

—Sermon Notes for October 24, 2021 —

Ken Gennicks preaching

“The Gospel According to Paul:
‘When Heaven Is Silent’”

(2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

INTRODUCTION

Our 2021 Bible study is *The Gospel According to Paul*, from *Acts 8-28* and Paul’s letters: *Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, and maybe *Hebrews*. During part of the Apostle Paul’s life, it seemed God had turned a deaf ear to his prayers. Today’s Bible study surfaces what we should do *When Heaven Is Silent*:

- I. Treat trials as a gift from God (v. 7, *given to me*)
- II. Remember what God has already said (v. 7, *great revelations*)
- III. Continue praying to God (v. 8, *three times I pleaded*)
- IV. Listen for God’s voice (v. 9, *my grace is sufficient*)
- V. Trust in God’s power (v. 9, *power is made perfect*)
- VI. Serve God right where you are (v. 10, *I delight in weakness*)

CONCLUSION

1. God’s Holy Spirit provides everything we need to complete God’s will for our life through His all sufficient grace (2 Cor. 12:9).
2. God’s Holy Spirit gives us the peace that passes comprehension when we cast all our cares upon the Lord (I Pet. 5:7).
3. God’s Holy Spirit gives courage to those willing to meditate on His promises (Josh. 1:9).
4. God’s Holy Spirit gives wisdom to make the most discerning decisions if you ask God for help and learn from godly examples (Jas. 1:5; Heb. 13:7).
5. God’s Holy Spirit gives you just the right balance of serenity, courage and wisdom in Christ Jesus (Col. 2:3).

—Applying Today’s Sermon to Your Life—

1. Our 2021 Bible study is *The Gospel According to Paul*, from the life and letters of the Apostle Paul in the New Testament. Our *Verse-of-the-Week* today is 2 Corinthians 12:9, *My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness*. Read today’s Bible text again, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Paul’s prayers were not answered as he preferred. Why not? How did Paul react? Has this ever happened to you? How did you react? What’s the value of these verses?
2. How have you reacted when God seems to be silent in spite of your prayers?
3. After today’s Bible study, answer the following as True or False:
 - T F All of my prayers are always answered quickly.
 - T F I don’t really have a meaningful prayer life.
 - T F *When Heaven Is Silent*, I persevere by faith, not by sight.
 - T F I bet I have the best prayer life in this whole church.
 - T F *A thorn in my flesh* will not distract me from Christ.
 - T F I try to treat trials as a gift from God.
 - T F I am serving God right where I am in spite of my weaknesses.
 - T F Pain, trouble and losses have weakened my faith.
 - T F My troubles and losses have made me a better servant.
4. How has God worked in you and through you in your weakness? What are you doing now to build a stronger faith muscle in preparation for hard times ahead?
5. In light of 2 Corinthians 12:7, three things that keep me from becoming arrogant or conceited are:
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
6. From 2 Corinthians 12:10, how can *weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions and difficulties* turn out for our benefit? What does this tell you about God?
7. How do the lyrics of this song speak into today’s Bible study?

*When darkness hides His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale, My anchor holds within the vale.
His oath, His covenant, His blood, Support me in the whelming flood.
When all around my soul gives way, He, then, is all my hope and stay.*

Will you trust the Lord Jesus even in the dark nights of the soul? Will you serve Him right where you are, without reservation? Will you joyfully walk by faith?
8. Imagine living today without faith, without knowing Jesus, without knowing how to pray, and without a supportive church family. Now think about your neighbors, your coworkers, your relatives, your classmates, your friends, and people in your circle of acquaintance. Who needs your faith, your Jesus, your prayers, your church family? Will you ask Jesus to make His appeal to them through you?
9. I will put today’s Bible study into action now by: