

I. TWO GREAT MOTTOES OF THE RESTORATION PLEA.

- A. Thomas Campbell is credited with the two famous statements below. However, he is not the only one to have said these things (others, with the same idea, preceded him).
 - B. First, "In doctrine unity, in opinion liberty, and in all things love."
 - 1. "In doctrine unity...."
We are to go to the Scriptures and agree on the teachings therein (1Cor. 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.
 - 2. "...in opinion liberty..."
We are to be gracious and allow for differences when possible. Of course, the difficult part of this is know when doctrine ends, and opinion begins (Rom. 14:1).
Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.
 - 3. "...and in all things love."
Without love the first two cannot be realized. Doctrine without love is useless, and respecting opinion cannot be done without love (1Cor. 13:1-3,7,13).
*If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have *the gift of prophecy*, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing...7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things... 13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.*
- C. Second, "Speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent."
 - 1. "Speak where the Bible speaks..."
We are know and practice that which the Scriptures teach (1Pet. 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.*
 - 2. "...and be silent where the Bible is silent."
We do not have the liberty to make laws where God has not (Heb. 7:14; 1Cor. 4:6).
(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.
(1Cor 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.

II. THERE IS NOTHING INHERENTLY WRONG WITH LOGIC & REASONING

- A. First, let us consider some important passages on logic and reasoning, as they pertain to God's word. Notice the following passages; Isa. 1:18; 2Tim. 2:15; 2Tim. 3:16,17; 1Th. 5:21.
 - (Isa. 1:18) "Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD."*
 - (2Tim 2:15) "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*
 - (2Tim 3:16,17) "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."*
 - (1Th. 5:21) "Test all things; hold fast what is good."*
- B. Some speak out against Aristotelian logic, as if Aristotle created logic! Logic is not an invention of men but is from God. He has given us the ability to reason and clearly expects us to employ such (as the passages above indicate). He has given reasoning abilities to humans that help enable us to distinguish between truth and error and between right and wrong.

III. GOD'S SILENCE IS INTENTIONAL.

- A. When God is silent on a matter, it is not accidental but intentional. This can be deduced from 2Pet. 1:3; Jude 3 and Deut 29:29.
(2Pet 1:3) seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.
(Jude 3) Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.
(Deut 29:29) "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law." Since God has given to us "all things" that pertain to life and godliness," then there is nothing of value that He has neglected to share. This truth cannot be overstated. "The faith" has been delivered once for all time. This implies that God has nothing more to reveal to us, and the things He did reveal are precisely what He wanted to reveal. God didn't forget anything in His word;
- B. Consider these related passages on the importance of basing our faith and practices on what the Bible actually says and not upon silence (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Jos. 1:7; Prov. 30:6; 1Cor. 4:6; 2Jn. 9).
(Deut 4:2) "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you."
(Deut 12:32) "Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.
(Jos 1:7) "Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go."
(Prov 30:6) "Do not add to his words, lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar."
(1Cor. 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.
(2Jn 9) "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son."
- C. We are not to act presumptuously (Deut. 1:43; 17:12,13; 18:20,22; Psa. 19:13).
(Deut 1:43) So I spoke to you, but you would not listen. Instead you rebelled against the command of the LORD, and acted presumptuously and went up into the hill country.
(Deut 17:12) The man who acts presumptuously by not listening to the priest who stands there to serve the LORD your God, nor to the judge, that man shall die; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel.
(Deut 17:13) Then all the people will hear and be afraid, and will not act presumptuously again.
(Deut 18:20) But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.
(Deut 18:22) When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.
(Psa 19:13) Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins; Let them not rule over me; Then I will be blameless, And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.

IV. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SILENCE & IMPLICATION.

- A. Some mistakenly think that silence is the same as implication. They incorrectly reason that if the Bible doesn't mention something explicitly then the Bible is silent about that matter and anything concluded on that matter would be via implication. Thus, they equate silence and implication. The problem here is this: If something is taught implicitly in the Bible, the Scriptures are not silent about that matter. This is a very important point to understand.
- B. To illustrate the flaw of equating silence and implication, let us pretend we have three different mothers giving grocery lists to their respective sons:
1. List #1: Buy apples, meat, corn, and oatmeal.
 2. List #2: Buy a dozen ears of corn, bananas, a loaf of bread, and a chicken.
 3. List #3: Buy a loaf of white bread, a pound of cheese, hot dogs, and hamburger.

- C. When considering these lists, do any of them grant authorization to buy a loaf of white bread? We can see that the third list covers the purchase explicitly. The second list covers the purchase implicitly. The son, who was instructed to buy "a loaf of bread," would have to decide what type to choose. Thus, the second list certainly authorizes him to buy a loaf of white bread, though it does not demand that he get white bread. Wheat bread would also be acceptable based on the wording of list #2. Finally, the first list does not grant any authority to buy bread of any type.
- D. To summarize, the third list deals with purchasing white bread explicitly while the other two lists deal with it non-explicitly. The second list authorizes the purchase of white bread implicitly, but the first list says nothing about buying any type of bread. In other words, the second list is not silent about buying white bread (due to implication), but the first list is silent and does not grant authority for any bread to be purchased. Therefore, there is a difference between silence and implication. Implication may authorize certain actions but true silence cannot authorize anything. What the first list says about white bread is akin to true Biblical silence (i.e., nothing was said at all either explicitly or implicitly).

V. SPECIFIC AND GENERIC COMMANDS.

- A. When the Bible gives a SPECIFIC command,

the silence of the command is prohibitive (1Cor. 11:23-26; Eph. 5:19).

(1Cor 11:23-26) For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; **24** and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” **25** In the same way *He took* the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me.” **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. **(Eph 5:19)** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

- B. When the Bible gives a GENERIC command,

the silence of the command is permissive (Mt. 28:19,20; Gal. 6:10).

(Mt 28:19,20) Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

(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.

V. INTERPRETING THE SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

- A. We are know and practice that which the Scriptures teach (1Pet. 4:11).
- B. We do not have the liberty to make laws where God has not (Heb. 7:14; 1Cor. 4:6).
- C. We are not to act presumptuously (Deut. 18:20).
- D. God’s silence is intentional (2Pet. 1:3).
- E. Scripture’s silence is not a license for each of us to go our own way. It is a divine invitation for us to draw close to the heart of God, and joyfully honor him in holy submission to rule every aspect of our lives (*adapted from Grantley Morris*).

VI. THANK YOU!

- A. Our class is now complete.
- B. Thank you for your wonderful attention, interest, and support over the past three months.
- C. My prayer is that with this study complete you now have a greater understanding of the Bible and how to study it.
- D. May God bless your reading and understanding of His word.