



Contact Us:

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Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study9:45 AM
Worship10:40 AM
Care, Inc. Service 2:30 PM
Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class.10:00 AM
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Don Smith

James Thomas

Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children
Gospel Broadcast Network
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)
House to House, Heart to Heart
Mission Printing
Rohan Jones, Africa
The Truth in Love
World Bible School

Let us know if you want to study
the Bible to know more about
Christ and His Church.

“Speak Where the Bible Speaks; Be Silent Where the Bible is Silent”

My entire life I have heard this saying, “Speak where the Bible speaks; be silent where the Bible is silent,” or phrases very similar. I have heard this phrase lauded, I have heard it ridiculed, and I have heard it misused. Recently, a reader of this blog asked me to address this phrase and what it really means. I would love to do just that.

Where Did the Saying Come From?

First of all, this isn't a quotation from Scripture, but a quotation from a preacher named Thomas Campbell. In 1809, Campbell spoke to a large crowd of people, who were described as being, “Sick of the animosities and controversies between rival sects, and disgusted with the petty differences which occasioned alienation and strife...” They sought some way to be united and to use Scripture alone as their guide in all matters of faith.

Thomas Campbell's speech that day was described in this way:

Having opened the meeting in the usual manner, and, in earnest prayer, specially invoked the Divine guidance, proceeded to rehearse the matter from the beginning, and to dwell with unusual force upon the manifold evils resulting from the divisions in religious society—divisions which, he urged, were as unnecessary as they were injurious, since **God had provided, in his sacred Word, an infallible standard, which was all-sufficient and alone-sufficient, as a basis of union and Christian co-operation. He showed, however, that men had not been satisfied with its teachings, but had gone outside of the Bible, to frame for themselves religious theories, opinions and speculations, which were the real occasions of the unhappy controversies and strifes which had so long desolated the religious world.** He, therefore, insisted with great earnestness upon a return to the simple teachings of the Scriptures, and upon the entire abandonment of everything in religion for which there could not be produced a Divine warrant.

Near the conclusion of his address, he spoke these now famous words, “**Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.**” A profound silence was said to have fallen over the crowd, as the weight of that thought sunk into their minds.

What Did It Mean?

Many debate and try to twist the meaning of these words today, but make no mistake, the meaning of those words were clear on that day. The first man to speak up said, “Mr. Campbell, if we adopt that as a basis, then there is an end of infant baptism.” To which Campbell replied, “If infant baptism be not found in Scripture, we can have nothing to do with it.”

There it is, the plain and simple meaning of the phrase: The church should do what Scripture authorizes us to do and *not* do what Scripture says nothing about. Fill in the blank with any religious practice, “If _____ be not found in Scripture, we can have

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“If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

1 Peter 4:11



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nothing to do with it.”

Campbell’s statement was summed up this way:

There should be no contention, henceforth, in regard to the opinions of men, however wise or learned. **Whatever private opinions might be entertained upon matters not clearly revealed must be retained in silence, and no effort must be made to impose them upon others.** Thus the silence of the Bible was to be respected equally with its revelations, which were by Divine authority declared to be able to “make the man of God perfect and thoroughly furnished unto every good work.”

There may indeed be many matters about which Scripture is silent and men may draw any number of conclusions and opinions about those matters. However, those opinions and conclusions should not be brought into the faith and worship of the church. They should be “retained in silence.” Incidentally, this seems to be the precise teaching of Romans 14 as well.

What It Does NOT Mean

1. It does not mean what God has not authorized is necessarily sinful.

We have often taken this to the next level and said we can know for certain that practices about which God is silent must indeed be sinful. That was not the intention of the phrase. Campbell believed “that all matters not distinctly revealed in the Bible should be held as matters of opinion and of mutual forbearance.”

But just because something is not sinful, or may not be sinful, does not mean you or I have the authority to introduce it into the faith or worship of the Lord’s church without express authority from God.

2. It does not mean when the Bible is silent about something, we can do whatever we want.

Many have begun to twist this phrase and insist it means the exact opposite of what Campbell meant. They now insist it means, “Where the Bible is silent, do whatever you want, just don’t make any laws about it.” Campbell knew there would continue to be chaos and disunity if men continued doing that.

It was obvious to the crowd the day this phrase was first spoken, *If we make this the basis of our unity, then there are many things which we must STOP doing.*

3. It does not mean we are not allowed to use church buildings.

When this phrase is quoted, many say something like, “Then why do you have a church building? The Bible is silent on that.” Actually, Scripture is NOT silent on a meeting place. In fact, the commands to assemble *necessitate* a meeting place. In a follow up writing, Campbell said about matters like this:

That if any circumstantial necessities indispensable to the observance of Divine ordinances be not found upon the page of express revelation, such, and such only, as are absolutely necessary for this purpose should be adopted under the title of human expedients, without any pretense to a more sacred origin, so that any subsequent alteration or difference in the observance of these things might produce no contention nor division in the Church.

