

Carols, Part 2

Silent Night

By all worldly measures, the night of Jesus's birth was a silent night. Apart from a few shepherds, the rest of the world was oblivious that God had come in human form. The bigger story of Christmas is made up of many more silent nights—146,000 silent nights, to be exact. After speaking through the prophet Malachi, God went silent for 400 years. No audible word from God, no miracles, and no prophets. Even so, God was at work preparing the world for the birth of his Son, and, in the fullness of time, on one silent night the savior was born.

1. How has our culture conditioned us to think negatively about silence?
2. Has there ever been a time in your life when God seemed to go silent? Share.
3. In hindsight, we can see that during those 400 years of silence God was working to get the world ready for Jesus. However, the people living through those times were tempted to believe that God wasn't doing anything. Why is it hard to see what God may be doing in the moment that is ultimately for our good?
4. Is it possible that God's definition of "our Good" and our definition might be different? What did Jesus mean when he told John's disciples, "Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me"?
5. How do you think John the Baptist felt when Jesus didn't come to see him in prison? Why do you think Jesus responded the way he did when John asked him if he was the one? Note Matthew 11.
6. Even though God sometimes seems silent, we know that He is never absent. What can we do to recognize God's presence in the face of his silence?

1. [Group]

Silent Night

2.

Silent Nights

3.

Old Testament | New Testament

4.

Old Testament | New Testament
|
Malachi

5.

God goes silent...

6.

In 330 B.C. — Alexander/Persia
In 323 B.C. — Alexander Dies
In 168 B.C. — Antiochus
In 63 B.C. — Pompey

7.

Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God...

Luke 1:8 NIV

8.

But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

Luke 1:13 NIV

9.

But when the set time had **fully come**, God sent his Son...

Galatians 4:4 NIV

10.

1. The Dispersion of the Jews
2. A Common Language
3. Roman Peace & Highways

11.

I have **seen** and I **testify** that this is the Son of God.”

John 1:34 NIV

12.

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison...

Matthew 4:12 NIV

13.

When **John**, who was in prison, **heard about the deeds** of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him “Are you **the one** who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

Matthew 11:2-3 NIV

14.

Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see:

Matthew 11:4 NIV

15.

Sometimes there is nothing additional you can know that will be better than what you already know.

16.

Blessed is anyone who does not **stumble** on account of me.”

Matthew 11:6 NIV

17.

Jesus doesn't give us a
reason to believe...
Jesus is our reason to believe.

18.

Sometimes God may be silent,
but He is never absent; so
when you become suspicious
of God's silence, trust
in God's presence.

19.

20.