

When God Is Silent

by Sandeep Poonen

The sermon explores the significance of God's silence, emphasizing the importance of living in obedience to His last spoken word while embracing His love and humility.

Duration: 29:37

Scripture: Genesis 1:3, Psalm 46:10, Isaiah 30:15, Zephaniah 3:17, Matthew 16:24, Philippians 2:14, Hebrews 3:19, Hebrews 4:9, James 4:10

Topics: "Gods Silence", "Faith And Obedience"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing God as a speaking God and understanding the significance of His silence. It delves into the concept of living in God's love and responding to His words, drawing parallels from Genesis chapter one where God's spoken word brought creation into existence. The message highlights the need to obey God's spoken word, remove pride, and embrace a life of humility and faith, ultimately leading to a deep rest in God's silent love.

Transcript

I want to speak from Genesis chapter one. If I were to give a title for my message, I would say, when God is silent. I think we've heard a lot of folks in the church, in Christianity, I'm sure there are many messages that speak about what to do when God is silent.

I think some of us may live at times when we feel that God is silent. One of the great truths of the new covenant that I believe has remarkably changed my life is that God is a speaking God. God speaks.

He's a living God. He's not like a God made out of wood or stone that you can carve. He's a living God.

And one of the proofs that he's a living God is that he speaks, that he's a speaking God. It's one of the reasons why we encourage people to use their mouth to speak. And the mouth should testify what God has spoken to them, not what the fertile mind has parsed in scripture, divided in scripture, split words, put words together and said, oh, that's a new thought.

That's not what we are supposed to be speaking about. What we want to speak is what God has spoken to me. That's what I speak to other people.

It should be handing on what God has passed on to me first. And that is based on the assumption, on the fact that God is speaking. And if God is not speaking, then we're following a wrong religion.

We have life from words that proceed from the mouth of God. That is how we live spiritually. That is the only way to live is God must be speaking to us.

And Genesis chapter one is a good picture of how God speaks. And you read in Genesis chapter one, that the earth was formless and void and shapeless. And then God spoke and the earth responded.

And over six days, God spoke. How long did it take for God to speak? God said, let there be light. How long did it take me to say that? It didn't take God that much longer.

It didn't draw. Let there be light. A few seconds, one or two seconds.

And then it says in verse five, and there was evening and there was day, 24 hours. How long did God speak? Two seconds, three seconds. And what happened? It was light.

And then what happened? Silence. Almost 24 hours, minus two or three seconds. God was silent.

Nobody had a problem with it. God didn't have a problem with it. And there was light.

The word of God spoken. And that was all that was needed for the next 24 hours. And then the next day and the next evening, God says something else.

Let there be an expanse in the midst of the water. It took maybe five seconds, 10 seconds for the next word. Then silence.

God was silent for a long period of time. Every day. God had no problem with it.

Earth had no problem with it. The earth was living off the word of God. The earth didn't try to go ahead of God.

The earth didn't say, okay, can we speed things up a bit? When God was silent, the earth lived with what was the word of God that God had given to them. But waited for the next word from God. And when the next word of God came, responded.

And most, I think for many, for a long time in my Christianity, definitely the early years, I used to think that God was silent. But I believe that's, I use that almost as a subtle complaint against God. God, where are you? You're silent.

I need you to speak to me. And I used it as a subtle complaint against God. God, I really need you to speak to me.

God is more eager to speak to me than I am to hear from him. It's always true. And so when God is silent, he's intentionally silent because he says, I've spoken already.

I've spoken what you need to do. And when you're ready, when it's time, I'll speak the next word to you. Now you live in the word that I've spoken to you.

You have all that you need with what I have spoken to you. And unlike the earth, unlike creation that happened in the first six days, we don't respond quite the same way. That's why he doesn't speak more quickly sometimes, because we are hard and we don't, are not pliable to the word of God.

We're not bendable to the word of God. You know what God used to create man? Dust. You know why dust? Because dust is so pliable.

You can do anything with dust. You put dust together. If you could, you could do anything with dust.

