



BIBLE STUDY

When God Feels Silent

A six-week study for seasons of quiet

A six-week journey for groups learning to stay near God when clarity feels distant.

Weeks: 2

Primary Text: Psalms and Wisdom

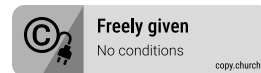
Manna Curriculum — Bible Study

When God Feels Silent

Primary Text: Psalms and Wisdom

This study helps believers remain near God in seasons of silence, practice faithful obedience without immediate clarity, and live as the hands and feet of Jesus through good works.

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Where Are You, God?

Big Idea: God's silence does not mean God's absence.

Primary Text: Psalm 13

Week 1 Overview

Big Question

Why does God sometimes feel silent, even when we are seeking Him?

Anchor Truth

God's silence does not mean God's absence.

Primary Group Text

Psalm 13

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 13

How Long, O LORD?

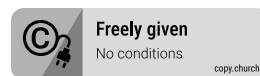
For the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

- 1** How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?
- 2** How long must I wrestle in my soul, with sorrow in my heart each day? How long will my enemy dominate me?
- 3** Consider me and respond, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death,
- 4** lest my enemy say, "I have overcome him," and my foes rejoice when I fall.
- 5** But I have trusted in Your loving devotion; my heart will rejoice in Your salvation.
- 6** I will sing to the LORD, for He has been good to me.

Formation Aim

To help believers remain near God in seasons of silence, practice faithful obedience without immediate clarity, and live as the hands and feet of Jesus through good works.

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Week 1 Group Session

Group Session

Connect (0–10 minutes)

Purpose: Build trust and normalize the experience of silence.

Choose one:

- When things go quiet, do you tend to wait, worry, or withdraw?
- Is silence harder for you than bad news? Why?
- What assumptions do you usually make when you don't hear anything back?

Leader Note: Do not correct answers. Let experience be named. Scripture will do the shaping.

Teaching (15 minutes — FULL SCRIPT)

How Long, O Lord?

Have you ever prayed—and then waited?

Not for something small, but for clarity.

For relief.

For direction.

For God to say something.

And instead of an answer, all you heard was silence.

For many believers, this is one of the most unsettling experiences of faith. We believe God speaks. We believe He hears. We believe He is near. And yet there are seasons when He feels distant, quiet, or absent. In those moments, the question isn't only, *"Where is God?"*

The deeper question is, *"Can I trust Him when I don't hear Him?"*

Psalm 13 gives voice to that struggle.

This psalm is short, but it carries weight. David opens with a question he repeats four times:

"How long?" These are not polished prayers. They are honest ones. Scripture preserves them for us, reminding us that God invites honesty—not performance.

David does not edit his emotions before coming to God. He does not soften his frustration or hide his fear. He brings his confusion directly into God's presence.

That matters, because many of us withdraw from God when silence comes.

David feels forgotten. He feels unseen. He feels like God has turned away. Yet he does not stop praying. He stays near.

That is the difference between unbelief and lament.

Unbelief says, “God is silent, so I’m done.”

Lament says, “God feels silent, so I’m coming closer.”

Psalm 13 moves through three movements: complaint, petition, and trust. What is striking is that trust comes **before circumstances change**. David anchors himself not in what he feels, but in what he knows to be true about God’s steadfast love.

Silence is not abandonment.

Silence is not punishment.

Silence is often the place where faith is refined.

Throughout Scripture, faithful people walk through seasons where God feels distant. Job cries out. The psalmists plead. Even Jesus, on the cross, cries, “*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*”

Silence does not mean God is gone.

Often, God is more committed to forming our faith than fixing our circumstances.

And this is the truth that will guide this entire study:

God’s silence does not mean God’s absence.

Discussion (45–50 minutes)

Movement 1 — Instruction

What Is True?

- What phrase or idea from the teaching stood out to you?
- Why is it important that God invites honesty rather than performance?

