

“Remain Silent”

Most human beings have a set of core beliefs, a value system or agenda that they try to adhere to which provide a moral compass for the decision-making in their lives. These things are often derived from personal convictions, religious viewpoints, family or social traditions, and sadly in some cases, worldly indoctrination. Wherever the basis for them is derived from one thing must be clear: they must never become more important than or get in the way of doing what is right or conversely prevent you from ending or restricting evil. Whatever your agenda may be it can never be more important than doing the right thing. Doing the right thing supercedes any personal passions that you carry. It can never be about you. You and I are insignificant in the grand scheme of things. Quite frankly, we really do not matter when it comes right down to it. What matters is that the right course of action was taken which resulted in the best possible outcome for another person or for a particular situation, regardless of us. Equally viable is the prevention of evil or a negative situation for an individual or group by the decisions we make. There must never be a compromise to this principle. The Bible is clear when in James 4:17 we read that “anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins”.

Jesus exhorted the same principle during an exchange with the Pharisees one Saturday morning (Mark 3:1-5). The Bible reveals that Jesus was in the synagogue when a sick man, who obviously needed healing, became the example for this principle. Jesus challenged the Pharisees, as well as everyone in the synagogue, as to what was more important: doing the right thing with this man who needed healing or sticking to their restrictions and traditional requirements of observance on the Sabbath. In other words, are your beliefs, value systems, traditions, passions, personal agendas, and inclinations more important than doing the right thing? This is what Jesus wanted to know. He was not interested in Jewish traditions or anything else. Jesus was only interested in the right thing being done for the sick man who needed healing. For that moment, nothing else should have mattered except doing the right thing. *Period.* Interestingly enough, we read that when Jesus proposed His question to them they... “all remained silent” (vs.4). This highlights another point because I would argue that in the room full of all those people, somebody probably agreed with Jesus yet they “all remained silent”, meaning that either peer pressure or the “just going along with crowd” mindset prevailed to the point that no one said a word. When either of these prevents you from doing what is right then you are no better than those who refuse to do the right thing because of their personal rationales. In fact, it is worse. Finally, in verse 5 we see that Jesus became... “angry and deeply disturbed at their stubborn hearts”.

If we can read that the actions of the individuals in the synagogue made the Lord angry and deeply distressed, then we can conclude that the same still holds true today. Jesus was disturbed because He wanted them to recognize that the priority has to be on doing the things that will bring another person or situation the best results. It is in those moments that we all will face many times over where we will be challenged to make the right decisions and stand up for what is right even though it may not be what we are used or conflict with our own way of doing things. It is in those times when Jesus says to you and I... “put aside what you think or feel or know because that is not important and go do what is right.” Let it be said about us that during those inevitable scenarios that we will face that we acted in such a way that pleased the Lord because it was in those moments that *we* did not remain silent.

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