

Divine Authority

Lesson 6
Respecting The Silence of The
Scriptures

What We Have Learned In The Previous Lesson

Expedients are matters of judgment we use
to carry out Lord's commands

An expedient must

Be lawful

Not be specified in New Testament

Edify local church

Not offend conscience of weak brother

Examples of expedients include church
buildings, song books and baptisteries

2

Introduction

- What does the Lord have in mind when He is silent on a subject?
- Does His silence give us permission to act as we choose?
- Or, does His silence forbid us to act as we think is best?
- These two underlying attitudes dictate how we apply Divine authority

3

Introduction

- Denominational view – God's silence is permissive
- We are free to do whatever we want as long as God has not specifically forbidden it
- Many churches of Christ have now adopted the same attitude
- We are free to act unless the Lord specifically forbids us from doing so

4

Introduction

- This is a departure from how churches of Christ used to view His silence
- Common attitude among churches of Christ has been that God's silence is restrictive in nature not permissive
- What has changed and why?
- Our attitude toward God's silence will determine whether we respect or reject His authority

5

Purposes of This Lesson

- Understand the meaning of God's silence and what our attitude should be toward it
- Recognize the danger of having the wrong attitude toward His silence
- Provide biblical examples of those that ignored the silence of God and suffered the consequences

6

Respecting The Silence of The Scriptures

What does it mean when God is silent?

Old Testament examples of disrespecting God's silence

New Testament examples of disrespecting God's silence

Denominational examples of disrespecting God's silence

Churches of Christ examples of disrespecting God's silence

7

What Does It Mean When God Is Silent?

- The only way we can know anything about the will of God is that He must communicate it to us
- If He has not communicated to us about a particular matter, we cannot know anything about that matter
- God's silence does not authorize us to act in whatever way we please but rather restricts us to follow what He has already revealed to us

8

What Does It Mean When God Is Silent?

1Co 2:10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

1Co 2:11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

9

What Does It Mean When God Is Silent?

1Pe 4:11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

10

What Does It Mean When God Is Silent?

Gal 1:8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

11

What Does It Mean When God Is Silent?

- Again, if God speaks on a matter, we can be sure of His will
- But if He is silent, we are forbidden to speak for Him on any matter
- When God speaks, all else is excluded
- From Bible examples, we see God's silence is restrictive and ignoring it results in eternal danger

12

Old Testament Examples Of Disrespecting God's Silence

Nadab and Abihu

Son of Israelite woman

Moving ark of the covenant

Balaam

13

Nadab And Abihu

Lev 16:12 "He shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar before the LORD and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, and bring it inside the veil.

14

Nadab And Abihu

Lev 10:1 Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them.

Lev 10:2 And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.

15

Son Of Israelite Woman

Lev 24:10 Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the sons of Israel; and the Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel struggled with each other in the camp.

Lev 24:11 The son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name and cursed. So they brought him to Moses. (Now his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.)

16

Son Of Israelite Woman

Lev 24:12 They put him in custody so that the command of the LORD might be made clear to them.

Lev 24:13 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Lev 24:14 "Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then let all the congregation stone him.

17

Son Of Israelite Woman

Lev 24:15 "You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If anyone curses his God, then he will bear his sin.

Lev 24:16 'Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

18

Moving Ark Of The Covenant

Num 4:15 "When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy objects and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is to set out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them, so that they will not touch the holy objects and die. These are the things in the tent of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.

19

Moving Ark Of The Covenant

Exo 25:13 "You shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.
Exo 25:14 "You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them.
Exo 25:15 "The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be removed from it.

20

Moving Ark Of The Covenant

2Sa 6:3 They placed the ark of God on a new cart that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart.

2Sa 6:6 But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen nearly upset *it*.

21

Moving Ark Of The Covenant

2Sa 6:7 And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of God.

1Ch 15:13 "Because you did not carry it at the first, the LORD our God made an outburst on us, for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance."

22

Balaam

- Although Balaam wanted to curse Israel, God restrained him from doing so
- Guided by the Spirit, Balaam states we should respect God's Word and not go beyond what it says

23

Balaam

Num 24:13 'Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not do anything contrary to the command of the LORD, either good or bad, of my own accord. What the LORD speaks, that I will speak'?

