

questions? Yes. The examples of Nadab and Abihu teach that God's silence is prohibitive (Leviticus 10:1-2). God's commands to Noah to build the ark teach that God's silence is prohibitive (Genesis 6:22). Silence prohibited the church at Corinth from calling themselves Paulites (1 Corinthians 1:13). Silence prohibited Jesus from being a priest under the law of Moses. (Hebrews 7:14, says "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.") Silence prohibited the exaltation of angels to positions of divine authority (Hebrews 1:5, 13). In each of these examples God's positive commands limit what may be done. "This do in remembrance of me." No explicit prohibition is

further necessary.

When we consider that man is not authorized to do anything he wants to do in worship (John 4:24), that worship becomes meaningless when we elevate human tradition (i.e. the use of instruments) to doctrine in worship (Matthew 15:9), that we cannot approach God in worship with a display of our own righteousness (Romans 10:2-3), and the prohibitive nature of the silence of the scriptures, we conclude it is sinful to worship God with the instrument.

May we strive to make our worship pure, holy, and acceptable to God. May we prostrate ourselves before His majestic throne with glory, honor, and thanksgiv-

ing. May we have the utmost spirit of humility as we contemplate His sovereignty, magnificence, and beauty (Revelation 4). May we realize that we are created for His pleasure and we do not live to serve self in offering worship (Revelation 4:11). ~



1 Peter 4:11

If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God...

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Assembly Schedule Sunday

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Morning Worship Service ___ 10:00 AM
Evening Worship Service ___ 6:00 PM

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NAVARRE MESSENGER

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"The Brotherhood"

Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.

"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. (1 Peter 2:17)



The word "brotherhood" here is translated from *adelphotes*. It appears only twice in the New Testament, both times in First Peter (2:17; 5:9). The King James renders it "brethren" in 5:9, but the New King James renders it "brotherhood" in both verses. Of *adelphotes* Vine says, "primarily, 'a brotherly relationship,'" and so, the community possessed of this relationship, "a brotherhood," 1 Pet. 2:17 (see 5:9 marg.)" and Thayer says, "brotherhood" ; the abstract for the concrete, a band of brothers, i.e. of Christians, Christian brethren : 1 Pet. ii. 17; v.9).

It is clear that Peter uses the term to refer to what Vine calls "the community possessed of this relationship" throughout the world. In 5:9 he compares the sufferings of those immediately addressed in his epistle to that

experienced by their "brotherhood in the world (nkj)." In 2:17, it seems to be a contrast to "all men." Hence, when we as children of God and brothers and sisters in Christ speak of "the brotherhood" we are speaking of

ourselves along with all in the world that share in this great relationship. What a great throng of people! It is this throng that Peter especially tells us to love.

It seems to me that in recent years we have lost much of that keen sense of brotherhood that we once enjoyed. Those of us who consider ourselves "conservative" and "non-institutional" have done a pretty good job of teaching that each local congregation is autonomous and independent of any other congregation in the world. We have shown that a failure to recognize this fundamental Bible principle has historically led to most of the wholesale apostasies of the past. We have rightly pointed out that the congregation of which we are members can exist and scripturally function as if there were no others like it in the world. We have also emphasized that each member of a congregation has a relationship and responsibility to the local church collectively and distributively that he does not

have toward brethren elsewhere.

I fear that during all of this we may have developed a mentality that is a bit too "independent." As a result of this perverted sense of independence, brethren have almost isolated themselves from any real concern, contact or sense of fellowship with their brethren elsewhere - even other brethren meeting across town. An invitation can come (in some cases no invitation is sent) from faithful brethren elsewhere to their gospel meeting. It may or may not be announced at the receiving congregation, but it is generally ignored because it is not a function of "our" congregation. In some areas preachers of local congregations have little contact or interaction with preachers or other members of other congregations. This writer confesses his own guilt to a degree at times along these lines.

We can remember a time when a church, in an area where there were several congregations would have a gospel meeting that the house would be filled mostly with members from the other congregations. Often, we would travel miles to encourage another congregation in its gospel meetings. We were just as interested in seeing another congregation prosper in the Lord as we were to see the congregation where we attended. We showed an interest in and often inquired about how that brethren meeting at such and such place were doing. That was before we conceived that "autonomous" and "independent" meant "isolation." Have we forgotten how to heed Peter's ad-

monition to "love the brotherhood?"

The brotherhood, of which Peter wrote, is not a brotherhood of churches organized together as a unit nor is it a brotherhood of Christians organized into a unit. It is a relationship that exists between all Christians. They share a common faith and have common interests.

While New Testament congregations were not tied together organizationally speaking, they were tied together doctrinally because they subscribed to the same standard. Paul declared that what he taught and ordained in one church he ordained in all (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17). They shared in a common faith.

I do not have the right to meddle in the internal affairs of another congregation nor infringe upon its autonomy. It can decide, without any interference for me, its meeting times, when it will have a gospel meeting, how it can best use its treasury, who will do its teaching and preaching, lead its singing and praying, what kind of facilities it will provide to do its work, which of its members it may or may not discipline, etc.

But, because of my duty to "love the brotherhood," I have an obligation to "speak the truth in love" to my brethren everywhere I have the opportunity to do so, just as I have an obligation to preach the gospel to every creature in the world because I love their souls. It is not interference into the affairs of other congregations when I demonstrate my love of the brotherhood by

teaching them the truth and warning them of departures from the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3) and even the Bible teaching that should govern them as they exercise their autonomy.

Let us love and appreciate those of the brotherhood that we meet and work with regularly in the local congregation, but let us also broaden our scope of interest and "love the brotherhood" as a whole - enough to "correct, rebuke and encourage" (2 Tim. 4:2 - NIV) as needed. ~

John 13:34-35

34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

The Silence of the Scriptures



by Kevin Cauley

"I don't understand the concept of the silence of the scriptures." This is an increasingly voiced sentiment. However, we do understand the prohibitive nature of the silence of the scriptures to some degree. For example, take the Lord's Supper. Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of me." This is a positive command. Jesus didn't have to explain who NOT to remember.

Jesus didn't say, "Don't remember Abraham. Don't remember Moses. Don't remember Joshua. Don't remember David. Don't remember Hezekiah. Don't remember John the baptizer." I don't know of any religious group observing the Lord's Supper in remembrance of anyone but Jesus. Would it be sinful during the Lord's Supper to remember someone other than Jesus? Yes. That shows a basic understanding of the silence of the scriptures.

It is not difficult to apply this same principle to other

areas of worship. When it comes to singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, the New Testament doesn't equivocate. The passages that speak of music in the church are limited. None mention instruments. All mention singing. Conclusion! The positive command regarding music in the church is: "Sing!" No one denies this. All agree that singing occurred. So why conclude that singing only is God's desire? The scriptures are silent on the use of instruments.

Is that silence permissive? Is that silence prohibitive? Can the scriptures answer these

