

DAY

9

---

## Saturday - April 11

*"It is Finished."*

Those three words echoed in the ears of the hiding disciples. They were the very last words of the "Messiah" they had followed for the past three years. Those three words didn't make sense. They had been waiting for a Messiah, a Deliverer, a King. But their King was dead.

*The words "It is Finished" didn't just kill Jesus - It killed their dreams.*

The Tomb had been sealed. The guards had been posted. The story was over. Now What? Do we just go back to being fishermen? Or tax-collecting? Do we move-in with our parents after we abandoned the family business to follow "The Master?" This "Rabbi" taught us everything, but didn't deliver us from anything. Sure, He loved us - but he left us.

*For the first time in 3 years - Jesus was SILENT.*

Here's the hard truth . . . the story of Easter didn't end in SILENCE but it did INCLUDE silence. And on this Saturday before Easter Sunday, we're going to explore 3 Reasons that God is Silent.

### 3 Reasons God is Silent.

#### #1 - Silence gives us space to HEAR what we've already HEARD.

Jesus had told the disciples on numerous occasions about the Good Plan of Salvation through him. There were no twists, turns, or surprise endings. His message had not changed and it was clear.

“Jesus told them that the Son of Man must suffer many terrible things and be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but three days later he would rise from the dead. And he said this plainly.” Mark 8:31-32.

They had HEARD the words of Jesus then but they didn't hear them NOW. Now felt pretty empty, dark, and alone. Now felt like 1,000 miles away from then. Now felt like a whole new world. But here's the truth that the disciples refused to hear - the words of Jesus that were true back THEN are still true NOW.

*Jesus did EXACTY what he said he would do -  
but it wasn't what they THOUGHT he would do.*

And just like them, we're tempted to do the same. We love God's promises when things are going great, but we dismiss them when things start falling apart.

*When it's all good . . .*

We're praying, and tweeting, and sharing praises with our “small group.”

*But when things get a bit messy . . .*

We start questioning, and blaming, and hiding out “until the storm passes by.”

Isn't that where faith enters? Aren't we called people of faith for a reason? If we're so faithful why aren't we FULL of faith? Maybe one of the reasons that God is silent is that he wants us to hear what we've already heard?

*Sometimes SILENCE is the only voice of God that we HEAR.*

Jesus had told his disciples at The Last Supper . . .

"I tell you this beforehand, so that when it happens you will believe that I AM the Messiah." - John 13:19.

"I have told you all this so that you may have PEACE IN ME.

Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows.

But TAKE HEART, because I have overcome the world." - John 16:33

Jesus had told his disciples at His Ascension . . .

And be sure of this: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." - Matthew 28:20.

Maybe silence gives us space to re-listen, re-play, and re-hearse the TRUTH that God has already shown us.

## **#2 - Silence gives us space to GROW our faith.**

Faith is a strange word. It's an even stranger question.

"Are you a person of Faith?"

"Do you have Faith?"

"How's your Faith?"

I mean really - what is faith? Is it something we get from the church?

Is it something we're born with? Can you have more of it than I have?

Can you see it? Touch it? Doesn't everyone have Faith in something?  
Don't we all believe that our way is the best way? What is Faith?  
Faith is complicated.

*The truth is that we ALL have faith in SOMETHING.*

We all see life through the lens of uncertainty. We all have questions without answers. We all believe in something - even if that something is ourselves, or NO thing at all. So to be brief . . . we all have Faith.

For the record - my faith is in Jesus. Not in myself, or you, or the church, or the government. Anything other than Jesus is a shallow faith. Anything short of a resurrected Christ is not worth placing my faith in.

That being said - the most accurate account of Jesus is in the Bible . . . so technically, I also have faith in the Scriptures. If the pages of scripture are telling us the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; then my faith is formed and strengthened by the verses below.

"Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see." Hebrews 11:1.

### **What is Faith?**

Faith is believing.

Faith is believing that God is WHO he says he is.

Faith is believing that God will DO what he says he will do.