Movement 2 — Conviction

What Is Exposed?

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 13

How Long, O LORD?

For the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

- 1 How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?
- 2 How long must I wrestle in my soul, with sorrow in my heart each day? How long will my enemy dominate me?
- 3 Consider me and respond, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death,
- 4 lest my enemy say, “I have overcome him,” and my foes rejoice when I fall.
- 5 But I have trusted in Your loving devotion; my heart will rejoice in Your salvation.
- 6 I will sing to the LORD, for He has been good to me.

- What emotions does David bring to God?
- What does this reveal about how we often respond when God feels silent?

Movement 3 — Correction

What Must Change?

- When God feels silent, what is your default response?
- How does Psalm 13 challenge or correct that response?

Movement 4 — Training

What Will I Practice?

Weekly Practice: Staying Near Through Honest Prayer

- What do you tend to leave out of your prayers?
- What would it look like to remain present with God this week, even without answers?

Leader Prompt: “This week isn’t about resolution. It’s about faithfulness.”

Movement 5 — Mission

How Does Obedience Become Love in Action?

Choose One Good Work:

- Stay present instead of withdrawing
 - Respond patiently instead of reacting
 - Initiate one honest conversation
 - Listen without fixing
 - Serve quietly and faithfully
-

Commit & Send (5–10 minutes)

Shared Confession: **God's silence does not mean God's absence.**

Prayer of Sending: "God, form our faith in the quiet, and send us to love faithfully where You have placed us."

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Day 1 — Instruction

Rehearsing Truth in the Quiet

Read:

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 13

How Long, O LORD?

For the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

- 1 How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?
- 2 How long must I wrestle in my soul, with sorrow in my heart each day? How long will my enemy dominate me?
- 3 Consider me and respond, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death,
- 4 lest my enemy say, “I have overcome him,” and my foes rejoice when I fall.
- 5 But I have trusted in Your loving devotion; my heart will rejoice in Your salvation.
- 6 I will sing to the LORD, for He has been good to me.

Devotional

Silence has a way of shaping our thoughts. When God feels quiet, our minds often fill the space with assumptions—sometimes fear, sometimes doubt, sometimes conclusions we never intended to draw.

Psalm 13 shows us that faith begins with remembrance. David does not deny his pain, but he anchors himself in who God has revealed Himself to be. Truth steadies us when emotions feel overwhelming.

God’s character does not change with circumstances. His faithfulness does not depend on how clearly we hear Him in the moment.

Reflect

- What truth about God stands out to you in Psalm 13?

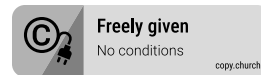
Pray

“God, anchor my heart in what is true about You.”

Respond

Write one truth you will intentionally return to today.

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Day 2 — Conviction

What Silence Reveals

Read:

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 22:1-5

- 1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Why are You so far from saving me, so far from my words of groaning?
- 2 I cry out by day, O my God, but You do not answer, and by night, but I have no rest.
- 3 Yet You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.
- 4 In You our fathers trusted; they trusted and You delivered them.
- 5 They cried out to You and were set free; they trusted in You and were not disappointed.

Devotional

Silence often reveals what lives beneath the surface. It exposes fears, expectations, and hidden assumptions about how God should act.

Conviction is not condemnation. It is clarity. God brings these things into the light so He can shape us, not shame us.

Reflect

- What emotions or reactions surface when God feels silent?

Pray

“God, help me see what You are revealing in my heart.”

Respond

Name one internal response you want to bring honestly before God.



Day 3 — Correction

Interrupting Old Patterns

Read:

Scripture (BSB): Job 23:8-12

- 8 If I go east, He is not there, and if I go west, I cannot find Him.
- 9 When He is at work in the north, I cannot behold Him; when He turns to the south, I cannot see Him.
- 10 Yet He knows the way I have taken; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold.
- 11 My feet have followed in His tracks; I have kept His way without turning aside.
- 12 I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my daily bread.

