

TIMES OF SILENCE

Introduction

- 1) **Ecclesiastes 3:7** – *a time to keep silence, and a time to speak*
- 2) The phrase “silence is golden” means in some circumstances silence is preferable to speaking
 - a) Even Jesus recognized times when silence was preferable (Matt. 26:63; Lk. 23:9)
- 3) There are various kinds of silence spoken of in the Bible – what can we learn?

I) **The Silence of Reverence**

- A) “The LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him” (Hab. 2:20)
 - 1) A demonstration of holy reverential respect for God (Psa. 46:10)
 - 2) Recognizing that God is King of kings and Lord of lords above all (1 Tim. 6:15-16)
- B) Those who don’t respect God and His ways are boastful and rude (Psa. 2:1-3; 75:4-5)
 - 1) Even godly people can speak rashly about God without thinking (Job 40:1-5)

II) **The Silence of Wisdom**

- A) It is a mark of wisdom to know when it is best to be silent (Prov. 17:27-28; 26:4-5)
 - 1) Job wished his friends knew when to be silent (Job 13:4-5; 21:5)
- B) It is wise to listen before we speak
 - 1) Listening to God’s word before we offer our opinions (Jas. 1:18-21)
 - 2) Listening before we jump to conclusions (Prov. 18:13)

III) **The Silence of Anticipation**

- A) There is a waiting for God in silence that anticipates His blessings (Lam. 3:26; Psa. 62:1, 5)
 - 1) Satan will tempt us to be impatient, doubt God, and turn to evil (Psa. 141:3-4)
- B) This silence is one of respect, reverence, and anticipation for God’s actions (Rev. 8:1)

IV) **The Silence of Worship**

- A) Silence plays a role in keeping order in our worship
 - 1) Our worship services should be conducted orderly, not chaotically, and quietness by some is necessary while others are leading and participating in the services (1 Cor. 14:40, 26-33)
 - 2) Not carrying on other conversations and activities while prayers, sermons, and classes are in progress
- B) Women are to “keep silent” in the churches (1 Cor. 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:11-12)
 - 1) This is not absolute silence or women could not sing (cf. Col. 3:16)
 - 2) Based on the law that commanded submission – divine law of God (1 Cor. 14:34)
 - a) The creation order and Eve’s sin (1 Tim. 2:13-14; 1 Cor. 11:8-9, 3)
 - 3) While a woman can teach in certain circumstances (Titus 2:3-4; Acts 18:26), she may not scripturally assume the position in the worship services of a teacher/preacher over a man who is subordinated as a student; she must remain silent

V) **The Silence of Divine Authority**

- A) Thomas Campbell (1808): “*Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent*” – reflects truth of 1 Peter 4:11 and Proverbs 30:6
- B) When God speaks specifically and reveals nothing more, His silence is not permissive (cf. Heb. 7:13-14); we must respect the limits of God’s authoritative word

Conclusion

There are times we should not be silent: Teaching others (1 Pet. 3:15), confessing Christ (Rom. 10:10), and confessing sin (Psa. 32:3; 1 Jn. 1:9). Will you answer the call of Christ today?