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# Words of Truth

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## Remaining Silent For the Wrong Reasons

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There are certainly times when we should be silent rather than speaking (Ecclesiastes 3:7). It is good to be able to bridle your tongue (Psalms 39:1 and James 3:2). If you can guard your mouth you can keep your life (Proverbs 13:3). When Jesus was being tried for the false charges brought against Him, He chose not to speak (Matthew 26:63). When the Apostles learned that they were wrong concerning Gentiles, they held their peace (Acts 11:1-18).

We could have an entire study about times wherein we should hold our tongues and still not cover the subject well enough. There are many layers to this subject. As an example, we could discuss how we should seek to teach the Gospel to everyone (Mark 16:15-16). Yet, we would find exceptions to that rule. That is, times wherein we should keep our mouths even in regard to teaching the lost. Our studies of this subject would show us not to try to teach scorners or fools (Proverbs 9:7-8 and Proverbs 23:9). We would be studying how there are certain types of people that we should not teach for they would just attack us for it (Matthew 7:6). We would learn that we should be ready to answer questions (I Peter 3:15), unless they are questions intended to cause strife (II Timothy 2:23). Our study would go on and on and we'd still have many things to touch on. Thus, we know there are times when speaking is not a good thing.

The same thing is true when you consider the subject of times when we should speak up. There are so many lessons to cover that I am sure we could not exhaust the subject in one study. Having said that, we are going to discuss SOME times wherein we should speak up instead of remaining silent.

### **There Are Times When We Cannot Remain Silent Even When It May Cause Hardship For Us**

When I was a freshman in high school I was a babe in Christ. I had a lot to learn, but there were some things I was sure of. For example, I was sure that God is our Creator (Genesis 1:26-28, Genesis 5:1-2, Psalms 100:3, and Isaiah 45:12). Therefore, when I was sitting in a science class that taught that God did not create man, I was faced with a dilemma. Should I speak up? Should I just sit back and say nothing? Am I ready to defend the existence of my Creator? I spoke up. I asked for the evidence that man evolved from nothing. Respectfully, I asked the science class teacher to consider the Biblical account of the creation of the earth and therein as the truth. The teacher denied my request. The situation grew from there. Next to come was a test wherein I was expected to answer as we had been falsely taught in class, rather than the truth that we came from God. What do I do now? Should I have remained silent? On my tests I answered the questions by saying something like this: "The answer you are looking for is that man evolved... However, that answer is incorrect according to the Bible..." I received a failing grade for that test. I also had a lesser grade on my midterm exam because I did the same thing. Should I have answered differently?

I have known several schoolteachers that are Christians. What should they do when required to teach science? What should a teacher do if a health curriculum requires he or she to teach homosexuality is okay? What about a police officer who has to lie to question a suspect? What about a doctor who has to keep information confidential to keep his or her job? What we are going to find is that God is never happy with us being ashamed of Him. We are going to also find that lying is never good.

### **Truth Be Told**

Before we get into this section of our study, I want us to realize that we do not have to be unkind or boisterous when speaking the truth (Colossians 4:6). Having said that, there is never a time wherein we should lie. Lying is wrong even if you'll get a failing grade, lose your job, be labeled a nut, or set free a criminal. Notice: *"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile... The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment... Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight... Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another... But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death"* (Psalms 34:13, Proverbs 12:19, Proverbs 12:22, Ephesians 4:25, and Revelation 21:8).

Had Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego just bowed down to false gods they would not have been cast into a furnace (Daniel 3:1-30). Had Daniel just stopped praying to God he would not have seen the lion's den (Daniel 6:1-24). Had John just not told Herod about his unscriptural marriage, he might have kept his head (Matthew 14:1-12). When civil authorities commanded Peter and John not to preach the truth anymore, they disobeyed that command to their own hurt (Acts 4:13-5:41). When Paul could have been set free from Roman custody, he followed the Lord's will to get to Rome to his own hurt (Acts 26:22-32). So, why did they speak up when "good" was not going to come from such?

### **If You Won't Confess Him Before Men...**

We cannot fear man more than we fear God (Matthew 10:28). Therefore, when an appropriate time to speak up presents itself, we cannot fear what man will do to us for speaking up about God. Jesus said this: *"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven"* (Matthew 10:32-33). It doesn't get any clearer than that!

### **Conclusion**

Again, every situation does not necessarily warrant us speaking up on behalf of the truth of the Gospel. You have to measure your speech with thoughtful consideration of what God's will is in each circumstance. Yet, a failing grade, job demotion, persecution, and such the like should not be our motives for silence. Whether it is honest souls at stake or our Lord's name being defamed, we need to be bold enough to speak up when such needs to occur (Ephesians 6:19-20 and Philippians 1:20). Again, this is true even if we know that problems may arise because we spoke up (I Thessalonians 2:2). Let's not forget to be defenders of the truth (Proverbs 28:4, Philippians 1:17, and Jude 3-4).