Devotional

Job could not find God, yet he chose faithfulness over frustration. Silence often exposes patterns we didn't realize we had—withdrawal, striving, numbing, or rushing ahead.

Correction happens when God redirects how we respond. Faithfulness is choosing to stay near even when clarity is missing.

Reflect

- What is your default response to silence?
- How might God be inviting you to respond differently?

Pray

“God, help me walk in faithful obedience.”

Respond

Identify one pattern you want to interrupt this week.



Day 4 — Mission

Being the Hands and Feet of Jesus

Read:

Scripture (BSB): Hebrews 13:5

5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, for God has said: “Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.”

Devotional

God’s promise of His presence frees us to love others without fear. When we trust that He is near—even in silence—obedience moves outward.

Mission does not require certainty. It requires faithfulness. God forms us so His love becomes visible through our lives.

Reflect

- Who might God be inviting you to love through faithful obedience this week?

Pray

“God, send me to love as You have loved me.”

Respond — Choose One Good Work

- Stay present instead of withdrawing
- Respond patiently
- Encourage someone overlooked
- Serve quietly without recognition



Why Aren't You Answering?

Big Idea: God's silence invites us to remember His faithfulness.

Primary Text: Psalm 77

Week 2 Overview

Big Question

What do we do when God feels silent for a long time?

Anchor Truth

God's past faithfulness anchors us when present answers are missing.

Primary Group Text

Psalm 77

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 77

In the Day of Trouble I Sought the LORD

For the choirmaster. According to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.

- 1 I cried out to God; I cried aloud to God to hear me.
- 2 In the day of trouble I sought the Lord; through the night my outstretched hands did not grow weary; my soul refused to be comforted.
- 3 I remembered You, O God, and I groaned; I mused and my spirit grew faint. Selah
- 4 You have kept my eyes from closing; I am too troubled to speak.
- 5 I considered the days of old, the years long in the past.
- 6 At night I remembered my song; in my heart I mused, and my spirit pondered:
- 7 "Will the Lord spurn us forever and never show His favor again?
- 8 Is His loving devotion gone forever? Has His promise failed for all time?
- 9 Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has His anger shut off His compassion?" Selah
- 10 So I said, "I am grieved that the right hand of the Most High has changed."
- 11 I will remember the works of the LORD; yes, I will remember Your wonders of old.

- 12** I will reflect on all You have done and ponder Your mighty deeds.
- 13** Your way, O God, is holy. What god is so great as our God?
- 14** You are the God who works wonders; You display Your strength among the peoples.
- 15** With power You redeemed Your people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah
- 16** The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You and swirled; even the depths were shaken.
- 17** The clouds poured down water; the skies resounded with thunder; Your arrows flashed back and forth.
- 18** Your thunder resounded in the whirlwind; the lightning lit up the world; the earth trembled and quaked.
- 19** Your path led through the sea, Your way through the mighty waters, but Your footprints were not to be found.
- 20** You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Formation Aim

To help believers respond to prolonged silence by remembering God's faithfulness, correcting fearful thinking, practicing trust, and living as the hands and feet of Jesus through steady obedience.



Week 2 Group Session

Group Session

Connect (0–10 minutes)

Purpose: Name the experience of extended waiting and unanswered prayer.

Choose one:

- What is harder for you: waiting without answers or receiving an answer you don't like?
- How do you usually cope when something takes longer than expected?
- What emotions surface when waiting stretches on?

Leader Note: Do not rush toward encouragement. Let the tension sit.

Teaching (15 minutes — FULL SCRIPT)

Why Aren't You Answering?

Waiting changes us.

At first, waiting feels hopeful. We pray. We trust. We expect movement. But when days turn into weeks, and weeks turn into months, silence begins to feel heavier. We stop asking *when* and start asking *why*.

Psalm 77 was written in that kind of season.

The psalmist isn't experiencing a brief pause. He is overwhelmed by prolonged silence. He prays through the night. He remembers God's promises. And yet, his questions deepen.

