

## God Is Not Silent

I should like to turn to the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, who is in many ways the key to this whole matter. There is an early Wittgenstein and there is a later Wittgenstein, but in his *Tractatus*, to which we refer here, we are concerned with the early Wittgenstein. Later he moved into linguistic analysis, but in this early stage, he argued that down here in the world (in the area of reason) you have facts: you have the propositions of natural science. This is all that can be said; it is all that you can put into language. This is the limit of language and the limit of logic. “Downstairs” we can speak, but all that can be spoken is the mathematical propositions of natural science. Language is limited to the “downstairs” of reason, and that ends up with mathematical formulations.

But, as Bertrand Russell emphasizes, Wittgenstein was a mystic. Even in his early days, there were already the elements of mysticism. In the “upper story” he put silence, because you could not talk about anything outside of the known world of natural science. But man desperately needed values, ethics, meanings to it all. Man needs these desperately, but there is only silence there. It was at this point that the title of this present book was born. It is Wittgenstein’s word “silence” that has given me this title. Wittgenstein says that there is only silence in the area of the things man desperately needs most—values, ethics, and meanings. Man knows it needs to be there, he argues, but he cannot even talk or think about it. Values, ethics, meanings are all upstairs. No matter how much we need them, there is only silence.

(Excerpt from *He Is There And He Is Not Silent* by Francis A. Schaeffer, Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1973 [1972], 51-52)