

## When God Seems Silent

How many of us have felt that way at some point? Have you had those same questions before at some point?

Tonight I want to talk about when God seems silent in your life.



Sometimes God can be maddeningly hard to get, would you agree? When God says in Isaiah 55:8 that His ways are not our ways, He means it. Do you ever feel that your voice is loud but your words just seem empty? If you're human, you do. Whether in your job, a relationship or any area in your life dealing with people, you're absolutely going to feel that way at some point. For Christians, or at least for me, that's an all too familiar feeling that seems to come in seasons. Do you ever feel like you read, pray and seek Him with all your heart and yet...nothing? You may be seeking Him on how to handle a certain situation, or praying for someone's health or salvation, and you hear and feel nothing. Have you ever been through a season of time where your life seems to be caving in all around you yet God is nowhere to be found? You feel that you're screaming at Him for an answer and you get complete and total silence. You're not alone.

The Bible tells the story of Elijah, who, in my mind, was well acquainted with God's silence. In his trials and suffering, he cried out to God. He asked for answers. And he kept asking. It took God 3 years to act and send rain.

Job had every part of his world crash in on Him and we see 37 chapters of the book of Job where God seemed completely absent.

How many of you have been there? If you haven't been there, then you will be. What then?

I want to look at a very familiar verse of scripture that I think is a perfect picture of this...I know it's familiar, but hopefully you will see it in a new way.

*Mark 4:35-41(NLT)*

<sup>35</sup> As evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's cross to the other side of the lake." <sup>36</sup> So they took Jesus in the boat and started out, leaving the crowds behind (although other boats followed). <sup>37</sup> But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. <sup>38</sup> Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, "Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?" <sup>39</sup> When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Silence! Be still!" Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup> Then he asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" <sup>41</sup> The disciples were absolutely terrified. "Who is this man?" they asked each other. "Even the wind and waves obey him!"

Through this passage, I want to give 3 reasons why I feel that it seems like God is silent in our lives.

So Jesus is out on a boat with His disciples and they're just kicking it, having a good time hanging out and after some time this crazy storm rolls up. The boat is taking on water like mad and I imagine people are frantic, throwing things over board and to their surprise, Jesus is at the bottom of the boat. He's exhausted and He's asleep! When the disciples think they're all going to die, they try to find Jesus. This brings to my first reason why God may seem silent.

## **#1 – God is silent when He wants to Draw Us Closer to Him**

God is silent when  
He wants to...

**DRAW US  
CLOSER TO HIM**

Notice that when everything was calm and all was well the disciples were kind of just minding their own business, having a good time I imagine, but when the storm came, they began to frantically look for Jesus. They knew they needed Jesus for help and direction.

The same thing is true in our lives. When everything is going well, when the money is okay, when the kids aren't sick, when nothing in the house is breaking and when there's no struggling, I can tend to drift and not seek after Jesus like I should be. In those times of peace, I'll be honest; I'm not always a man after God's own heart like David. But when the difficulties of life come we pray more. We read more. God knows that it's in those seasons we are drawn back to Him. We will seek Him more, we'll pray more, we'll read more, and we'll have more of an awareness of Him. But you know, this is exactly what He wants us doing in the first place. Just like Jesus pursues us, He longs to be pursued. Water is so much more satisfying when you feel you're about to thirst!

## #2 – God is silent when He wants to Increase Our Faith



How many of us could stand for our faith to be strengthened? I know I certainly could.

In verse 40, Jesus says, “**Why are you so afraid? Do you *still* have no faith?**”

Look at that...He says you **STILL** have no faith. After all the teaching I've done, after the things you've seen, how do you **STILL** have no faith? At this point in the disciples walk with Jesus, they have seen many things take place. You probably have a heading in your Bible in Mark chapter 1 that says “Jesus Heals Many” and this is after the calling of the first disciples. So we know that the disciples have seen Jesus move and work in people's lives. But it wasn't until the storm and trials hit them personally that they could believe it for themselves within themselves. Does that make sense?

You believe in Jesus. You know that He carried your cross and He died your death and you've seen Him work in people's lives around you, but you have a situation and it's easy to say, "Well, Jesus may not help me with this." Or "I'm not hearing from God on this, so He doesn't care." It's easy to make light of that here, but we've all had that thought.

When we first trust Jesus, we are starting our faith. We're on the milk. But then through reading, prayer and life experiences, we move to the meat where our faith can increase. This happens through being put in situations (financial hardships, relationship problems, health issues) where we need to trust Him. It's when we get to a place where we see first-hand that all we have is Jesus we realize that all we need is Jesus. Amen? He knows that He may have something laid out before you that will require a higher level of faith and this hardship is Him getting you there. We heard Sunday from Pastor Brad that God is the One who was and is and is to come. God is already in next week. He is already in next year. He knows what is laid before you and is preparing you.

### **#3 – God is Silent when He wants to....reveal Himself in a fresh new light.**



We're making it to the end of our scripture for tonight and so I want you to see the reaction of the disciples when Jesus finally calmed the storm.

**Mark 4:41 – “They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”**

They were like “man, who is this guy that can control nature!?” Again, they've seen him cast out demons, heal the sick, cleanse the leper, restore sight, but they've never seen Him speak a word to a storm and that storm cease. Did you know the same thing happens in our lives? Sometimes something causes us to see God in a new way.

Think about the history of your walk with Him. Reflect back and think about how you've learned about God. When you first trusted Him, you knew Him as **Savior**.



SAVIOR

Then your walk with Him continues, and you or someone you love gets deathly sick and is healed. Now, you know Him and **Healer**.



HEALER

Then, a little later, your money gets tight. Ends aren't meeting. Just when it seems that all hope is lost, God pulls through and reveals himself as **Provider**.



PROVIDER

God loves to reveal Himself. He loves to come through for you. He loves to prove that He is holding your life and that He's worthy to be trusted. It was times

of uncertainty and struggle in your life that God used to reveal Himself to you in a fresh new way.

God pulled through for Elijah and Job and He will pull through for you. The “When” can sometimes be the hard part and the “How” is sometimes unimportant.

God is silent when  
He wants to...

**DRAW US CLOSER TO HIM**

**INCREASE OUR FAITH**

**REVEAL HIMSELF**

We will go through times when God is drawing us to Him, when He is increasing our faith and finally when He reveals Himself.

In these times of silence, no matter how painful, no matter the level of anticipation you have, know that you are in God’s best interest. When you read, pray and seek Him, be sure to listen. Don’t ignore the silence. Quiet your voice and lesson your words. Sometimes God’s biggest move and revealing come after periods of silence. Take comfort in the fact that a teacher is always silent during a test. Know that Jesus is always working in your life. Jesus is always moving in the dark. Jesus always provides water in the desert and He always calms the storm. He is holding your life. Jesus always has been, always is and always will be the answer. Amen?