It could shape in any way. I pictured God picking up rock. He said, I can't use this.

It's too hard to make man out of this. But he used dust to create us so pliable. And every part of what God spoke responded to the voice of God.

The reason it takes so long in us is not because we need more words from God. It's because we don't respond the way the earth did to what God has said. If God has said, do all things without complaining and murmuring.

Lord, I want more light from your word. I want you to speak again and again. All I've spoken.

Has he not spoken to us about how much he loves us from his word? Has he not spoken to us from his word of how much we can trust him? I'm not talking about is it not in his word? Has he not spoken to you? Has he not convinced you in your heart that it is true? What God has said about his love. So I'm not talking about all the scripture. I'm talking about very specific words that God has spoken to you.

It may have just taken a few seconds for him to speak it to you. And then you say, God, I need to speak. It's one hour later.

I need you to speak. And God said, just live with what I've spoken to you already. But I'm too impatient.

Really more of what's the problem with me is I want a new word. I want something new. I want something novel.

I don't want to live with the word that God has given to me because I am proud. But God wants me to be, to enjoy his silence and to recognize that God is not unhappy with me. We must, we must learn to live under God's continuous smile all day long.

You must learn to live that life. And it is available to every single person. It is available to every single person in the universe.

And it is available to every single person, every single day in a fresh way. His mercy, his loving kindness is new every morning. So no matter how badly we've done, God says you can start every single day with a fresh new start.

And I'm smiling at you. We must begin every day as if God is saying, okay, now I'm starting off the day with me smiling at you. I know what you ate last night.

I know you ate too much. I know you watched something you shouldn't have watched. I know you said something you shouldn't have said.

I know your loud thoughts into your head that you shouldn't have allowed. But when you come into Christ, when you come with me in Christ, I look at you just as if you've always obeyed. I look at you just as I look at Christ.

And my loving kindness is new every morning. So right now I'm smiling at you because I'm not smiling at you. I'm smiling at you in Christ.

This is the beginning of the gospel. This is the good news. This is why even with our children, we should seek to resolve issues that they have the same day so that they too can wake up every morning with us smiling on them as parents because they have confessed their sins, because they said sorry, because they sought to seek restitution.

Now we're smiling again. That's how every day begins for our children. That's how every day begins for us with God.

I'm smiling at you. It doesn't matter how old you are and what you've done for the last X number of years. Today God begins the day smiling at me.

And then God says, let's try to live today with my smile over you. And I've given you the way out when you sin. I'm not smiling at you when you sin.

Not this always happy God, no matter what you do. No, when you sin is the reason why I don't smile. But now I've also shown you in my word how to get back to make me smile again, confess your sins, repent, say sorry to the one you've hurt.

Come back in, come back home like the prodigal child came home. Come back home, come back into the light. And now I'm smiling at you again.

How long does it take to come back into the light? A few seconds. How long does it take to repent? A few seconds. How long does it take to say sorry to somebody? A few seconds.

And you're back in the light. And he's smiling at you and we're in his love again. Zephaniah chapter 3 verse 17.

This one phrase in there in verse 17, Zephaniah chapter 3 verse 17, we've memorized this verse. It's the second last sentence or the second last line there which says, he will be quiet in his love. He will be silent in his love.

Lord, I don't need you to speak to me because I see you as love. I'm going to live in your love. And the Lord is saying, I will be silent in my love.

I pictured the seventh day. You know what God did the first six days? He spoke. What did he do the seventh day? He rested.

He rested what? His vocal cords. So he did the first six days. He spoke.

Seventh day, I'm not going to speak. I'm going to be silent. In my love.

Who was with him? Adam and Eve. I don't believe they were just silent. I think he was also singing over them with shouts of joy.

He sang songs to them. But this was not Adam do this, Adam do that. Adam, I'm going to give you 50 million instructions.

I've created this whole earth. With that tree, you got to do this. Water it three times a day.

With this plant, got to do this. No, no, no, no. Be silent.

