
WHEN GOD SEEMS SILENT

Word

Scripture Reference

1 Samuel 3:1

Discussion Questions

1. We need God all the time, but when do you feel that you need Him the most?
2. There are times in your Christian life when you can't seem to hear from God even though you really want and need to hear Him, like when you are going through crises (e.g. losing a job, losing a loved one, needing direction, needing encouragement and comfort, etc.). Sometimes even when you are reading the Bible, you can't seem to get something out of it, and you wonder why. It is like the lights suddenly went off. Share with the group if you have gone through this experience in your Christian life.
3. When God seems silent in your life, we look at three possible reasons: Firstly, ***God seems silent because you are not recognizing His voice.*** God is there and He wants to communicate to you, but you are not hearing it because you do not recognize His voice.
 - a. In the book of Samuel, (1 Samuel 3:1-21). We find out that Samuel was an answer to his mother's prayer. Samuel's mother was barren, but she prayed to have a child and promised that when he's big enough she would give him back to God to serve Him, which she did. That time, Samuel didn't recognize God's voice yet. Relate the first time that God actually spoke to Samuel. How did it happen? Who helped him to recognize God's voice (v.3-10). What do you do when you want to "hear" God's voice? How would you know if it is

really Him talking to you? What happened when Samuel became familiar with God's voice (v.19-21)? In order to really hear Him, you should be familiar with His voice. Discuss the ways you can get accustomed to His voice so that you can hear Him when He speaks to you.

- b. Jesus' sheep recognizes His voice (John 10:27). The sheep doesn't listen to stranger's voice, only to his shepherd because he recognizes it. The same with Jesus' followers. What is contrary to the scripture is of the 'stranger', not of the Shepherd. Discuss the danger of cultic or false teaching that a Christian could fall into if he is not familiar with the Scripture. What's the risk and threat of being misled by false teaching? How can you guard yourself from this threat?
4. Secondly, ***God seems silent because of sin.***
 - a. Sins in Eli's household (1 Samuel 3:11-18). Verse 1 says that the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation. Then the following verses relate how God told Samuel about the evilness of Eli's sons and that he, as the father, didn't restrain them in spite of the fact that God had spoken to him about it many times. And so, God was silent and eventually judged the family. God's word is your direction and guidance in life. Discuss why it is difficult to see God's direction and guidance in your life because of sin. How does God warn you of the consequences of sin? When He does, how should you respond?
 - b. When Jesus took your sins upon Himself, He felt silence and loneliness of being separated from God (Mark 15:34). What does it tell you of the seriousness of sin? What is the warning in Psalm 66:18 regarding sin in your heart? How can you restore your relationship with God (1 John 1:9)?
 5. Lastly, ***God seems silent as a test for your faith and trust*** (Example is the life of Job). Job went through a lot; crisis after crisis, and God seemed nowhere to be found. But after a while, God spoke to Job, and that is when Job realized that all the crises he went through were a test of his faith and trust in God. Will you remain steadfast in your faith or vacillate when there is a sudden illness in the family, when you lose a loved one or your

job, or you have a failed business, or other crises in life? How would you pass the test of your faith in God?

Walk

God may seem silent, but He is actually just there and wants to talk to you through the Scripture, through His messengers, and even through crises in life. Don't stray from the familiar, the normal path, and the tested way of walking with the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not absent or uncaring when He seems silent, but like a coach, He is intently engaged in your life's training. Is there a sin that hinders you from recognizing God's voice? Do you open your heart to Him so that He can fill and bless you?

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You that you want to speak to me, even though I give you good reason to not talk to me. Forgive me for sins in my heart that prevent me from recognizing your voice. Lord, please help me to be faithful in reading Your Word because it is how You speak to me. Help me to listen with my heart when your Words are being spoken and discussed because it is Your Word that would direct and guide me in my life. Please forgive me from any sins that I have committed and help me to turn back from anything that will not please You in my life. I want to hear your voice, Lord. It is my desire to live a life that is pleasing to you. Help me to do so. In Jesus' name. Amen.