

REFLECTIONS - PART 3

Scripture used: Galatians 5:25 (NLT)

OVERVIEW

Big Idea:

The Spirit works in every part of our lives, including our personal lives (decisions about friends, relationships, and marriage) and our public lives (the culture and values we choose in our workplaces). We go through seasons when God's voice and direction are clear in our lives. At other times, we go through seasons when God is silent, "the messages are rare and the visions are uncommon" ([1 Samuel 3:1](#)). These are times of drought when we might feel like God is angry with us, absent from our lives, or seeking to avoid a relationship with us, and we struggle with silence from God. Yet these times are like "graduate studies" when God can do deeper and more focused work in us, and in fact, God often speaks through the silences in our lives.

KEY POINTS

- 1) **As believers, we will face seasons of doubt and apparent silence from God.** Mother Teresa had her own lengthy seasons when her spiritual life seemed "non-existent" (her own words) despite a life of the utmost faithfulness. She experienced the reality of darkness, coldness, and emptiness. It was not exactly a crisis of faith, but more like a walk through the valley of the shadow of death ([Psalm 23](#)). We sometimes struggle with feelings that God has abandoned us (even Jesus shouted that on the cross as he was meditating on [Psalm 22](#)) as we journey through loss, pain, and tragedy, or even just a dry season in our lives.
- 2) **When we face silence in our relationship with God, we need to be honest with our feelings, but not let them have the last word.** Our feelings will change based on our circumstances. When we are struggling with God, it is important that we acknowledge our feelings. But our faith is the foundation that anchors our feelings and gives our life stability. By faith, we know that God is always with us ([Psalm 139:7](#)). By faith, we know that God loves us with an everlasting love ([Jeremiah 31:3](#)). God gives us experiences that reinforce our faith, and we can build our lives on this foundation.
- 3) **God is doing something deeper in our lives by communicating through the whole of human experience. He can communicate powerfully even in silence.**
 - a. Sometimes, God's silence communicates, "Let it be." We can trust God that the chaos in our circumstances is not ours to fix or force into our preferences, like forcing someone who might be a friend for a season into a permanent lifetime relationship.
 - b. Sometimes, God's silence communicates that we must stay the course, and not quit because of discouragement or suffering ([Mark 14:33-36](#)). We must follow the call of God in our lives, as Dr. King and Mother Teresa did.
 - c. Sometimes, God's silence communicates that we must trust God and believe that He will have the last word through sickness and crisis (as in the Lazarus story in [John 11](#)).
 - d. Finally, sometimes God's silence communicates that He trusts us to walk in wisdom. With maturity and resilience, and God's "counsel and loving eye", we can live by our values and make the right decisions.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - How do you feel about your current relationship with God? Do you feel like God is near or far to you? Are you in a season where you clearly know what God is asking you to do, or are you seeking God's will and God's voice? Are you experiencing a crisis of faith, or season of drought?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - When was the last time you asked God for direction or clarity, and didn't get the answer you hoped for? Did you feel like God was communicating something through His silence? When you go through a dry season in your relationship with God, how do you respond? Have you found spiritual practices that are helpful to go through dry seasons and grow deeper in spite of the struggle?
- 3) **DO** - As we pray, "God do a deeper work in my life," what does this look like? Are there areas where God is saying, "let it be", "stay the course", "trust me", or "I trust you"? If you are sensing God asking you to do one of these in some area of your life, what does it look like to take a next step of trust?