

When God Seems Silent

Silence is not absence –

On more than one occasion King David felt abandoned by God because his prayers were not being answered.

Psalms 139:7-12 [NIV] *“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,’ even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.”*

King David knew that despite his feelings, he was never out of God’s sight, thus King David reassures we are not alone.

So how do we convince our frightened hearts when life crumbles around us and God becomes silent?

We enter into silence with Him.

Creating a spiritual opportunity of solitude –

We have to feel totally accepted and comfortable with someone to sit with that person in silence.

It can be intimidating, but silence shifts the emphasis of a relationship away from words and transactions to intimacy where no words are necessary.

Are we this comfortable with God?

Would you like to be?

Then simply say, *“Lord, I’m here and I’m scared, please let me feel your presence,”* then sit in silence. Eventually peace of mind will settle over you and you will be able to face the as yet unresolved problem.

Circumstances lose their power over us and silence becomes an opportunity to fall in love with the Person of Jesus Christ, rather than what He tells us and does for us.

Silence checks our trust level –

It’s like a parent running alongside a child who is learning to ride a bicycle. The child wants to know the parent is there because they have no confidence they can ride the bike alone.

But it would look silly if when the child was 40 years old and still needed their parents to run alongside them.

At some point in our journey with God in life, He may decide to be *“hands off”* to see if we remember what we have learned, it is a preparation for the road ahead in our lives, which may be bumpy or difficult.

This is God taking us to the next level in building our commitment and perseverance. It will also reveal those things we are trusting in more than Him.

Silence is a spiritual opportunity for surrender –

Romans 12:1 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

To offer our lives totally to the Creator God is to take our trust in Him to the highest level that a human being can have. The Greek word translated “*bodies*” is “*soma*” meaning whole life, physical body, mind and “*human spirit*,” [Job 32:8; Proverbs 20:27; 1 Corinthians 2:11].

Such a surrender was taken by all the apostles when they introduced themselves as servants of Jesus Christ. The Greek word they used was “*dōulōs*” meaning a bond slave, [Romans 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1; Revelation 1:1]. Every true Christian accepts that they are purchased bond slaves of Jesus Christ, [Acts 20:28].

Our lives then become the property of a loving and merciful Master to direct and use as He wills.

Silence does not mean nothing is happening –

Ever tried to watch a seed grow? The problem is that you cannot. It remains hidden under the dark soil until the seedlings are ready to break through the surface and appear.

Sometimes there are deep issues that have undermined our lives for years that only a time of silence will force them to emerge.

If we face financial problems, we may be looking for a quick answer but the Creator God wants us to face and wrestle with a much bigger issue; who exactly is my provider?

Of course God expects us to work hard, that is our part, but we need to get our priorities right.

Matthew 6:33 [New King James] *“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”*

If the focal point of our lives is to receive a place in the created family of God, [kingdom is a family grown big] then God promises that all our physical needs will be provided. Do not overlook it says “needs” not “desires” will be provided.

Silence is a spiritual opportunity of scriptural memorisation –

When God seems to be silent we are driven to search His Word, the Christian Bible, seeking comforting promises of which there are many.

If we record these scriptures on 3 x 5 inch cards we can read and memorise them at any moment of the day when our mind is not fully active with our work.

We can then also pray these promises back to God, [Psalms 37:25; Matthew 6:25-26] when we think that nothing is happening, for we are looking for quick fixes to our problems. God is building character in us and preparing us to be more effective part of the kingdom He is creating.

Silence forces us to get real with God –

Isaiah 64:8-9 [New King James] *“But now, O LORD, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand. Do not be furious, O LORD, nor remember iniquity forever; indeed, please look, we all are Your people!”*

We must never forget the basic relationship we have with the Creator God, our Father, because all life originated from God, but also the One who is moulding our life into one that is acceptable and pleasing to Him.

Romans 9:14-21 [New King James] *“What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! For He says to Moses, ‘I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.’ So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, ‘For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.’ Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. You will say to me then, ‘Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?’ But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why have you made me like this?’ Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honour and another for dishonour?”*

Human pride and vanity, influenced by Satan whose pride caused him to lose his elevated position at the throne of God, [Ezekiel 28:14-15, 17; Isaiah 16:12-15]. We are not satisfied with how the Creator God is moulding our lives, forgetting just what we are as physical human beings, dust, [Genesis 2:7; Genesis 3:19].

Psalms 103:13-18 [New King James] *“As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.”*

Thankfully God remembers what we are and deals with us with patience, love and compassion.

When God seems to be silent it is a precious sign that God has been and still is at work in us, shaping us even though He seems far away.

If we allow God’s silence to do its work, we will come out the other side knowing we are not alone, that God longs for a deeper intimacy with us, and that He is worth trusting for the journey as we will have a stronger relationship with Him as a result.