24

New Testament Examples Of Disrespecting God's Silence

Division caused by following men

Following Law of Moses not required for Christians

Jesus, only one called by title, Son of God

Under Law of Moses, only Levites could serve as priests

25

Division Caused By Following Men

- To make human opinions equal to God's commands is sinful
- Individual opinions that don't contradict Divine commands should be privately believed and practiced

26

Division Caused By Following Men

Rom 14:1 Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.

Rom 14:2 One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only.

27

Division Caused By Following Men

Rom 14:3 The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him.

Rom 14:21 It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.

28

Division Caused By Following Men

Rom 14:22 The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

Rom 14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

29

Division Caused By Following Men

1Co 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1Co 1:11 For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you.

30

Division Caused By Following Men

1Co 1:12 Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."

1Co 1:13 Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

31

Division Caused By Following Men

1Co 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.

32

Following Law Of Moses Not Required For Christians

- False teaching – Gentile Christians must be circumcised and keep Law of Moses to be saved
- God was silent on this so they had gone beyond His Word in teaching it

33

Following Law Of Moses Not Required For Christians

Act 15:1 Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

Act 15:2 And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.

34

Following Law Of Moses Not Required For Christians

Act 15:22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas-- Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren,

35

Following Law Of Moses Not Required For Christians

Act 15:23 and they sent this letter by them, "The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings.

Act 15:24 "Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with their words, unsettling your souls,

36

Following Law Of Moses Not Required For Christians

Act 15:25 it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

Act 15:26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Act 15:27 "Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word of mouth.

37

Following Law Of Moses Not Required For Christians

Act 15:28 "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials:

Act 15:29 that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well. Farewell."

38

Jesus, Only One Called By Title, Son Of God

- The Father never said to any of the angels, you are my Son
- But, He did say this of Jesus alone
- Those who claim Jesus is an exalted angel disregard God's silence

39

Jesus, Only One Called By Title, Son Of God

Heb 1:5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"?

Heb 1:6 And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM."

40

Jesus, Only One Called By Title, Son Of God

Heb 1:7 And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE."

Heb 1:8 But of the Son He says, "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.

41

Under Law Of Moses, Only Levites Could Serve As Priests

- Prophesied Jesus would be a priest
- Law of Moses was silent about priests being from any other tribe except Levi
- Jesus was from the tribe of Judah
- In order for Jesus to become a priest, Law of Moses had to be replaced by the New Covenant which took effect after Jesus' death

42

Under Law Of Moses, Only Levites Could Serve As Priests

Heb 5:6 just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

43

Under Law Of Moses, Only Levites Could Serve As Priests

Heb 7:13 For the one concerning whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar.

Heb 7:14 For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, a tribe with reference to which Moses spoke nothing concerning priests.

44

Under Law Of Moses, Only Levites Could Serve As Priests

Heb 7:11 Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron?

Heb 7:12 For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.

45

Denominations Disrespecting God's Silence

Instrumental music

Infant baptism

46

Instrumental Music

- The Lord plainly revealed we should sing in our worship
- The Lord is silent in the New Testament concerning using mechanical instruments in our worship

47

Instrumental Music

Eph 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

48

Infant Baptism

- The Lord commands those who believe in Jesus and repent of their sins must be baptized in order to be forgiven of their sins
- The Lord is silent about commanding infants to be baptized, those who can neither believe nor repent

49

Infant Baptism

Mar 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

Mar 16:16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

50

Infant Baptism

Act 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified."

Act 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

51

Infant Baptism

Act 2:38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Act 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.

52

Churches of Christ Disrespecting God's Silence

Sunset International Bible Institute
Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort,
Inc.

53

Sunset International Bible Institute

- Previously known as Sunset School of Preaching
- Location – Lubbock, Texas, USA
- Preacher training school overseen by the elders of the Sunset church of Christ
- School is funded by local churches and individuals

54

Sunset International Bible Institute

- New Testament reveals local churches sent money directly to evangelists to support them as they preached
- These preachers can work with the supporting local church or local churches in other areas
- New Testament also reveals the only time one local church sent money to another local church was for helping needy saints

55

Sunset International Bible Institute

1Co 9:14 So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

56

Sunset International Bible Institute

2Co 11:8 I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to serve you;

2Co 11:9 and when I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so.

57

Sunset International Bible Institute

1CO 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.