Be silent in my love. And God wants us to be silent. He also wants to be silent.

He wants to rest. And we can't be silent. And we can't hear the silence of God, the silent love of God when we're complaining, when we're whining, when we're arguing, when we have a complaint against God in our spirit.

We can't hear the silent love of God. All of those have to cease. All of our complaining, all of our complaints for the way God made us, for some situation in our life, for the way other people treat us.

No matter what it is, we can't hear the silent love of God. Because we're so busy arguing with God, complaining against God. All those thoughts have to cease.

Then I can be silent. For many years, I used to feel that when God is silent, I have to just press through. I have to just hold on.

But I don't believe that God is silent in a negative way. Not to his children. God is a speaking God.

God speaks to us. But then there are periods of silence. But that doesn't mean he's mad at me.

He's not that he's upset at me. Because God can always smile at me. I can live in the smile of God's love all day long.

But I must obey. That's what it says here. When God is silent in his love, he does something in verse 11.

In that day, Zephaniah chapter 3, verse 11, in that day, you will feel no shame. Even you look at this, there's a lot of bad things that Jerusalem did. But in that day, Jesus God says, you will feel no shame.

Because of all your deeds by which you rebelled against me. You know why you will feel no shame in that day? Because I will remove from your midst all pride. That's the reason I feel shame.

I have some sense of self-worth, or self-entitlement, or self-righteousness. But the day is coming when you will feel no shame. When you will allow me to put to death that self-life.

All of that self, and all of the pride that is there. And you will never again be haughty. Never again have anything that you come to God, which says, Lord, I deserve this.

Lord, I want this. Lord, I need this. Lord, you must give me this.

There won't even be a spirit of complaining. I will remove from you. And God speaks and says, don't grumble and complain.

And then he's silent. Because he wants to do away with all of that pride. And he's complaining.

He says, I'm not going to speak to you anymore. When he's silent, can you respond to it? And he waits. And he's at rest.

He's silent. Because he has spoken. And he's waiting for all the proud ones to be removed.

The proud enemies within myself. Verse 12, I will leave among you a humble and lowly people. Those who tremble at his word, they will take refuge, not in themselves, but in the name of the Lord.

They are the ones whose eyes are completely his. They take refuge only in the name of the Lord. They don't tell any lies.

They shall feed and lie down, and no one will make them tremble. Nobody can make them tremble, because they're only trembling at God. They only tremble at God's word.

If you fear God, you need fear nothing else. These are the ones who don't tremble at any human being. Because they are humble, and they are contrite, and they tremble at God.

So they tremble at nobody else. To such people, God says, shout for joy. Rejoice.

Verse 15, the Lord has taken away his judgments. He will stand before God's presence without shame. He will stand before him justified.

And he will be quiet. He'll be silent in his love. We will live with God with no insecurities, and he'll rejoice over us with shouts of joy.

We'll get to hear God sing over us. And that'll be the fuel that keeps us going. That'll be the fuel that keeps us from disobeying him.

That will be the fuel that says, Lord, I don't want to sin. Not because you've commanded me not to do it. Because I'm looking at your smile, and your smile goes away.

I want to live in the silence of your love. I want to really live every day, Lord Jesus, knowing that the day can begin with your smile, and then trying to keep living in a smile. Dear brothers and sisters, put yourself back in Genesis chapter 1, verse 1. And God may be speaking to you, and has said something to you.

Let there be light. Do all things without grumbling, complaining. Rejoice always.

Do not fear. I am with you. Keep your character free from the love of money.

Do not be anxious for anything. I have loved you with an everlasting love. How precious are my thoughts to you.

He has spoken something to you. Be okay with the silence after that, knowing that God is waiting then for you to remove from your midst the humble, sorry, the proud, exalting ones. He wants us to become absolutely nothing, so there will be no haughty person in God's holy mountain.

As I was praying for the second half of 2017 for NCCF, I want to have a renewed desire among every one of us that there will be no part of this service that takes glory away from God. And that this two hours that we spend with God will be a little foretaste of how we ought to live for the rest of our weeks. Take no glory away from God.

