



WHERE DOES THE BIBLE  
SAY NOT TO?

By  
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**Authority  
Begins  
with  
God the Father**

**God the Father**



**Jesus**

**God the Father**



**Jesus**



**Holy Spirit**

**God the Father**



**Jesus**



**Holy Spirit**



**Apostles**

**(Inspired by the Holy Spirit)**

**God the Father**



**Jesus**



**Holy Spirit**



**Apostles**

**(Inspired by the Holy Spirit)**



**New Testament**

# How do we determine authority? (Acts 15)

- **By Direct Commandment**
- **By Approved Apostolic Example**
- **By Necessary Inference or Implication**

Authority is either inclusive or exclusive

- *Inclusive* includes all things necessary to accomplish what is commanded.
- *Exclusive* excludes all things except what is commanded by God.

What about when  
God says nothing?

Does the silence of the  
scriptures give us authority  
to act?

The debate  
is  
an old one

# In the second century

- Tertullian (2<sup>nd</sup> century) spoke of those who contended that the thing which is not forbidden is freely permitted.
- He replied: “I should rather say that what has not been freely allowed is forbidden” (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*).

# During the Reformation Period

- Martin Luther (1483-1546) taught that:
  - *“What is not against Scripture is for Scripture, and Scripture for it”* (*A Manual of Church History*).

# During the Reformation Period

- Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) on the other hand taught:
  - *“that which is not enjoined or taught in the New Testament should be unconditionally rejected”*

# During the Restoration Period

**“We speak where the Bible speaks  
and are silent when the Bible is  
silent”**

**So we ask the question:  
“Does silence authorize?”**

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“Does silence authorize?”**

**Answer: No, it does NOT!**

**Principle rooted in the Old Testament**

# Does silence authorize?

## ■ Cain and Abel

– Genesis 4:3-4 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,

– **Why?**

# Does silence authorize?

## ■ Why?

- Hebrews 11:4 (NKJV)

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

- **Romans 10:17 (NKJV)**

**So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

# Does silence authorize?

## ■ Noah

- He constructed the ark, he did so “by faith” (Heb. 11:7)
- Genesis 6:22 (NKJV)  
Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

# Does silence authorize?

## ■ Nadab and Abihu

- They were sons of Aaron who offered “strange fire,” i.e., fire not taken from the altar of sacrifice (cf. Lev. 16:12), they were destroyed by God.

# Does silence authorize?

## ■ Judah

- Jer. 7:31, “They have built the high places [centers of idol worship] of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; *which I commanded not*, neither came it into my mind”

**Principle clearly taught  
in the New Testament**

# Does silence authorize?

- In Col. 2:22-23 Paul condemned the practice of “will worship,” a disposition which is “after the precepts and doctrines of men”.
- W. E. Vine defines “will-worship” as “voluntarily adopted worship, whether unbidden or forbidden”.

# Does silence authorize?

- In Heb. 1:5, the inspired author argued for the superiority of Jesus Christ over the angels.
- Why? Because the Father never “at any time” said to angels: “You are my Son...”

# Does silence authorize?

- Heb. 8:4 declares that Jesus could not be a priest on earth. Why not?

# Does silence authorize?

- Because, we learn in 7:14, that Jesus was from the tribe of Judah (not Levi).
- And that concerning priests from the tribe of Judah, “Moses spoke nothing,” or, to say the same thing in another way: He was silent about it!

# Does silence authorize?

- 2 Jn. 9, “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.”

# Consequences

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- One writer states and correctly so:
  - Once one rejects the Bible teaching that silence DOES NOT authorize, anything goes!
  - We could not only use pianos to accompany our singing but beads to aid our prayers, crucifixes to focus our devotion, and hashish to enhance our sensitivity.
  - We could also initiate an organizational network similar to that which has been protested so strongly in Catholicism or begin financing church projects with bingo games (where legal) on Tuesday evenings.>

# Consequences

- Not one of these things is explicitly forbidden in the New Testament, and no one who denies the legitimacy of the authority principle can consistently argue against any of them”.

# Consequences

- It is one of the causes of division
  - *Morals*
  - *Baptism*
  - *Work of the church*
  - *Worship*

# Conclusion

- The question NOT:
  - Where does the Bible say NOT to!
  - But where does the Bible say TO!