IS SILENCE REALLY GOLDEN?

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We have all heard the story about the four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. It goes like this. There was an important job to do for the Church they all attended. Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody ended up doing it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done!

Never in the history of the world has it been so evident that in these last days, Jesus is truly building His church. In Africa for example the Christian church is growing thirty-two times faster than the birth rate. In Korea the Christian church is growing four times faster than the population increase. Perhaps the most significant factor initiating this growth is the realization that the Great Commission has been given to the whole church, not to a select few that are called to be Evangelists.

As humorous as this opening story might be, it is however, a damning deposition on the state of the Church in America. A new Gallup poll done last year states that approximately 79% of all Americans believe they are born again believers in Christ. This follows another Gallup poll done in the later part of the last century that states that over 50 million American adults claim to be born again. However, over 95% of these individuals have NEVER led a soul to Christ.

Christ's first instruction to His new followers which can be found in Mark chapter one was, "Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men." His last instructions on this earth to His disciples were, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Christ thus began and ended His ministry with the command to be witnesses and fishers of men! He proclaimed witnessing as one of our greatest duties, in what we call the Great Commission, found in Mark 16:15. It says; "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." The first, greatest and most obvious principle, in Christ's mind is that the Church is to share the Gospel with a lost and dying world. But it goes even farther then just witnessing! Let me show you what I mean. The Great Commission goes on to command us to action! Mark 16:16-18 says; "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; "they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." Going back to Jesus' last instruction for a second, please notice that He is not sending us forth without the power to get the job done. The first few words are "But ye shall receive power." What is the power for? To be witnesses! But is the Church in America truly being witnesses and ambassadors of Christ?

Statistical information regarding crime and morality in America has become giant billboards broadcasting the results of the church's false and fatal belief that whatever will be, will be. But in other words, there is safety in inactivity and, Silence is Golden!

Perhaps the greatest two examples of how our inactivity and silence as Christians, has started this country down the road to destruction, can be found in two Supreme Court decisions. The first was in 1962. This was when the Supreme Court ruled that prayer was to be abolished from the United States classrooms. This decision was monumental in that it was the first time in the history of our nation, that America took a verbal and public stance against God. Abraham Lincoln said, “The philosophy of the schoolroom in one generation will be the philosophy of the government in the next.” History has proven him right!

The Word of God emphatically declares in Proverbs 14:34 that "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” When the Body of Christ allowed people to speak out against God in 1962, our nation began an unprecedented rise in immorality. Since 1962 divorce has increased 117%. 
Adultery has increased 200%.
Sexually transmitted diseases among ages 15-20, up 226%.
Teenage suicide up 253%.
The birthrate among unwed mothers, ages 10-14, is up 553%.
Unmarried couples living together increased by 536%.
Violent crime up 794%.
Sexual abuse of children is up a horrifying 2,000%.

These are only eight of the forty categories reflecting the increase in national immorality. John Adams, our second President, stated, "Our Constitution was written only for a religious and moral people. It will not work to govern any other people." So again is Silence really Golden?

The second example of how our silence as Christians has started this country down the road to destruction is the Roe vs. Wade decision of 1973. Millions of abortions have been performed in America in the last 30 years. More than five thousand innocent lives are taken every day. That comes to 1,800,000 unborn children murdered every year.

The first Supreme Court decision showed our contempt for God. In the second decision we showed our contempt for human life. A life that only God can give! In both these Supreme Court decisions the church of Jesus Christ was asleep at the wheel. There was no universal church outcry, no mass national response at all. We continued to vote in liberal and immoral representatives that continued to uphold these decisions. We allowed it to happen because most of us remained passive and silent. We are still paying for that error in judgment.

This is not a new story however; it is as old as the world. Inactivity and silence were present and even a major factor in man's downfall in the Garden of Eden. Let us turn to Genesis 3:1-7. It says, "Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?' And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, "you shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" And the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings."

Do you notice where Adam was when Eve was being tempted? He was with her. What was he doing? Or better yet, what wasn't he doing? Adam was given dominion over all of God's creation which included his wife, but Adam did, and Adam said, nothing. He should have reminded Eve of God's strict command regarding the tree. He could have helped Eve by lifting her eyes beyond the temptation and reminding her of God's larger plan. Or he could have commanded the devil to depart. Adam's sin was disobedience in protecting the creation he was given authority over. He failed to speak out against the serpent and protect and strengthen his wife. Adam was passive and silent! He was not only passive in his protection of God's creation and of Eve, but he remained silent toward the serpent as well. Adam was created to speak forth the authority that was given to him by God. Instead he disappeared! His passivity and silence, brought sin into the world, and we are still dealing with it, six thousand years later.

