

# How Can We Keep Silent?

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In 1945 Communists seized Romania and attempted to discourage religion by controlling Christian churches. As a result, Pastor Richard Wurmbrand formed an underground ministry to preach to enslaved people and to invading Russian soldiers. Even though he was imprisoned and tortured over fourteen years, he could not keep silent about Christ during those desperate times of Communist control. Each time he was released from prison, he was compelled to reinstate his ministry of sharing the hope and joy only Jesus can give. Despite threats, beatings, and imprisonments, he could not keep silent. <sup>1</sup>

Although many of us may never face the horrific persecutions that Pastor Wurmbrand did, we must not allow “our silence to condemn men to death, misery, and darkness,” <sup>2</sup> as Ray Stedman explains in his devotion, “When Stones Cry Out.” Being disciples of Christ, we must boldly declare our faith. Breaking the silence is imperative as we practice the following three disciplines:

1. Praise God for His overwhelming love,
2. Proclaim His gift of Christ, and
3. Promote Him alone.

The first way we shatter silence is to praise God for his overwhelming love. In John 3:16 we read, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” <sup>3</sup> It is important that we each ask ourselves, “Do I grasp the reality that Jesus sacrificed his mortal life in return for my sinful life, so that I can have eternal

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Wurmbrand, *Tortured for Christ*, (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2017), 201.

<sup>2</sup> Ray C. Stedman, “When Stones Cry Out (Luke 19:37-40),” RayStedman.org. Ray Stedman Ministries, October 21, 1973.

<https://www.raystedman.org/thematic-studies/new-covenant/when-stones-cry-out>, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 3:16 (English Standard Version; all subsequent citations are from this version).

life?” If we truly understand the magnitude of this gift, we can’t help but praise the one who has given it.

The essence of how our praise of His love should abound is captured in the song “How Can I Keep From Singing” by Chris Tomlin. In the chorus he exclaims,

How can I keep from singing Your praise  
 How can I ever say enough  
 How amazing is Your love  
 How can I keep from shouting Your name  
 I know I am loved by the King  
 And it makes my heart want to sing.<sup>4</sup>

Even if we were to withhold our praise for His amazing love, creation would shout His praise. As Jesus said in Luke 19:40, “...if these were silent,” speaking of His disciples, “the very stones would cry out.”<sup>5</sup> If all creation, including the rocks, can declare His splendor, how can we possibly refrain?

The second discipline of breaking our silence is to proclaim God’s gift of Christ. The woman Jesus met at the well in John 4 was a hopeless, lonely outcast bound by secrets. Only when Jesus exposed her secrets and offered her hope and love, was she compelled to race back to her village and cry out for others to come and meet her Savior.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, when Jesus exposes our secret sins and welcomes us with his love and forgiveness, we are compelled to share the newfound hope and joy that comes in knowing our Lord intimately. As a result, we are told to, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son

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<sup>4</sup> Chris Tomlin, “How Can I Keep from Singing,” *See the Morning*, (Sparrow Records, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Lk. 19:40.

<sup>6</sup> Jn. 4:7-30.

and of the Holy Spirit,” as commanded in Matthew 28:19.<sup>7</sup> We have been called by Jesus himself to proclaim the light of the gospel.

The third discipline of piercing the silence is to promote God alone. There is one caution that I can personally attest to, and that is the temptation to focus on the wrong light. I’ve been blessed with the knowledge of math. I love it, and it comes easy for me. Because I do so well in math, I want to share my strong performance with my peers. It is difficult not to gloat and become prideful, rather than to promote the one who has blessed me with this gift. An even more precious gift God has given me, is the gift of the gospel. It’s written in 2 Corinthians 10:17, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”<sup>8</sup> We aren’t to boast for our own glory, but to boast in God’s glory as we use our talents and gifts to direct others to Him.

Richard Wurmbrand had no such dilemma in whom he promoted. It is recorded in *Tortured for Christ* that “the Communist regime of Romania planned to assassinate him; yet he was not silent in the face of this death threat.”<sup>9</sup> Despite imprisonments, beatings, torture, and potential death, he continued to pierce the silence. We too must pierce the silence, as we boldly praise God for his overwhelming love, proclaim God’s gift of Christ, and promote Him alone. After all God has done for us, how can we keep silent?

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<sup>7</sup> Mt. 28:19.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Cor. 10:17.

<sup>9</sup> Wurmbrand, 202.

## Bibliography

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