

Respecting The Silence of The Scriptures

Learning to follow what God has
said instead of following what He
has not said

Introduction

- What does the Lord mean 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 God's authoritative Word

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Introduction

- Denominational view – God's silence is permissive
- We are free to do what 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

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Introduction

- In the past, many churches of Christ held that God's silence was restrictive
- What has changed?
- Many now insist we do many things ignoring God's silence, church buildings, song books and baptisteries
- But, in these optional matters of judgment, we only carry out God's commandments, not go beyond them

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The Scriptural View of God's Silence

- The only way we can know anything about the will of God is, 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 restricts us to following what He has revealed to us

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The Scriptural View of God's Silence

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.

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The Scriptural View of God's Silence

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.

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The Scriptural View of God's Silence

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!

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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.

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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.

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God Is Silent About Moving The Ark A Different Way

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*.

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God Is Silent About Moving The Ark A Different Way

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."

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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.

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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,

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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."

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Instrumental Music

- The New Testament is silent about using mechanical instruments in our worship
- The New Testament reveals we must sing, making melody with our hearts to the Lord, in our worship

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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.

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God Is Silent About Infant Baptism

- The New Testament is silent about commanding infants to be baptized, those who can neither believe, repent nor confess Jesus
- The New Testament reveals those who believe in Jesus, repent of their sins and confess Jesus as the Son of God must be baptized for forgiveness of their sins

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Those Who Believe In Jesus, Repent of Sins and Confess Him Are To Be Baptized

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

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.

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Those Who Believe In Jesus, Repent of Sins and Confess Him Are To Be Baptized

Act 8:37 [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."]

Act 8:38 And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch, and he baptized him.

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God Is Silent About Local Churches of Christ Funding Social Activities

- The New Testament is silent about local churches providing entertainment, recreation and social meals for members and the lost
- The New Testament reveals individual Christian obligations and local church obligations are different
- The New Testament reveals we are to assemble for worship, not for social meals, entertainment, or recreation

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Local Churches Are Not To Be Burdened With Individual Obligations

1Ti 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

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.

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There Is A Distinction Between Social and Spiritual Activities

1Co 11:20 Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper,

1Co 11:21 for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

1Co 11:22 What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you.

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There Is A Distinction Between Social and Spiritual Activities

1Co 11:33 So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

1Co 11:34 If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come.

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God Is Silent About Local Churches Using Sponsoring Churches To Support Preachers

- The New Testament is silent about a third party (local church or organization) between supporting churches and preachers
- The New Testament reveals the only time local churches sent money directly to other local churches was to help the needy saints in the receiving churches
- The New Testament reveals local churches sent money directly to preachers

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Benevolence Is The Only Reason One Church Can Receive Money From Another

Rom 15:25 but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints.

Rom 15:26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

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Each Local Church Sent Funds Directly To Preachers They Supported

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.

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Respecting The Silence of The Scriptures

1. The Scriptural view of God's silence
2. Bible examples of disrespecting God's silence
3. Denominational examples of disrespecting God's silence
4. Churches of Christ examples of disrespecting God's silence

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