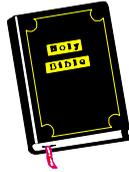


WEST COLUMBIA CHURCH OF CHRIST



“every disciple that is perfect shall be as his master.” Luke 6:40b

THE SILENCE OF THE BIBLE

There has been a great deal of discussion on "The Silence of the Bible." Some have emphasized the respect we should have for the authority of God by respecting the silence of the Bible. Others have taught that where the Bible is silent, we have a right to speak. The issue is, "Does God give to man the right to teach and practice in the name of Christ anything about which there is no divine revelation?" Has God given sufficient guidance in all affairs that pertain to the work and worship of the Lord? Has He left some things to the wisdom and judgment of man? How shall we know what has been left to the judgment of man in the work and worship of the Lord?

If, by His silence in revelation, God has granted to man the right to teach and practice some things, then there opens a field of strife and division. Man cannot agree with his fellows as to what must be brought in, and no greater source of division can be found than the different standards of men.

The Bible clearly teaches that man should not add to the word of God. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:2). Here we learn that Jehovah would not let the children of Israel add to nor take from anything He had commanded them. Jehovah had given the law, and it was sufficient to guide them in all of their work and worship. They were to let the law stand, without additions, subtractions, or alterations. This enforced upon them to respect God's silence on any subject. If they could not add to or take from the law, they were not to impose human judgments upon the people. To do so would be to add to or take from the law. They had to respect the silence of Jehovah on the work and worship they were to perform.

The New Testament teaches the same principle: "**I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.**" (Rev. 22:18-19). This demands that man respect the silence of divine revelation. No one is permitted to add to or take from the teachings of the New Testament. It will not do to say that the above quotation applies only to the book of Revelation. God would not forbid one from adding to or subtracting from only one book in the New Testament, but would also grant man the privilege of adding to and taking from other books.

This principle applies to all the books of the New Testament. Other teachings show this to be true. "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written..." (1 Cor. 4:6). These Corinthians were thus forbidden to go beyond the things that were written. They were to respect the silence of God — the silence of the Scriptures — and not make any alterations. God would not forbid the church at Corinth to "go beyond the things which are written," and at the same time grant other churches to add what they pleased or to leave off anything they did not wish to teach or practice. .

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www.WestColumbiaChurchOfChrist.org South Carolina 6/30/2013

THE BULLETIN—VOLUME 39, NUMBER 25 June 30, 2013

SERMONS THIS SUNDAY:

AM: HARVEY ALLEN

PM: HARVEY ALLEN

JOIN US IN
NEW TESTAMENT
CHRISTIANITY
TODAY!

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked:
for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” - Galatians 6:7

KEEP YOUR HEART CLEAN IN 2013

A Warm Welcome awaits you at all our services. Come see!
www.WestColumbiaChurchOfChrist.org

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SERVICES

Sunday 10 AM Bible Study
Sunday 11 AM, 6 PM Assembly
Wednesday 7 PM Bible Study
Office Phone (803) 794-5320
Nursery provided
Bible Classes for all ages

LADIES CLASS

To be announced

EVANGELIST

BULLETIN EDITOR

Ed Kelleher

Office Phone (803) 796-8858
E-Mail: Ed@macro-inc.com

“PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER” - James 5:16

- **REMEMBER IN PRAYER:** *Judy Walker, Miles Johnson, Richard Ramkinson, Margaret Herring, Wilson Burton, Betty Mathis, Lamar Reeves, Elma Berrier.*
- **Connie Richbough** is doing well after her knee replacement. She completed rehab at National Healthcare in what appears to be record time and now is at home. Let's pray she and Floyd will be back with us soon.
- We rejoice that sister **Judy Walker** continues to recover her strength and was able to be with us again last Sunday.
- Remember **Stephanie Rigney** who is looking forward to completing her course of chemotherapy.
- Continue to remember **Anna Porter** and **Judy Walker** in your prayers, that their physical strength will continue to improve. They miss being with us.
- Keep all these, and **the church here**, in your prayers. Our thanks and gratitude to those who watch, and work and pray for the church here. To those faithful in visiting and attendance, encouraging others by talking with them. To those quietly doing the many jobs necessary to keep the congregation functioning.

