

Silent Sheep

Why Christian Men Tend to “Wimp Out”



The female principal in a Christian school publicly slanders her pastor. Her attacks on the preacher are brash and frequent. Why did the deacons and men of the church sit idly by, week after week, while this ungodly assault persisted?

A pastor has a visiting evangelist speaking nightly at his church. It comes to the pastor's attention that the visiting speaker is drinking alcohol after the services. The pastor chooses not to confront this man because "God is using him," and he does not want to interfere with the work of the Holy Spirit!

A faithful church member is verbally abused in public by the pastor while the men of the church refuse to lift their voices, or a finger, to defend the assaulted brother.

A Christian college recruits a football player who sexually assaults a girl student. Rather than expel the criminal and seek justice, the school administration tries to "keep it quiet" because this athlete is very talented. Where are the champions for truth?

In each of these cases, why do these docile men display a lack of initiative paramount to that of a neutered tomcat? Why won't these men stand up, step up, and speak up for a just and right cause?

I am not suggesting for one moment that God's men should be quick to rebuke. Any man who thrives on contention is not right with God. But this inability to defend the defenseless and confront an erring brother is inexcusable. Paul found it necessary, on one occasion, to confront Peter face to face.

Is a "man-fearing spirit" the culprit here? Is it a fear of rejection, rebuke, or reprisal that keeps men from doing their duty? Proverbs says, "The righteous are as bold as a lion." God said to Joshua, *Be strong and of a good courage*. This phrase, or its equivalent, is referenced four times in the first chapter of Joshua. God's men are not to be bullies, but they are to be bold and courageous. There comes a point when gentleness can become a cloak for **cowardice**. There are certainly many times to *turn the other cheek*, but there are also times to do the right thing, regardless of the consequences.

Another reason why men keep silent when they should speak is a **lack of character**. Reuben prevented Joseph's death, but he consented to put him in a pit. Rather than rescue his brother from the gross injustice of his other brothers, he compromised and they sold him into slavery. Herod believed that John the Baptist "was a just and good man." Yet, being dominated by his wicked wife, he delivered John, an innocent man, to die and beheaded him. Herod lacked the character to do right. It's never a light thing to trample on justice. To know the truth without honoring it is the sin of weaklings.

Think about the 914 people who died in the People's Temple suicide atrocity in Jonestown, Guyana in 1978. These silent sheep hushed their consciences repeatedly and submitted themselves to an evil man until they were incapable of thinking for themselves. The continual exposure to Scripture-twisting by the dynamic and powerful leader overtook hundreds of gullible followers. How does any man get to the point where he passively watches a cult leader engage in sexual acts with his spouse? How does any woman get to the point of thinking this behavior must be "God's will?" These things do not happen overnight. A person must suppress his conscience over and over until he has finally surrendered the right to think for himself. When the time came for the Kool-Aid cocktail administered by Jim Jones, apparently, the majority lined up without saying a word!

The belief that spiritual authorities are beyond question even when obvious offenses are committed finds no support in the Word of God. God has prescribed the manner to approach erring shepherds (see 1 Tim. 5:19-20). Dishonoring God's man is a wicked sin, but exalting men to a God-like status is dangerous and destructive. Both shepherds and sheep are responsible *to* and *for* one another. All men in the Kingdom are accountable, regardless of position.

People who know the Bible do not get brainwashed apart from their consent. The Bible never encourages a man to censor his own conscience. When a man repeatedly quells his conscience by coalescing instead of following the dictates of his enlightened mind, will, and emotions, he has effectively surrendered his manhood.

There are times when failure to speak out is just as big a sin as taking God's name in vain or telling an out-and-out lie. It's always right to do right! Silence may be golden at appropriate times, but it can be deadly when you should speak up.

We read of the meek and lowly Lamb of God who *like a lamb dumb before his shearer . . . opened he not his mouth* (Acts 8:32). Never forget that the Lamb Who went to the Cross without protest is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah. He is the all-powerful King of Kings that will ultimately rule and reign on earth as He does now in heaven. Jesus was no limp-wristed poppy picker! He single-handedly drove the moneychangers out of the temple. Though silent when personally accused, Jesus forcefully confronted the abuse that had infiltrated His Father's house. He stood up for a righteous principle with zeal and valor.

Ecclesiastes states there is a "time to keep silence, and a time to speak."

There are numerous occasions to practice meekness and silence, but there are other instances when it is mandatory to display courage and open your mouth for an honorable cause. God give us men with SPIRIT-FILLED BOLDNESS. God give us men who fear God more than other men. God give us sheep with backbones. God deliver us from the silence of the lambs!

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