

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Silence Is Golden

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The phrase, “*silence is golden*” may sound like a saying from Scripture, but like “*cleanliness is next to godliness*”, the literal phrase is not found in the Bible. However, the Bible recognizes that silence has a place in our lives as much as speaking: “There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak” (*Ecclesiastes* 3:7). Silence in those appropriate times certainly is valuable like gold.

TIMES OF COMFORT

When our loved ones are suffering in times of receiving shocking news or experiencing the death of someone close to them, we wonder what words we can say to help. Sometimes being physically present, but verbally silent is the best medicine we can offer.

Job’s friends gathered with him in his physical suffering, and mental shock and “*sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great*” (*Job* 2:13). While “*afar off*” they saw his physical condition to the point of “*knowing him not*”. They then

“*lifted up their voice and wept*” (*Job* 2:12). But in his presence, they did not utter a word. Silence in the presence of very great grief are at times more eloquent and soothing than any words that could be uttered. Their silence was no doubt comforting. It is when they began to express in words their estimation as to why their friend was suffering that they gave Job much pain and grief.

TIMES OF INTERSPECTION

Our silence can cause others to think of their own actions. Peter was moved to bitter tears when Jesus gave him a silent look (*Luke* 22:61-62). The silent moment produced a din of guilt thundering in Peter’s conscience. He remembered Jesus’ earlier predictions of Peter’s denial in the face of his own words to the contrary. Jesus’ silence gave room for his earlier words to resonate in Peter’s mind.

Pilate could only marvel when Jesus, in the face of accusations and Pilate’s own demands, refused to answer any more of his questions. (*Mark* 15:5). Words defending himself before His enemies would not change their murderous scheme. Silence left Pilate

thinking of Jesus’ last spoken words claiming He was “*King of the Jews*” (*Mark* 15:2), as he faced his own cowardly plans. Our silence certainly forces others to hear and live with their own thoughts.

TIMES OF NEEDED ORDER

How much communication and learning is accomplished when two people are talking over each other? Not much. It is when the restless mob settled down to “*great silence*” and were “*the more silent*” that they gave themselves the opportunity to hear and evaluate Paul’s defense (*Acts* 19:40, 22:2). When a prophet received a revelation in the assemblies of the church the other prophet speaking was to “*keep silence*” (*I Corinthians* 14:30). Prophets were to prophesy “*one by one that all may learn and all may be exhorted*” (*I Corinthians* 14:31). Speaking prophets revealed God’s mind. Appropriate silence allowed the words to create learning and exhortation. In the assemblies all things are to be done decently and in order (*I Corinthians* 14:40). Appropriate silence allows for such edifying occasions. Silence indeed has its golden moments.