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." - 2 Timothy 1:12

“AND THEY CONTINUED STEADFASTLY” - Acts 2:42

- Next week—First Sunday, luncheon and men's meeting.
- We need someone to pickup **Tommy White** Sundays while **Connie Richbough** is recovering from surgery.
- **BULLETINS BY EMAIL** sent each Friday. To subscribe, send email address to Ed.
- Remember to **send cards to our visitors!** Brother **Gamble** posts a list each week of visitors and those of our number who need encouragement.

“Remember Lot's wife.” - Luke 17:32

“REJOICE WITH THEM THAT DO REJOICE!” - Romans 12:15

- **TJ Bolen** has agreed to come work with us here at West Columbia as a full time evangelist and gospel preacher. He and the family (wife **Michelle** and children **Easton 3**, and **Richter 1**) will be moving here from Washington state sometime the end of September, first part of October. Keep them, and the church here, in your prayers.

KEEP YOUR HEART CLEAN IN 2013

**“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord,
shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;**

but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” - Matthew 7:21

THE SILENCE OF THE BIBLE—(Continued from Page 1)

What He says here to the church at Corinth is applied to all of the churches, and is applicable to His people through all ages.

The same truth is expressed by John: **"Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works."** (2 Jn. 9-11). This teaches that the silence of "the teachings of Christ" must be respected. John is writing to no particular church, but Christians in general. Hence, the principle of respecting the silence of "the teachings of Christ" is here taught by John.

One is safe when one follows the teachings of God. One impeaches the wisdom of God when one attempts to make any alterations in "what is written" in the New Testament. In doing so, one must take the attitude that either God did not know enough to give man a complete guide for all ages, or that God has left man free to make additions where God has not spoken.

The foundation of the argument that man may speak where the Bible is silent rests, like Dagon's temple, upon two pillars, which, so long as they continue sound, will support all the theories of men. The first pillar is that "the church of Christ, like all other societies, has power to make laws for its government." The second pillar is that, "where the sacred Scriptures are silent, human authority may interpose." But if some Samson can be found to shake these pillars from their bases, the whole edifice, with the lords of the Philistines in their seats and the multitude with which it is crowded, will be involved in one common ruin. If the two principles mentioned above are granted, the arguments cannot be refuted. But if it can be shown that the principles are false, the conclusions, with all the arguments based on them, are false.

First, the church of Christ is not like other societies. It is different from all human institutions, because Christ framed a constitution for it which is different from any of the teachings of man. No one can show that God permits man to speak or act in the name of Christ where the New Testament is silent. There is not a single sentence in all the New Testament that warrants man to speak, where the New Testament is silent, in the name of Christ; there is no Scripture that grants man such authority. How, then, can man know that he has the right to speak where the Bible is silent? No human association, no individual has any right to interpose authority where the New Testament neither enjoins nor forbids. We must respect the authority of God here.

To interpose and draft regulations where the New Testament is silent is to legislate for God's people where God has not legislated. It is a fearful thing to impose anything in the name of Christ upon God's people when God has not spoken on that point. If He has spoken, then we must respect what He has said. If He has not spoken, then we must respect His wisdom in remaining silent.

It seems that anyone would know that the floodgate would be open and all sorts of innovations would be brought into the work and worship of the Lord's people if we do not respect the silence of the Bible. To respect the silence of the Bible is to respect God. To break that silence is to impeach the wisdom, love, and authority of God. It is to commit the high crime of presumptuous sin. **"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."** (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

- Henry Leo Boles, 1874-1946, Gospel Preacher