Do not touch God's glory. And the way we touch God's glory is by putting self on the throne. We think, I'm feeling useless.

I feel like I just can't do it. That's a subtle way of putting evil self on your throne. When God has said, let there be light, don't put filthy self on the throne by saying, I can't do it.

God said, let there be light. He must clearly have known that the earth can respond with light shining out of darkness. And so when God says, don't be anxious for anything, don't touch God's glory.

Don't take glory away from God by putting yourself on the throne and saying, it can't happen. You don't know. I've lived 40 years like this.

I've lived 80 years. It doesn't really matter, as God said. And the devil will come to you and say, God hasn't really said that.

God said it for a different kind of person. God said it for the mature in the faith. God is saying to us so many different things.

Let us not complain when God is silent. When God is silent and He doesn't seem to be speaking, go back to the last word God has said and ask yourself, have you obeyed it? Have we obeyed it? Is there ways in which we can obey it more fully? Have we removed all the proud, exalting ones? Self. What should we do with self? Should we deny self? Do you think the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ is if anyone wants to follow me, let him deny himself and follow me.

Is that the message of Jesus? No. That came to me recently. The message of the gospel is not if you want to follow me, deny yourself and follow me.

It is, you've got to deny yourself and then do something with self. You've got to kill him. I've heard that one of the things that Jesus speaks the most is that you must hate your life and you must crucify your life if you hate your life.

And I've been asking myself, do I hate my self-life or do I just deny my self-life? Do I hate that desire in me that wants to speak a harsh word to somebody else? Do I hate it or do I just merely deny myself of saying that? Do I hate that spirit of judgment towards another brother or another human being or do I just deny myself of it? And the gospel is not that I must just deny myself of speaking back at my spouse. I must just not deny myself of lusting with my eyes. I must hate it.

I must seek the Lord to say, Lord, this self is not good enough just to be denied and put in the corner. I must hate it. I must seek to crucify it.

And there's a vengeance that must come in there. There's a violence. That's the biblical word that God says in Matthew.

The violent taken by force. Lord Jesus, I want to be violent against my self-life. I want to be violent against all the proud, exalting things within me that wants yourself to be recognized, myself to be recognized, my feelings to be validated, my importance to be recognized, my whatever on and on.

My opinions that matter. Not only must I deny myself of that, I must hate it and I must work, allow God to remove those proud, exalting people from my midst. Then we can stand before God without shame and we can preserve the smile of God all day long in our hearts.

Let's bow our heads and let's, on the seventh day God rested and God says there remains for his people a Sabbath rest. And God was angry at his people because they did not enter into this rest because of unbelief. It says in the Psalms that God loathed them, loathed, was disgusted by these people, his people, the children of Abraham.

But he was disgusted with them because of their unbelief. And God says in Hebrews chapter four, there remains for us a Sabbath rest, a seventh day rest. There remains for the people of God a rest where God

is silent in his love.

And that there is silence in heaven. And there's silence in his presence because there's not a single complaint. Let us come before him and let us ask the Lord to give us this heart of faith.

I will say that the brothers and the sisters here who are struggling the most with an area, you are the ones who are really in trouble of God being displeased because of your unbelief. Because that is the only reason why you've not entered into rest is because of our unbelief. And if there have been years that have gone by and there's been a besetting sin that has not made drastic progress, we must cry out to the Lord and say, God, I am sick of this self that I continue to put on my throne.

I, Lord Jesus, I want this life of rest. And we've heard from the ones who've gone before us that God continues to reveal his life no matter how many years we've been walking with him. And there are things in all of us that God should be showing us.

You've been living with this kind of filthy behavior for years. You didn't even know how serious it is. But now I'm showing you how horribly serious it is.

I'll be violent against it. Don't feel sorry for yourself. It's very easy for me to smile at you, but remove the proud one.

Remove that pride and say, Lord Jesus, I want your life and I will pay whatever cost it is of myself. I will crucify this self-life.

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