1CO 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

58

Sunset International Bible Institute

- New Testament is silent about preaching school arrangements like Sunset Institute
- Elders should oversee their own work, not the work of other churches
- Each church should train preachers as it is able to do so
- Other churches should send money directly to evangelists not to a centralized evangelistic training program like Sunset

59

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.,

- Location – Nashville, Tennessee, USA
- Benevolent organization designed to help both needy saints and non-Christians throughout the world
- Receives funds from local churches and individuals

60

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.,

- New Testament reveals local churches are restricted to collecting funds for needy saints, not for the world in general
- Local churches sent money directly to those Christians who were in need
- Individual Christians are responsible for helping both needy saints and those in the world

61

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.,

ACT 2:44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;
ACT 2:45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.
1Ti 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has *dependent* widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

62

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.,

1CO 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.

1CO 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

1Co 16:3 When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem;

63

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.,

Gal 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Gal 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

64

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.,

- New Testament is silent about local churches sending benevolent funds to centralized human organizations
- Local churches are to oversee their own benevolent work
- Local churches are to give directly to needy saints

65

What We Have Learned In This Lesson

Silence of God is not permissive but restrictive

The only way we can know anything about God's will is if He reveals it to us

In both Old and New Testaments, examples show going beyond His silence is disaster

Many churches of Christ, like denominations, have ignored the silence of God and followed what is not right

66

Divine Authority

Lesson 6 - Respecting The Silence of The Scriptures

Various passages and material from Lesson 6 outline

For each of the following questions, please circle the letter by the correct answer.

1. 1 Cor. 2:10-13. In order for us to know the will of God on any subject,
 - A. We must use our best reasoning to guess what we believe is best.
 - B. We must accept the fact that God's Word is so confusing we could never understand His will.
 - C. We should pray for the direct revelation of the Holy Spirit to provide us with the truth.
 - D. We should search the Word of God for God's clear revelation.

2. The silence of God is
 - A. Permissive.
 - B. Indifferent.
 - C. Restrictive.
 - D. Irrelevant.

3. Lev. 24:10-17. Concerning the punishment of the son of the Israelite woman who blasphemed,
 - A. The people voted what they thought would be just.
 - B. Moses decided on his own what should be done.
 - C. They did not punish him.
 - D. They placed him in custody and waited for the Lord to speak.

4. God was angry with David and the people for transporting the ark on the cart because
 - A. God had authorized only the Levites to carry it.
 - B. The cart was not built well.
 - C. The drivers of the cart were careless.
 - D. God did not want the ark taken to Jerusalem.

5. Acts 15. The reason for many being confused about whether the Gentiles were to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses to be saved was
 - A. God had not been clear about this matter.
 - B. The Gentiles were trying to change God's commandments.
 - C. Some Jewish Christians were going beyond God's silence on this matter.
 - D. The apostles were afraid to teach the truth and upset the Gentiles.

6. Concerning baptism, God is silent about
 - A. Baptism being for the remission of sins.
 - B. Infants being baptized.
 - C. Baptism to be done in water.
 - D. Baptism to be done by the authority of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

7. One of the reasons why the Sunset International Bible Institute is unauthorized is
 - A. God does not want local churches to evangelize.
 - B. God is silent about local churches sending money to another church who does their evangelizing for them.

- C. God is against a local church overseeing its own evangelistic work.
 - D. God is silent about how local churches are to evangelize.
8. Benevolent organizations that are supported by local churches of Christ are not authorized because
- A. God hates the poor.
 - B. Benevolence could be done more efficiently if they were better organized.
 - C. They do much good for the people.
 - D. Local churches are to give directly to help saints who are in need.

For each statement, circle True or False.

- | | | | |
|------|-------|----|--|
| True | False | 1. | The only way we can truly know the mind of someone is if we have honest communication from them. |
| True | False | 2. | If God is silent, then we should be silent. |
| True | False | 3. | Nadab and Abihu respected the silence of God. |
| True | False | 4. | Balaam respected the silence of God. |
| True | False | 5. | The Law of Moses indicated men from the tribe of Judah could serve as priests. |
| True | False | 6. | God is silent about instrumental music being used in New Testament worship. |
| True | False | 7. | All churches of Christ respect the silence of Scripture. |
| True | False | 8. | The local church is commanded to help people of the world from its treasury. |

For each question, please provide statements that clearly answer each question.

1. Describe the two prevailing attitudes relating to God's silence and their consequences if followed.

2. Please give some Old Testament examples of how people disrespected the silence of God and what occurred when they did.

3. Explain how the silence of God related to Jesus' priesthood. Heb. 7:11-14.

4. Please give some examples of denominations ignoring God's silence.

5. Please give some example of churches of Christ ignoring God's silence.