"Will the Lord reject forever?"

"Has His loving devotion ceased?"

"Has God forgotten to be gracious?"

These are dangerous questions—unless they are brought to God.

Psalm 77 teaches us something critical: **prolonged silence tests memory before it tests faith.**

The psalmist begins by rehearsing his pain, but something shifts midway through the psalm. He makes a deliberate turn. He chooses to remember what God has done rather than fixate on what God has not yet done.

“I will remember the deeds of the Lord... yes, I will remember Your wonders of old.”

Remembering is not denial. It is discipline.

God’s people have always been called to remember—especially when circumstances tempt them to forget. Memory anchors faith when feelings drift.

Silence does not erase God’s track record.

The psalmist remembers the Exodus. He remembers God making a way through the sea. He remembers deliverance that once seemed impossible.

And that remembrance doesn’t instantly solve his pain—but it steadies him.

God’s silence does not mean God has stopped working. Often, it means He is calling His people to trust His character rather than His timing.

Faith grows not just by receiving answers, but by remembering who God has already proven Himself to be.

And that is the invitation of Psalm 77:

When answers are delayed, **remember faithfully**.

Discussion (45–50 minutes)

Movement 1 — Instruction

What Is True?

- What stood out to you from the teaching?
- Why is remembering such a critical discipline in silence?

Movement 2 — Conviction

What Is Exposed?

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- 3 I remembered You, O God, and I groaned; I mused and my spirit grew faint. Selah
- 4 You have kept my eyes from closing; I am too troubled to speak.

5 I considered the days of old, the years long in the past.
6 At night I remembered my song; in my heart I mused, and my spirit pondered:
7 “Will the Lord spurn us forever and never show His favor again?
8 Is His loving devotion gone forever? Has His promise failed for all time?
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10 So I said, “I am grieved that the right hand of the Most High has changed.”
11 I will remember the works of the LORD; yes, I will remember Your wonders of old.
12 I will reflect on all You have done and ponder Your mighty deeds.
13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is so great as our God?
14 You are the God who works wonders; You display Your strength among the peoples.
15 With power You redeemed Your people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah
16 The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You and swirled; even the depths were shaken.
17 The clouds poured down water; the skies resounded with thunder; Your arrows flashed back and forth.
18 Your thunder resounded in the whirlwind; the lightning lit up the world; the earth trembled and quaked.
19 Your path led through the sea, Your way through the mighty waters, but Your footprints were not to be found.
20 You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

- What emotions does the psalmist express?
- Where do you see the turning point in the psalm?

Movement 3 — Correction

What Must Change?

- How do you typically respond to prolonged waiting?
- How does this psalm challenge fearful or forgetful thinking?

Movement 4 — Training

What Will I Practice?

Weekly Practice: Remembering God’s Faithfulness

- What has God already proven to you in the past?

- How might remembering reshape how you wait this week?

Leader Prompt: “Memory is a spiritual discipline.”

Movement 5 — Mission

How Does Obedience Become Love in Action?

Choose One Good Work:

- Offer encouragement rooted in God’s faithfulness
- Stay patient with someone who is struggling
- Share a testimony of God’s past work
- Serve consistently even without recognition

Commit & Send (5–10 minutes)

Shared Confession: **God’s past faithfulness anchors me while I wait.**

Prayer of Sending: “God, help us remember what You have done and live faithfully while we wait.”



Day 1 — Instruction

Remembering in the Waiting

Read:

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 77

In the Day of Trouble I Sought the LORD

For the choirmaster. According to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.

- 1 I cried out to God; I cried aloud to God to hear me.
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- 11 I will remember the works of the LORD; yes, I will remember Your wonders of old.
- 12 I will reflect on all You have done and ponder Your mighty deeds.
- 13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is so great as our God?
- 14 You are the God who works wonders; You display Your strength among the peoples.
- 15 With power You redeemed Your people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah
- 16 The waters saw You, O God; the waters saw You and swirled; even the depths were shaken.
- 17 The clouds poured down water; the skies resounded with thunder; Your arrows flashed back and forth.
- 18 Your thunder resounded in the whirlwind; the lightning lit up the world; the earth trembled and quaked.

