

DO WE VIOLATE GOD'S SILENCE IN SOME OF OUR ACTIVITIES?

Brother Waddey: Why does the lesson on the silence of the scriptures not apply to sponsoring churches, monies from the church treasury to do work of the individual Christian and the fellowship halls in buildings that have been "set apart" for the work and worship of God. Jan

Dear Sis. Jan: This law of silence is applicable where God has told us what he wants us to do. For example he told Noah to build an ark...that excluded a house. It was to be of gopher wood...that excluded oak. It was to have three decks...that excluded a fourth (Gen. 6:13-16).

God has not provided us specific instructions on how to get our support to a missionary or some other good work (Phil. 4:16-19). Had he said send your gifts directly to the missionary that would exclude the idea of a church collecting his support from others and forwarding it to him...but he did not do so.

God tells us to remember the poor (Gal. 2:20). But he did not specify a method or manner by which we would do that.

When God gives us a generic command to do something but does not specify the details, that means we are left to our own good judgment to develop a workable plan to do what he wants done. Thus we are commanded to "Go preach the gospel" but no instruction are given as to the mode of transportation. Those who go are free to choose any method that helps them fulfil his command to go.

As to fellowship-halls in church buildings. It is quite true that the Bible says nothing about fellowship halls, but neither does it say anything about church buildings, toilets, water fountains, carpets, pews, lights, air conditioning, paved parking lots, lawns, etc. God does tell us to assemble for worship (Heb. 10:25). Since he provides no details about provisions for a place to assemble, we must rely on our own good judgement to come up with such. Each congregation is free to decided just how big, or how nice their building will be. Congregational autonomy forbids me trying to force other churches to build their buildings in a way that I approve of. It is true that a congregation can be too extravagant or wasteful in their building projects, but for that they will answer to God and not to you or me (Rom. 14:4).

Without doubt some of our brethren have abused these principles that I have set forth. For that they will have to give account in judgment. But abuse of a good principle does not disannul the principle. For example some men abuse their right as head of their family (Eph. 4:22-23). They are wrong, but the principle is divine and still stands. JHW

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