The church is authorized to adopt certain “human expedients” that are **necessary** for doing what God has expressly commanded us to do. Consider this example: If someone commissioned you to bake a cake, you’d be authorized to use an oven and purchase flour, as these things are **necessary** for doing what you’ve been told to do.

Bottom Line

I am not a follower of Thomas Campbell. I’m a follower of Jesus Christ. But I happen to believe Campbell was right. I believe we would be better off if we adopt – and stick to – this mentality, **“Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.”**

I believe Scripture is not only inspired, I believe it is all sufficient. I believe it is, *“Profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for EVERY good work”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

It is presumptuous, divisive, and spiritually dangerous to introduce things into the faith and worship of the church that are not expressly authorized in Scripture. Let us walk respectfully, dear church.

Wes McAdams (radicallychristian.com)

Television

The Truth In Love (Robert Dodson)

Sunday @ 7:00am on KTAB

In Search of the Lord’s Way (Phil Sanders)

Sunday @ 7:30am on KTAB

Life In The Light (Chris McCurley)

Sunday @ 10:30am on KTAB

Radio

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)

Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

Internet

TheGospelRadioNetwork.org

Gospel Broadcasting Network (Gbnv.org)

God’s Plan for Redeeming Man

Hear Learn the saving message of Christ’s sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).

Believe Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)

Confess Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)

Repent of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)

Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being **baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)

Live faithfully (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

Bible Reading Schedule

Dec. 27	2 John, 3 John
Dec. 28	Revelation 1-5
Dec. 29	Revelation 6-11
Dec. 30	Revelation 12-18
Dec. 31	Revelation 19-22
Jan. 1	Matthew 1-3
Jan. 2	Matthew 4-6
Jan. 3	Matthew 7-9

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
(2 Timothy 2:15)



THE EYES OF THE LORD

Second Chronicles may be one of the most neglected of the inspired books by otherwise good Bible students. I must admit that my yearly trek through the genealogies in 1 and 2 Chronicles takes some patience. Much of what we read in the Chronicles is a repeat of the material in 1 and 2 Kings with but little difference. It is interesting, therefore, that on my journey through 2 Chronicles some years ago my eyes happened to light upon a little phrase that I had read a number of times, though only in passing. But first, some background information.

It was the 36th year of the reign of Asa, king of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Asa was instrumental in maintaining pure worship before God. He removed his own mother from being queen because she had made an idol unto false gods (2 Chron. 15:16). In addition, he brought into the house of God the things that his father Abijah had restored to the temple. When the 16th chapter of 2 Chronicles opens we learn that Baasha, king of the Northern Kingdom, rose up against Judah. Rather than depend upon God for protection, Asa turned to Benhadad, the king of Syria, and sought an alliance with that idolatrous nation. The union was successful and Benhadad retreated from his aggression. Asa may have won the battle, but he lost what might have otherwise been a blessing from God in the final overthrow and defeat of Syria itself. Hanani the prophet was sent to Asa: *"Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand"* (2 Chron. 16:7). Hanani then makes this interesting statement: *"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of [them] whose heart [is] perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars"* (2 Chron. 16:9). Please note these lessons from this record.

First, **God has searching eyes.** Here it is said that He is looking for those *"whose heart is perfect toward him"* (16:9). During the last days of the southern kingdom, Jeremiah was once instructed to *"run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be [any] that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it"* (Jer. 5:1). Those must have been trying times in the nation of Israel, when a righteous man was hard to find. The northern kingdom had already been destroyed because of the absence of the "righteous few" that might have preserved that nation. Jeremiah was instructed to take an inventory and see if "a man" could be found in the streets of Jerusalem. Wickedness was rampant. For the most part Israel had become corrupt. But God would give them another opportunity. "Jeremiah, see if you can find a man!" To be sure, God already knew the answer! The question was for Jeremiah's benefit, not God's. The hammer of judgment was about to be lowered on the city and the nation, and God wanted Jeremiah to know that the divine judgment was justified. Oh, the searching eyes of Jehovah God. Like the prodigal son whose father must have never ceased to look, our Father in heaven keeps searching for one more soul that is "perfect

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Celebrate

"Rejoice with those who rejoice..." (Romans 12:15)

January Birthdays: John McCaghren (12/27), Tom Wilcox (17), Anita Boyd (19), Jaceton Evetts (20), Mattison Churchwell (25), Karen Bland (29), Judie Turner (29).