19 Your path led through the sea, Your way through the mighty waters, but Your footprints were not to be found.

20 You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Devotional

Waiting stretches faith. Over time, unanswered prayer can blur memory and magnify doubt. Psalm 77 shows us that remembering is not passive—it is intentional.

God’s past works remind us that silence has never meant abandonment. Remembering anchors us in truth when emotions threaten to drift.

Reflect

- What does this psalm teach you about remembering God’s faithfulness?

Pray

“God, help me remember what You have done.”

Respond

Write down one specific way God has been faithful in your life.



Day 2 — Conviction

What Waiting Exposes

Read:

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 77:7-9

- 7 “Will the Lord spurn us forever and never show His favor again?
- 8 Is His loving devotion gone forever? Has His promise failed for all time?
- 9 Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has His anger shut off His compassion?” Selah

Devotional

Long waiting often stirs fearful assumptions about God’s character. Conviction helps us recognize when our thinking drifts away from truth.

God reveals these assumptions not to condemn us, but to correct and heal us.

Reflect

- What assumptions about God surface when waiting is long?

Pray

“God, reveal where my thinking needs correction.”

Respond

Name one fearful assumption you need to surrender to God.



Day 3 — Correction

Choosing to Remember

Read:

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 77:10-12

- 10** So I said, “I am grieved that the right hand of the Most High has changed.”
- 11** I will remember the works of the LORD; yes, I will remember Your wonders of old.
- 12** I will reflect on all You have done and ponder Your mighty deeds.

Devotional

Correction happens when God redirects our focus. The psalmist chooses remembrance over despair.

Remembering is not denial—it is obedience.

Reflect

- What has God already shown Himself faithful in?

Pray

“God, redirect my heart toward trust.”

Respond

Choose one way to intentionally remember God’s faithfulness today.



Day 4 — Mission

Living Faithfully While Waiting

Read:

Scripture (BSB): Psalm 77:13-15

13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is so great as our God?

14 You are the God who works wonders; You display Your strength among the peoples.

15 With power You redeemed Your people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah

Devotional

Remembering God's faithfulness fuels faithful living. Even while waiting, God sends His people to love, serve, and encourage others.

Mission continues even when answers are delayed.

Reflect

- Who might need to see God's faithfulness through you this week?

Pray

"God, send me to love faithfully while I wait."

Respond

Choose one good work:

- Encourage someone who is discouraged
- Serve without recognition
- Share a testimony of God's faithfulness
- Practice patience in a difficult relationship



Week 1 Leader Guide

Leader Guide

Before You Lead

- Pray for your group to feel safe naming real experiences.
- Read Psalm 13 slowly before the session.
- Plan for unhurried discussion, especially during Conviction and Mission.

Tone to Set

- Calm
- Honest
- Unhurried
- Hopeful without forcing answers

Key Moments to Emphasize

- God invites honesty, not performance.
- Silence does not mean abandonment.
- Faithfulness precedes clarity.
- Mission flows naturally from obedience.

Suggested Closing

Use the shared confession and prayer of sending from the group guide.



Week 2 Leader Guide

Leader Guide

Before You Lead

- Prepare for heavy emotions related to long-term waiting
- Allow lament without rushing to hope
- Trust Scripture to redirect the group naturally

Tone to Set

- Patient
- Grounded
- Empathetic
- Hopeful without forcing outcomes

Key Moments to Emphasize

- Remembering is an act of faith
- Silence tests memory before faith
- God's faithfulness has a history
- Mission continues even while waiting

Suggested Closing

Encourage participants to carry stories of God's faithfulness into their daily lives this week.

