

### 3 *No Rash Opinions*

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#### *Wait To Act*

Torrey in *How To Study The Bible* incredibly encourages you to obey what you see in the Bible immediately without any need to resolve difficulties you have not resolved.

Whatever duty you find commanded in the Bible, do it at once. Whatever good you see in any Bible character, imitated it immediately. Whatever mistake you note in the actions in Bible men and women, scrutinize your own life to see if you are making the same mistake; and if you find you are, correct it immediately.... Obeying the truth you already see will resolve the enigma in the verses you do not as yet understand. Disobeying the truth you see darkens the whole world of truth. *Id.*, at 15.

While this advice sounds wholesome, it is wrong when given as advice on how to *study* the Bible. Any tour of the Internet chat rooms or e-mail banter and community forums demonstrates how reckless is Torrey's direction.

Rather, one needs to have a deep understanding of every passage before one overturns one's life in reliance on a particular passage. For example, let's apply Torrey's principle that whatever good you see in a Bible character, you must immediately imitate it and whatever error you see in a Bible character you must do the contrary. Jesus encountered a rich young man, and the man said he had kept all the Commandments. Jesus told him he had to do one more thing. He had to give all his money away to the poor. Now there is nothing wrong in giving your money away to the poor. At the same time, however, if you follow Torrey's advice, you must quickly do what the rich man failed to do. You must immedi-

ately impoverish yourself. However, with a little deeper understanding of the Bible, you would realize that this man suffered from greed, and Jesus was giving this man a work worthy of repentance *matched precisely* to his sin. Not everyone must live without any money.

It is extremely unwise to see what appears to be a Biblically-correct behavior, and overthrow your life without more careful study. Deep truths are what indeed the Bible offers. You have to dig deep to find its treasures. Those who are content finding superficial truth and treating it as the deepest truth will potentially destroy their lives. I actually know a young man who stuck a fork in his eye to blind himself, thinking this is what Jesus meant by ‘plucking your eye out’ if it causes you to sin.

Thus, one must approach the Bible with the opposite view than what Torrey endorses. You must wait patiently to be sure that you have understood how all the parts fit before you rely upon your understanding to change your course of life.

The Bible is not to be read as a race to the truth. The truth in its pages must be found patiently. The whole meaning of *study* is undermined when your teacher, like Torrey, encourages *immediate* wholesale changes of your life at the first whisper of truth you might note.