



## ***Silent Witness—Wouldn't that be a Contradiction of Terms?***

By Kurt von Schleicher

*"I am convinced the greatest act of love we can ever perform for people is to tell them about God's love for them in Christ." —Billy Graham*

If we were to adopt the position of a silent witness, we would be going against what Scripture teaches, that instructs us to boldly confess Christ openly and to ***"contend for the faith."*** Being a silent witness at all times simply doesn't work, because the focus is on whether we can be good, righteous and prove that we are loving so others will get saved. But how will that help our unbelieving friends if they never hear about the One who pours His love into our hearts or makes us a practical blessing to others? Besides, our Message should not be who we are but who He is. Preach the Gospel loudly wordless, but when it is necessary use Christ-honoring words that they can understand!

Some Christians want to remain silent and be "secret agent Christians." Some feel afraid of rejection. Some feel embarrassed by the money-hungry TV brethren and don't want to be associated with them. Some don't know how to witness or share their testimony, but some Christians would witness if they knew how and were convinced about the heat of hell—if they were taught about the urgency of the need.

Paul said, ***"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"***  
(Rom 1:16 kjv).

He said to Timothy, ***"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord"*** (2Tim. 1:8).

Some so called Christians are merely religious and lost, claiming to be righteous but merely self-righteous. Some Christians don't live the life, just wanting to do what they want, when they want and where they want... flapping their gums in the wind for Jesus in the name of glorifying God. They are carnal or worldly. Their character stinks, their activities are selfish. They live contrary to how Jesus lived—not walking in selfless love and purity. They basically through their self-will, give our great Cause a black eye so to speak.

Listen, don't get me wrong. If you are determined to call yourself a Christian and live according to your own plans and feelings rather than according to God's Word and his loving Holy Spirit, please do us all a favor and remain silent about Jesus and the Bible. Don't witness your way! The world doesn't need it.

Some ask about what's more important in being a witness for Christ—living a holy life of love or verbally telling the Good News of Christ's love that was displayed on the cross? My question to them is: Which wing is more important for a plane to remain in flight—the left wing or the right wing? Of course both of them are important!

Some are afraid, but why let fear intimidate you? Thousands of people love to go climb into a gnarly rollercoaster and drop from the sky a couple hundred feet in amusement parks. They pay lots of money for this feeling. Yes, many pay hard-earned money to go feel fear in a scary movie too, but outside people's lives as they head towards eternity are literally at stake.

Christian, if you will but draw upon God's power daily to live in victory over sin, Satan and the works of the flesh—if you will live as a spiritual Christian rather than a worldly, carnal or lukewarm Christian—if you will look to Jesus to meet all your needs instead of to your own abilities or to the world system to meet your needs... then please by all means, open your mouth and tactfully share the Good News of Jesus' love with lost people! God can help you overcome fear and your own hang-ups! Don't remain silent! God can work His greatest miracle through you if you are willing and available!

Think about it! God could have chosen angels to spread the Gospel, but He didn't. He chose you and me to do this in Christ's love. How exciting—extreme to the MAX! The Bible says, ***"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"*** (Rom. 10:17 nkjv). God says, ***"Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy"*** (Ps. 107:2).

David said, ***"Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise"*** (Ps. 51:13-15).

Now, if ever there was a place for a silent witness (and over the long haul there is not), I would say that such a place would be in the home. Of course there times when God wants us to be silent (preaching the Gospel loudly but wordless) and there are times for us to merely ask questions. But over the long haul, if we remain always silent like some wimpy secret agent Christian who is too fearful to take a stand for the Lord, we will be falling short of God's will and plan for our lives.

Here's a fishing principle that helps me: Those sinners we are most familiar with, we should be least verbal with in our outward witness. In other words, we should be more of a non-verbal witness at home first, until each one of our family members is ready to hear the whole nine yards from us, because we have been living the life in love before all.

We all blow it from time to time though we try hard to avoid this, and we need to remember that the sins we commit not only affect us, but they affect others too—even the unsaved around us. David discovered this when he tried to witness for the Lord. No wonder he wrote, ***"Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness"*** (v. 14). You see, David's hand were bloody. Why? Well, he had killed Uriah, the husband of the woman with whom he had committed adultery. God saw him do this, and Joab, the general of David's military force, knew what David had done.

Personal sin also silenced his tongue. He had no song and no effective witness. What a bummer! He cried out. ***"O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise"*** (v. 15). David was accustomed to creatively and extravagantly praising the Lord, but now he was silenced. When we lose our song, our praise and our testimony, we simply affect others around us. David wanted to become a

good witness and representative for God, but he was not able to talk to people about the Lord. His conscience was beating him up bad. But when the Lords forgave David and all his filthy sins were washed away, he was able to proclaim, ***"Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You"***(v. 13).

If you are ever tempted to say, *"I can sin and totally get away with it,"* just remember King David. He really blew it bad, but he did not get away with it at all. Sin literally affected his whole being, his family and the very people to whom David should have brought an effective witness of the Lord to were ill-affected.

God has called each of us to be His witness by His power not by our own. Our important task is to teach transgressors God's ways. Our awesome privilege is to lead sinners to the Lord. ***"You shall receive power... and you shall be witnesses to Me"***(Acts 1:8).

