

## DO WE ARGUE FROM SILENCE?

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Letter # 6

In this series of letters I am taking up some of the objections against the position I hold on the constitution of churches. In this letter I consider something Bro Bill Stang wrote in the article *Where Is The Authority?* Which appeared in *Voice in the Wilderness* Dec 2006 and also in *BBB*, Jan. 2007.

Bro Stang said:

He gives *arguments from silence*, [ p. 34, col. 1, par. 2].

Of course Bro Stang gives no reference, no quote, no anything but the mere assertion. Such has the appearance of argument and it fools those who do not think for themselves. He suggests we who believe in self constitution give *arguments from silence*. Is it not strange that someone would accuse you of such when in fact you have filled pages with Scripture and have given quote after quote from Baptist history on the very subject under discussion? See *LUF*.

These quotes from history given in *LUF* expressly say churches are self constituted! On the other hand I have repeatedly challenged these brethren to give one express quote of any Baptist who taught the doctrine of EMDA before 1900. Did Bro Stang do this? Has anyone done this? No! Not one! And despite much fulmination, bluster, bravado and no little impudence, we have received not one single reference! In the light of these facts, it would seem that thinking men would ask serious questions of those who contend for this doctrine. But as they do not, I pose these questions for them:

“Does the NT contain all the information which we need for the doctrine and practice of a NT church?”

“If there is no explicit statement of EMDA in the NT, then how can it be a Bible doctrine?”

“Do you know of any other Bible doctrine which is not found in the Bible?”

“Do Baptists get their doctrine from the Bible or not?”

“Is this not arguing from silence when men cannot give a single quote of EMDA before 1900?”

“Why this silence on EMDA from men who are vociferous on the subject?”

“If indeed Baptists taught EMDA through the ages, then why is there no explicit record of it ?”

“How is it that Baptists taught EMDA for near two thousand years but never included it in any confession, covenant, church manual or church history?”

“If there is no explicit statement of EMDA in the records of Baptist churches, by what means are we able to ascertain they believed and practiced this doctrine?”

“If indeed Baptists believed and practiced a doctrine which is essential for the constitution of a church for nearly two thousand years which they never explicitly expressed in any document, and which is not in the Bible, is it not possible there are other doctrines which they believed and practiced and which are just as essential to obedience but which no one has yet discovered?”

“If someone should pretend to discover such a doctrine, by what means would EMDA men be able to reject it seeing they are willing to accept a doctrine which is not found in the Bible or in Baptist History?”

These questions produce an ashen face, an eerie silence and uncontrolled shaking among EMDA men!

One more question: *who* is silent?