

ONWARD

from the desk of Chris Greer



Hey . Chris here. ☐

I'm curious ... have you ever experienced God's silence? Ever been totally frustrated by it?

If so, you're not alone.

You may have heard of Saint (or Mother) Teresa, a modern luminary who served the poorest of the poor in the slums of India for 40 years.

But did you know she consistently *labored* to hear God?

Her [personal journals](#), published after her death, surprised the world. They revealed her intense, decades-long struggle with God's silence.

When we ask God to speak but get no answer, it can be perplexing and painful. But there *is* a way down that quiet road.

Let's get unstuck and keep moving onward...

quote of the week

"Whether the experience of [God's] silence is measured in weeks, months, or years, for most of us it doesn't fit into what is 'normal' in our understanding of salvation. But it *is* normal."

— Eugene Peterson

I, too, know the acute pain of getting lost in the woods, asking God for trail signs, but only hearing crickets.

When in those seasons, we're tempted to quickly fill the silence. Our prayer times shrink, our impatience grows, and our phones are never far away. We don't handle silence well.

But...what if God's silence is *normal*, not an aberration?

And what if the experience places you in (very) good company, rather than making you the odd one out?

Lots of folks besides you, me, and Mother Teresa have waded through the holy hush and lived (with faith still intact!) to tell the story.

Here's a snapshot from a few Psalm writers:

O Lord, why do you stand so far away? Why do you hide when I am in trouble? - Psalm 10:1

Wake up, O Lord! Why do you sleep? Get up! Do not reject us forever. - Psalm 44:23-24

O Lord, why do you reject me? Why do you turn your face from me? - Psalm 88:14

Our Lord and faithful forefathers *get* it, and they help us get it. As Eugene Peterson noted, "The psalmists, along with Job, Jeremiah – and, never forget, Jesus – develop and enrich our vocabularies of God's silence."*

But, what do we do with (and in) this reality? And how does it help us keep growing up in Jesus?

First – rest in the actuality that relational silence is part of knowing God, not a sign that you don't. In our most intimate relationships, silence often signifies depth, not absence.

Second – keep in mind that God *has* spoken: purposefully, powerfully, and permanently through Jesus, the Bible, and history. Remember...

God's silence in the present never nullifies his voice in the past.

And we're drawn closer to him when we look to them in quiet seasons.

Third – take comfort that you're not alone. The shared experiences of people in Scripture and our communities enable us to "honestly face and courageously live through all that we don't like and don't understand."*

And the promise of God's nearness – even if he goes unheard – helps us hang tight with him through the quiet hours.

Fourth – you must develop tools that nurture your trust, remind you of his presence, and ready you to hear from him again.

The spiritual practices of Remembering, Worship, Community, Celebration, and Scripture Reading help us stay connected. (*more on this – and a special invitation – in my next email!*)

Ultimately, these seasons of silence become opportunities to...access him through memories of his action, mature our trust in the timeless truths he's already given, and hold his hand tightly on the long, quiet walk.

Onward,

Chris

P.s. Don't forget to look for that invitation in my next email, coming to you soon...

* Quotes from Eugene Peterson's, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places*

God may be quiet, but he's never gone.

dad joke of the week

Job Interview: Where do you see yourself in the next five years?

Me: I'd say my biggest weakness is listening.

Miss an issue of ONWARD? Check out past editions here: [Chris-Greer.com/onward](https://www.chris-greer.com/onward).

Get this email from a friend? [Subscribe here](#) to get them in *your* inbox!

M Street Publishing

6834 Cantrell Rd PMB 1479, Little Rock
Arkansas 72207 United States



You received this because once upon a time you told Chris it was OK. But if ONWARD is unhelpful, feel free to unsubscribe.

It's all good.

[Unsubscribe](#)

