

# The Silence of God

by Sir Robert Anderson

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*Sir Robert Anderson's sermon explores the profound implications of God's silence, emphasizing faith, the significance of the Cross, and the ultimate hope in divine revelation and judgment.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 50:3, Romans 10:9, Ephesians 2:17, Colossians 2:22, 1 Timothy 1:16, 1 Peter 1:6, 2 Peter 3:9, Revelation 10:7, Revelation 11:15

**Topics:** "Divine Judgment", "Gods Love"

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## Description

Sir Robert Anderson preaches about the consequences of challenging God's silence, emphasizing that it signifies the end of grace and mercy and the beginning of divine wrath. He clarifies that the angels' song was not a promise or prophecy but a divine proclamation of peace and goodwill through Jesus Christ. Anderson highlights that the silence of God signifies the culmination of divine revelation and warns of impending judgment for those who reject Christ. He stresses that the Cross of Christ is the ultimate demonstration of God's love, answering all doubts and challenges, and that belief in Christ as Lord leads to salvation and fulfillment of God's purpose.

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## Transcript

When faith murmurs, and unbelief revolts, and men challenge the Supreme to break that silence and declare Himself, how little do they realize what the challenge means! It means the withdrawal of the amnesty; it means the end of the reign of grace; it means the closing of the day of mercy and the dawning of the day of wrath.

Among the statements which distressed the orthodox in the late Professor Tyndall's famous Birmingham address on "Science and Man" was his reference to the herald angels' song. "Look to the East at the present moment," he exclaimed, "as a comment on the promise of peace on earth and good will towards men. The promise is a dream ruined by the experience of eighteen centuries, and in that ruin is involved the claim of the 'heavenly host' to prophetic vision."

But the angels' song was not a promise; still less was it a prophecy. That anthem of praise was a divine proclamation. The time was not yet when God could enforce peace between man and man; but grace "came by Jesus Christ," and, with that advent, peace and good will became the attitude of God to men. And this "on earth," even in the midst of their sorrows and their sins. "He came and preached good tidings of peace" (Eph. 2:17, RV). "He that has ears to hear" can catch the echo of that voice as it still vibrates in our air.

If God is silent now, it is because heaven has come down to earth and the climax of divine revelation has been reached. He has spoken His last word of love and grace, and when next He breaks the silence it will be to let loose the judgments which shall yet engulf a world that has rejected Christ. For "our God shall come and shall not keep silence" (Ps. 50:3).

A silent heaven is a part of the mystery of God; but Holy Writ declares that a day is fixed in the divine chronology when "the mystery of God shall be finished" (Rev. 10:7). When that day breaks, the heavenly host shall again be heard, proclaiming that "the sovereignty of the world is become our Lord's and His Christ's, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15, RV). Then at last He will assume the power that now is His by right, openly rewarding the good and putting down the evil. In a word, He will do then what men think He ought to do now.

If He delays this, it is not that He is "slack concerning His promise." God's own "apology" for His inaction is that He is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet. 3:9).

Through the ages until Christ came, the course of human history was an unanswered indictment by which every attribute of God was seemingly discredited. Divine power and wisdom and righteousness and love were all brought into question. But the advent of Christ was God's full and final revelation of Himself to man. There are mysteries, no doubt, which still remain unsolved, but they are mysteries which lie beyond the horizon of our world.

Of all the questions which immediately concern us there is not one which the Cross of Christ has left unanswered. Men point to the sad incidents of human life on earth, and they ask, "Where is the love of God?" God points to that Cross as the unreserved manifestation of love so inconceivably infinite as to answer every challenge and silence all doubt. But, ignoring the stupendous fact that He "spared not His own Son," the test men give Him is whether He complies with some specific appeal urged in the petulance of present need.

To believe in Christ is to acknowledge His Lordship now. Hence the promise, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9, RV). The sinner who thus believes in Christ anticipates now the realization of the supreme purpose of God, and is absolutely and forever saved.

It was in the power of these truths that the martyrs lived and died. Here was the secret of their triumph--not "the general sense of Scripture corrected in the light of reason and conscience"; not the insolent pretensions of priestcraft, degrading to everyone who tolerates them. With hearts awed by the fear of God, garrisoned by the peace of God, and exulting in the love of God, they stood for the truth against priests and princes combined. Daring to be called heretics, they were faithful to their Lord in life and death.

Heaven was as silent then as it is now. No sights were seen, no voices heard, to make their persecutors pause. But with their vision focussed on Christ, the unseen realities of heaven filled their hearts, as they passed from a world that was not worthy of them to the home that God has prepared for them.

With us, the degenerate sons of a degenerate age, faith falters beneath the strain of the petty trials of our life. While He is saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," our murmurs drown His voice. Professing to be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," our petulance and unbelief push from us the infinite compassions of God. "They endured as seeing Him who is invisible": we can see nothing but our troubles, blinding our eyes to the glories of eternity.

The dispensation of law and covenant and promise--the distinctive privileges of the favored people--was marked by the public display of divine power on earth. But ours is the higher privilege, the greater blessedness of those "who have not seen and yet have believed" (Jn. 20:29). Walking by faith is the antithesis of walking by sight. If "signs and wonders" were given to us as at Pentecost, faith would sink to a lower level, and the whole character of the discipline of Christian life would be changed.

The sufferings of Paul denote a higher faith than "the mighty deeds" of his earlier ministry. Not until miracles had ceased, and he had entered on the path of faith as we now tread it, was it revealed to him that his life was to be "a pattern to them that should afterwards believe" (1 Tim. 1:16).

What a life it was! The amazing record is given in 2 Corinthians 11. And all this not only without a murmur, but with a heart exulting in God. Instead of grumbling at his infirmities, he boasted in them. Instead of repining, he learned to take pleasure in them "for Christ's sake." He describes them as "light affliction."

Thus, filled with glad thoughts of the home beyond and of the glory to which He is calling them, saints can rejoice in Him, even though in heaviness from manifold trials (1 Pet. 1:6-7).

Men appreciate the asceticisms of religion, penances and ordinances which are "after the precepts and doctrines of men" (Col. 2:22, RV). But these have nothing in common with the life of faith. They are paths by which men delude themselves in vain efforts to reach the Cross. But it is at the Cross itself that the life of faith begins. And the spiritual miracles of that life are more wonderful than any which merely controlled or suspended the operation of natural laws.

Greatest of all is the miracle of the new birth. And carrying the truth to others, we find it produces the same results which we ourselves have proved. And this not merely in isolated cases or in favoring circumstances. Christian missionaries have carried it to some of the most degraded races of the heathen world, with results that surpass all previous records, giving overwhelming proof of its divine character.

Thus there is a sense in which heaven is not silent. Those who escape from the influence of earth hear the sights and sounds of another world; and with united voice they testify that God is with His people and that His Word is true. And when our race shall have been run, we too shall pass from the arena to join the mighty throng, until at last, their ranks complete, the ever-swelling host shall stand, a countless multitude, before the throne of God.

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