated from faith. . .

The Statement "only the believer obeys" has to be paired with the other one: "only the obedient believe.

In the first, faith is the precondition of obedience, in the second, obedience is the precondition of faith. . .

Only the obedient believe.

A concrete commandment has to be obeyed, in order to have faith.

A step of obedience has to be taken, so that faith does not become pious self-deception, cheap grace.

The first step is crucial.

It is qualitatively different from all others that follow.

The first step of obedience has to lead Peter away from his nets and out of the boat. . .

Faith is possible only in this new state of existence created by obedience.

COMMENT

The point is that in genuine faith a first step of obedience has to be taken, so that faith does not become pious self-deception, cheap grace. It's actually very simply told the call, the following-after. Faith is possible only in this new state of existence created by obedience. Whether we walk on the water or sink, the first step is crucial.