In Genesis 3:17 we see God's pronunciation of the Curse on Adam. The curse was for two wrongs. One, Adam listened to his wife's suggestion instead of obeying God's commandment. Two, he ate of the fruit. Adam's disobedience was a process. Adam was silent, Adam listened, and Adam obeyed his wife instead of God. Sin entered the world! Compare Adam's response to his wife's suggestion to that of Job's. She told Job to curse God and die, which is exactly what happened to Adam and the whole human race when Adam listened to his wife's suggestion. Read Job's response to his wife's comment in Job 2:10.
Adam's disobedience did not begin with the eating of the fruit however, but with his passivity. This passive and silent man eventually broke God's clear command. Where, on the other hand, Job's actions along with his verbal response did not cause him to break God's command, or sin in any way. Speaking out against evil is not a sin! Passivity and silence on the other hand, is!

Now let's look at an earlier passage. Turn to Genesis 1:1-3. It reads like this; "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light and there was light." According to verse two the earth was in complete chaos. It was without form and void. Other translations such as the Young's literal translation, the Taylor translation, and the Spurrell translation, renders verse two like this; and the earth was waste and chaotic, or the earth was a shapeless, chaotic mass, or finally, a formless wasteland. In any translation the idea is that the earth was in a state of chaos; then came the miracle found in verse three. "Then God said!" God spoke to the chaos and it brought order and beauty. With His word's God created paradise. With Adam's silence he brought ruin to paradise. After God spoke to the chaos and created paradise He rested. After Adam's silence he labored. 

God created life out of the chaos, once finished He rested. Adam's silence destroyed life and created chaos. Adam ruined paradise by failing to act. Adam, God's image-bearer, did not reflect God by his inaction. He chose to be passive, and silent in the face of evil that was trying to discredit God.

There are other examples of sin coming from the silence of God's chosen. They are; Abraham remained silent regarding his wife's plea for a child through Hagar (Genesis 16). Ishmael was the result of that silence. Ishmael's descendants comprise the Arab nations. These Arab nations despise Israel even to this day. Judea lied to his daughter-in-law about his youngest son Shelah. Shelah was to marry his brothers' wife in order to keep the family line in tact. But Judea feared for Shelah's life so he told Tamar his daughter-in-law to wait until he was grown. He was hoping that she would just go away and find someone else. When Judea's youngest son was grown, he said nothing. Figuring the situation would just disappear. His silence came back to haunt him. Read what happened in Genesis 38.

If the Gallop poll is to be taken as any indication of the spiritual condition of our country, then how is it possible for 79% of all Americans who claim to be born again believers in Christ, to be controlled by the remaining 21% who do not believe? This vocal minority has controlled the legislative branches of our country with such success that they have brought our country to a state of moral degradation. Is the blame to be put on the 21% for voicing their will with such intensity that it caused the remaining overwhelming majority to fade away into oblivion?

Brothers and sisters, we must take back what is rightfully ours. Our country's policies are based on the will of the majority, not the minority. It seems however that when the overwhelming majority stays passive and silent, the vocal minority takes control. The responsibility and power is ours to change this world. We are God's hands, feet and voice. We have been given dominion over the world. Then why are we sitting back and letting 21% of Americans control our present and future? Is it because we are so heavenly minded that we are no earthly good? Are we so busy looking for Christ's return, and figuring we are going to miss all the evil that is to come, that we can't see the evil that is right before our eyes? Or, are we hoping that with our passivity and silence the immorality and evil will just disappear? Remember “God demonstrated His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

God saw the immorality and evil in the world, and He openly demonstrated (no passivity) and declared (not silence) the solution. Let us look at Romans 10:13-17, 2nd Corinthians 3:2 and 1st John 4:12, for a better understanding of what has just been said. They read like this; Romans 10:13-17 “For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.” How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!” But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?” So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." 2nd Corinthians 3:2 “You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men”; 1st John 4:12 “No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us."
According to these verses, especially 1st John 4:12, God’s love is not perfected "in us" if we do not love one another. Beloved we stop God's love from being fulfilled in the world and in us, when we take our new found relationship with Christ and keep it to ourselves. Remember "for God so loved the WORLD." (you are included in the world but not alone in it), "that He gave His only begotten Son." Read again the verses above, how will they know, how will they hear unless we tell them. Remember, "You are the epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men";