If faith is about believing God, then it's quite possible that - the very places and circumstances that we try to avoid are the places where our faith is grown.

It's possible that God not only allows us to enter seasons of silence, but places us into seasons of silence. It's possible, and I believe scripturally probable, that God uses the silent places to grow us more than the active places. God told Moses to "Be still and know that I AM God." And nothing seems more still than silence.

*Sometimes WAITING will grow us more than DOING.*

**Faith Isn't.**

Faith isn't the ABSENCE of fear, it is CONFIDENCE to overcome it.

Faith isn't confidence in YOURSELF or OTHERS - it is confidence in JESUS.

Faith isn't about you, or me, or anyone other than Jesus. Faith isn't about trying harder, or going deeper, or doing more. Faith is the humility to stop looking for anything or anyone else to be the solution that only Jesus can be.

*Faith is admitting that more of anything,  
other than JESUS, still won't be enough.*

"Looking to JESUS, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." ~ Hebrews 12:2

"It was by Faith that Moses left the land of Egypt, not fearing the king's anger. He kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible."  
~ Hebrews 11:27

*Sometimes SILENCE forces you to look  
for a SOLUTION that's bigger than you.*

### #3 - Silence gives us space to SHOW our faith.

Hebrews chapter 11 is hands-down the most comprehensive study of the word faith in the entire scriptures. It's actually referred to by many as "The Hall of Faith" because of its recounting the faith-full acts of the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament disciples. And right there at the end of the entire chapter of the "Who's Who in the Kingdom of God" . . . it ends with this truth.

"All of these people earned a good reputation because of their FAITH,  
yet none of them received ALL that God had promised" - Hebrews 11:39

(That's pretty cool J. - but I'm not feeling any warm and fuzzy's from that verse!)  
And I've felt that way about this verse for years until I realized that this verse has two hidden meanings that may have been lost in translation.

The phrase "earned a good reputation" in Greek is actually just one word.  
It's the word "*martyreo*" that means "to witness or to testify"

Martyreo is a VERB.

Martyreo is an ACTION.

Martyreo is something you SEE.

Martyreo is from the word MARTYR.

Martyreo is about offering your LIFE.

Martyreo is your FAITH on DISPLAY.

Let's read that verse again and apply the truth of "martyreo" . . .

"All of these people (showed witness) of their FAITH,  
yet none of them received ALL that God had promised" - Hebrews 11:39.

*Faith isn't something you HAVE on the inside -  
it's something you SHOW on the outside.*

Their Faith was on display for the whole world to see. Their faith made people ask questions about God. Their faith created conversations. Their faith was proven by their actions. Their faith was visible. Is your faith visible? Is mine?

It's possible that the SILENT times are when your faith is the LOUDEST.

The second half of that same verse is just as powerful when it comes to understanding faith. The second half of Hebrews 11:39 says . . . "none of them received ALL that God had promised." That means that some of the promise is still on the way.

*Faith is believing that God isn't DONE yet.*

"So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive ALL that he has promised."

~ Hebrews 10:35-36

We're almost there - hang with me . . .

"It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him."

~ Hebrews 11:6

"For in just a little while the Coming One will come and will not delay."

~ Hebrews 10:37

The Apostle Paul said in Acts 13:23 . . .

“Jesus is God’s promised Savior of Israel.”

Do you see it?

The Reward is Jesus.

The Coming One is Jesus.

The Promise is Jesus.

Jesus is the Promise that we’ve been waiting for  
and The Promise is on the way!

On that dark Saturday after the Crucifixion the disciples were waiting for The Promise and wondering if it was still true. What they didn’t know then, but we know now, was that Sunday was coming. The Promise was on the way. Saturday felt defeated, discouraged, and alone, but The Promise would show up on Sunday.

*It’s Saturday . . .*

*but Sunday’s Coming.*

Don’t give up.

Don’t loose heart.

Don’t loose hope.

Don’t stop listening.

Don’t stop looking.

Don’t stop believing.

Don’t lose your faith.

Believe that Sunday is coming.