January Anniversaries: None.

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Dec. 13, 2015	Dec. 20, 2015
Bible Class	36	48
AM Worship	46	56
PM Worship	33	42
Wednesday PM	46	52
Contribution	\$1,631	\$2,324

Next Week: 12/27/15		Next Week: 1/3/16		December 2015 Make Announcements: Joe Dennis Prepare Communion: Churchwell Family Clean Building: J. & T. Barnum / J. Barnum Hostess Committee: Cindy McCaghren's group January 2016 Make Announcements: Ken Maninger Prepare Communion: McCaghrens Clean Building: McCaghren / Bridges Hostess Committee: Cindy McCaghren's group
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	Song Leader: Ken Maninger		
Greeters	Maninger Family	Fuller / Stultz		
Opening Prayer	Gene Bannister	Allen Griffith		
Communion	Don Smith*, Ryan Rudloff John Barnum, Garrett Barnum	James Thomas*, Hank Wheeler Garrett Barnum,		
Closing Prayer	James Thomas	Gene Bannister		
Attendance Cards	Chase Churchwell	Jaceton Evetts		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	Song Leader: Ken Maninger		
Opening Prayer	Allen Bland	James Fuller		
Scripture Reading	Hank Wheeler	Don Smith		
Communion	Don Smith	James Thomas		
Closing Prayer	Ken Maninger	John Barnum		
Wednesday Devotionals:	December 30 Joe Dennis	January 6 Prayer Night	January 13 Allen Griffith	January 20 Tom Wilcox

Search the Scriptures

Be like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

Studies for the week of December 27, 2015

Sunday Class Allen Griffith
Wed. Class Singing

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toward him."

Second, **God has far reaching eyes.** His eyes are said to run "to and fro throughout the whole earth" (2 Chron. 16:9). There is no hamlet, no small village, no isolated corner of this globe that can escape the penetrating look of the eyes of God. Surely the New Testament equivalent of this Old Testament passage is expressed in the words of the Hebrews writer: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things [are] naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13). One wonders by the timing of Hanani's statement from God whether or not Asa may have attempted to make this "league" with Benhadad in secret. Men may perpetrate and perform their crimes in the dark of night where they THINK they can escape detection. Law makers and politicians may receive a bribe "under the table" in an effort to conceal their wicked deeds. The abortion industry may succeed in hiding the horrible nature of their crimes, and the thief who breaks through and steals in the dead of night might be successful in hiding their misdeeds from men. But our God sees all, and all will answer to the Almighty for their ungodly deeds.

Third, **God has urgent eyes.** It is said that His eyes "run" (2 Chron. 16:9). When it comes to judgment and salvation, time is of the essence. "The King's business requires haste" (1 Sam. 21:8). We must preach the word, "be instant (urgent) in season, out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2). But what is it that makes the search so urgent? It is the limited time constraint that faces each one of us. Life is but a vapor (James 4:14). There is no certainty of tomorrow. God knows this; and so His eyes are said to "run." If God's eyes are urgently seeking those who are lost, should we not have urgent eyes as well? A world lost in sin, standing on the very brink of eternal ruin, calls for the eyes of every servant of our Lord Jesus Christ to be urgently seeking the lost.

Fourth, **God has revealing eyes.** God is said to "shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect" (2 Chron. 16:9). I, for one, am glad that God is a revealing God and that He WANTS to make Himself known. How grateful we should be that not only has He made "one of every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," but that He desires that all men "should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:26-27).

Some years ago it was declared that "God is dead." No, God is not dead. He is alive, and He has made Himself known. For those who fail to find Him, the fault is solely theirs, for God is looking for them, and He is ready and willing to show Himself to those who earnestly seek after Him (Heb. 11:6).

Finally, **God has demanding eyes.** While His love is unconditional, His blessings are for a limited few. He is strong in behalf of "them whose heart is perfect toward him." The context of those words helps me understand what God means by a "heart that is perfect toward him." Asa failed to trust God. He doubted the power of God to fulfill the promises given. While Asa may have proven himself noteworthy by seeking to eradicate idolatry and return to true worship of Jehovah, he failed in this one area. He failed to seek God's advice and then to follow it when it came to him. God demands that we bow in submission in every single aspect and area of our life. Failure to do so will be catastrophic.

May we never forget that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, and may we live soberly in view of that wonderful truth!

Tom Wacaster (STOP, Dec. 2015)