

Scriptural Silence

What is the significance of Biblical silence, or has it any significance at all? Does Scriptural silence grant freedom to act in religious matters, as many allege? Does the silence of the Bible have a prohibitive force? How shall we deal with the silence of Scripture? All such questions relate to the subject of Biblical authority for doctrine and practice and the way by which that authorization is ascertained

The foregoing questions may appear immaterial, given the fact that the modern approach to “Christianity” pays little attention to the New Testament for the most part. The only “authority” that matters to most Protestants is whatever will draw the crowds and keep them coming. Simple New Testament worship has been prostituted, redefined in terms of “Christian” rock band and “praise team” performances and hand-clapping/hand-fluttering cultic hysteria. The pop-psychology, make-me-feel-good “sermonettes” that come from so many pulpits are a travesty when contrasted with the Bible’s prophets and preachers.

But how do these practices relate to Biblical silence? The worship corruptors are ready with their defense: “The Bible doesn’t say **not** to employ such in worship.” In other words, if the Bible doesn’t explicitly forbid a practice, they assert their right to engage in it.

Only in religion, it seems, are men willing to follow this flawed course. It is axiomatic that when a doctor prescribes a medicine, he authorizes only that medication. Only a fool would ask him for an attendant list of all of the medicines he was **not** prescribing. Those who shop Online will never be asked to list all of the items they are **not** ordering. The doctor’s silence regarding other medications and one’s silence regarding additional merchandise is therefore **prohibitive**— rather than permissive—in force. The doctor, patient, merchant, and buyer understand that fact without its being stated.

The Bible calls attention to the prohibitive force of God’s silence. Nadab and Abihu presumed upon God’s silence regarding the fire in their censers. They lost their lives by doing so. Their fire was not “strange” because God had explicitly forbidden it, but because He “commanded it not” (Lev. 10:1–2). His silence **prohibited** rather than permitted. Jesus could not be a priest on earth (Heb. 8:4) because He was of the tribe of Judah, “as to which tribe Moses **spake nothing** concerning priests” (7:14, *emph. added*). Scriptural silence never implies authorization. To allow all that is not expressly forbidden is to open a Pandora’s Box and throw away its lid—which is where “Christianity” is today.

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