Once we receive the pure and undefiled love of God in our hearts we defile it by keeping it to ourselves. Just like living water loses its pureness and becomes polluted when it stagnates, so it is with the pure and holy love of God when we do not allow it to move due to our inactions and silence. That's what's wrong with the world. It is becoming more polluted every minute, because the living water of Christ is stagnating inside the church walls. We are not doing what He commanded! Beloved how can we say we love our fellow man if we passively stand by, and silently watch as they hurt and destroy themselves, their families, friends, neighbors, and everything around them. If Jesus would have done that, we would all be in hell right now! We had an evangelist in our home county not long ago who asked something that stirred and shocked the hearts of all who were present. He asked; “how much must we HATE our neighbor in order to keep our mouths shut regarding Christ and salvation?” You may not like the way the question was phrased but the point is clear. By our silence we could be condemning them to hell for all eternity. Please do not use the argument that someone else will do it. How do you know their future? Do you know if they will get another chance to hear the Gospel? NO! It is your responsibility to let the world know.

Keep this in mind. Loving God and loving others are inseparable read Matthew 25:31-40. "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?' Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ”The King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

First the Standard; 'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; ‘I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

Secondly we see the Command; “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.”

Now read again 2nd Corinthians 3:2; "You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men"; Mankind will not know the love of God unless each member of the body of Christ, not just the pastors, show forth God's love the same way Christ did. He showed the world the Father in word and in deed. So should we! Look at Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, John 13:34-35, 21:15-17, Acts 1:8 and 5:42. Do you see a recurring theme? Go, preach the good news of God's love, to the world, in word and work! Stand up for what is right and holy! Stand against the whiles of the enemy! Learn God's ways and teach others to stand.

Passivity is not safe; it is severely dangerous and destructive. Silence is not Golden it is deadly. When God saw the evil that man was capable of doing, and He saw that the thoughts of man’s heart were evil continuously, God took action. He brought forth a flood. When His people would not stop their idolatry, he took action. He sent them into captivity. When God saw an evil hoard coming against His holy city, and He heard the cries of a righteous king, God took action. He sent His angel and killed 185,000 enemy soldiers stopping the advance of evil. (2nd Kings 18-19). **Love is only known by the actions it prompts!**
Agape love is NOT passive but active and aggressive. It prompted God to take a dramatic and drastic action to change a situation that was impossible for man alone to overcome. Out of that chaotic and deadly state of affairs, His extreme action brought forth a peace beyond all understanding. Christ died for the sins of the World! He then gave us the responsibility to keep it until He comes. His bride's Passivity and silence are not what He had in mind!

Matthew 25:14-30 is a story about a land owner going away into a far country leaving his servants to run his kingdom. We all know this story. The servant who worked hard and profited much received much. The servants were blessed according to the work accomplished. But there was one servant who did not fare well. Look at verses 24-30 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 'And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 'So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 'Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

We are required to be faithful stewards (1st Corinthians 4:2) and fulfill the word of God (Colossians 1:25) and as each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1st Peter 4:10). Don't be like the lazy unprofitable servant that did nothing. He stayed passive and silent until the King returned. He was then cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Let all of us pray and then act to change this world conforming it into the image God created before the fall. Let us be about our Father's business when He returns! Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing (Matt. 24:45-46)." The duties described there in are not passive or silent; they are active and vocal. Silence is not golden!

Brethren we have an election coming up in a few months that I believe will determine the fate of this country. Granted our choice is not a good one. But what it comes down to is this. We can keep the status quo and continue down this road of socialism and the worship of foreign Gods. We can watch while Christ is ridiculed, minimized and continually removed from our schools, city offices, state government and our nation’s highest offices and courts. Without doubt as shown earlier, will come the same fate for the moral standards of our once proud country. Or we can make the decision that we want to make a change, pray for God’s intervention and forgiveness and vote for change. One thing is for sure however, silence and inaction is destructive, counterproductive and in a word, SIN!

May God Richly Bless You
In His love and service
Your Brother in Christ
Rev. Mario A. Bruni D. Div.
1st Corinthians 10:13