

The Potter's Christian Life Center

SERMON NOTES
with Pastor Greg Formey



When God Hides His Face

Psalm 102:1-2

Sunday, February 1, 2026

1 Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to you! 2 Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress! Incline your ear to me; answer me speedily in the day when I call! ESV

There are seasons in every believer's life when prayer feels unanswered. Words leave our mouths, but nothing seems to come back. Heaven feels quiet. God feels distant. Scripture does not deny this experience. It names it. The Bible often speaks of God "hiding His face," not because He has left, but because He is working beyond what we can see.

These seasons test faith at its deepest level. Faith is easy when God speaks clearly and acts quickly. Faith is harder when days stretch into months, and months into years, with no clear word. Yet Scripture teaches that silence does not mean inactivity. God often works most deeply when He works most quietly.

Hebrews 11:1-2

Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. 2 Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation. NLT

GOD'S SILENCE TRAINS US TO TRUST WHAT WE CANNOT SEE

In the ancient world, silence often preceded action. In the Torah, Israel waited four hundred years in Egypt before God spoke deliverance through Moses. During Second Temple Judaism, many believed God had been silent since Malachi. Yet that silence prepared the way for Christ. God's quiet seasons are often wombs, not tombs.

Think about Joseph. Genesis 37-41 records years of betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment.

Genesis 39:19-23

19 Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her. 20 So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held, and there he remained. 21 But the Lord was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the Lord made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. 22 Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison. 23 The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. The Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed. NLT

God spoke no recorded words to Joseph in prison, yet God was shaping his character and positioning him for leadership. The breakthrough came suddenly, but the preparation was long.

In everyday life, silence shapes us the same way. Muscles grow stronger during rest, not strain. Faith matures during waiting, not answers.

What if the silence you resent is the training ground for the responsibility God is preparing you to carry?

GOD'S HIDDEN WORK OFTEN APPEARS ONLY IN HINDSIGHT

Hebrews 11:3

3 By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen. NLT

This verse explains that visible things come from the invisible creative actions of God. God's actions take place much of the time before human awareness.

Most of the time when we pray, there is no immediate answer. But God is always preparing us and all the elements of our circumstances to come together at the right time.

Look at the unrecorded years of Jesus. Between Luke 2:52 and Matthew 3:16 lie nearly twenty silent years (the majority of His lifetime). Scripture records no accounts of His life - no sermons, no miracles, no public voice. But when the voice of God finally spoke at His baptism, it verified that He had lived a life fully devoted to the will of God.

Ancient Middle Eastern culture valued long apprenticeships. Rabbis trained quietly before teaching publicly. God follows this pattern. What looks like delay is often development.

When you look back on past seasons of your life, can you now see ways God was working that you could not recognize at the time?

Conclusion

When God hides His face, He has not turned His back. His silence is never empty. It is filled with purpose, shaping your faith, deepening your trust, and preparing a future you cannot yet imagine. The God who feels quiet is still present, still active, and still faithful.

Waiting is not wasted time. It is sacred space where faith learns to walk without sight.

Psalms 27:13-14

**13 Yet I am confident I will see the Lord's goodness while I am here in the land of the living.
14 Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord. NLT**

If you are in a season where prayers seem unanswered, hold on. God is working in the dark. And when the light comes, you will discover He was never absent at all.