***"I would arouse you, in the interest of a greater estimate of Jesus Christ, in the interest of a greater service for Jesus Christ, who is literature's loftiest ideal, philosophy's highest personality, criticism's supreme-ist problem, theology's fundamental doctrine, spiritual religion's cardinal necessity—and who is personally, socially, politically, economically, educationally, scientifically, religiously, the only hope of this head-dizzy, body-weary, soul-famished, hell-bound world in which we live!"*** —R.G. Lee<sup>1</sup>

THINK ABOUT HOW GREAT JESUS CHRIST REALLY IS! THINK ABOUT THE PRIVILIGES OF OUR GREAT MANDATE! THINK ABOUT THE LOSTNESS OF THE LOST! There are only two kinds of people in the world out there; people who have found Jesus Christ and those who are still looking for him. Many are looking for the love of the Lord in the wrong arms and places. They all crave to see authenticity. But our sin really affects our witness. If we are about to quit, discouraged, and into a life of sin, let's simply tell on ourselves to God. Let's hang a one eighty away from sin and ask God not only to cleanse us, but to open our lips so we can boldly share the Gospel with others to rescue them.

If you don't, be sure your sin will find you out. Glen Campbell used to sing a son that kind of typifies many of our lives today saying, *"There's been a load of compromising on the road to my horizon."* Is that how your life has been? Listen sin spreads like a disease and it will impede you in reaching your God given purpose. It will not only rob your joy, and destiny, but it will affect your witness to others. As long as you give sin room in your life, your spiritual life will be ineffective. Don't give up and allow spiritual slumber or sin to steal away your good witness for the Lord. Keep your heart pure and clean before Him. So many are in need near you! Remember to pray. Remember the Lord and reach out!

***The Gospel is fact;  
Therefore tell it simply.  
The Gospel is a joyful fact,  
Therefore tell it cheerfully.  
The Gospel is an entrusted fact;  
Therefore tell it faithfully.***

*The Gospel is a fact of infinite importance;  
Therefore tell it earnestly.  
The Gospel is a fact of love  
Therefore tell it with feeling!  
The Gospel is a fact of difficult comprehension;  
Therefore tell it with illustration.  
The Gospel is a fact about a Person;  
Therefore share Christ! —R.G. Lee*

Soul-winning is sometimes helping someone weaker strengthen us. On a beautiful fall day in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, a man was out on an afternoon hike several miles from where he parked his car.

Then all of a sudden, at a pretty rapid speed, the temperature dropped precipitously as ominous clouds began to form. Realizing a mountain storm was quickly approaching, the man headed back to where he left his car. But on the way back, the man was caught in “a whiteout.” The hours passed as he wandered around in circles—unable to see even two feet in front of his face. After a little bit, he felt his energy giving out and a deadly lethargy starting to creep in, yet he knew that if he listened to his body’s demands and sat down to rest, he would never get up again. After wandering around a few more minutes, however, he finally gave in and decided to rest, knowing he would soon die. But as he sat down, he felt something next to him. He brushed away the snow and found the body of someone who, like himself, had been caught out in the freezing storm. He felt for a pulse with this person lying there, and finding that there was still life flowing through the body, he stood up, and with super-human strength hoisted the body onto his shoulders and then began to walk. After trudging through the snow a mere one hundred feet, he experienced a face to door encounter with a solid log cabin... up-close and personal. It hurt so good.

That cabin was only one hundred feet away from where the hiker was totally ready to give up. He didn’t see it because of the blizzard, but once he attempted to save someone else and started moving, the cabin suddenly materialized before him. Inside, there was a fire in the fireplace and a man cooking dinner. Both of the travelers were soon warmed, fed, and saved. Perhaps you feel like giving up, like you just want to sit down and die. But listen, the thing for you to do at this point, is to look around for someone who is worse off than you are, in order that you may give out and rescue that person.

Now of course you don’t save your own soul from damnation and God’s judgment by telling others about salvation in Jesus Christ alone, but once you are born again, this Spirit-led-activity will only be good for the reviving of your soul—I mean the proper rescuing of those perishing out in the cold! God has given you gifts and talents and maybe some resources to employ as you fish for souls. He expects all of us to selflessly use these things for His glory. God expects us to open our mouths at times and go tell!

I encourage you, with all my heart, to continue to witness of Jesus for your Father in whatever way you can, but don’t always remain silent. Why earn the right to be heard, building the bridge of trust and relationship, that is meant to carry the Gospel across to the unbeliever, if you never put that verbal Message across the bridge? Here are some suggestions:

1. According to Romans 10:9–10, it's important to confess Christ openly. You owe it to your family to be honest with them first; they may have to explain your newfound faith to others, but that is ok because you love them and want to spend eternity with Jesus and them all.

2. Obey the laws unless they flat-out forbid you from sharing your faith on your off hours on your own property. Yes, on your own time, under no condition should you ever commit to or agree to remaining silent about your faith or to denying Christ as being your Lord. Be loyal to Him no matter what! Obey God rather than men.

3. If you are grown up and think your parent's father might be opposed to your faith, pray about it thoroughly, pray for their salvation, seek godly counsel from more than one mature Christian and then at the right time, tell them about Christ and what you believe anyway with gentleness and great respect. There are sometimes disappointments between adult parents and adult children, especially regarding family or religious traditions. But you want them to go to heaven and Jesus is the only way. Where your parents will live eternally is more important than what they might feel temporarily.

4. Meditate upon the soul-winning and personal evangelism verses in the book of Acts.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Robert G. Lee, Bread from Bellevue's Oven, Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1947, p.10.