

# SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

When God Seems Silent – Pastor Mickey Stonier

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## MINISTRY PRAYER REQUESTS

## MEMORY VERSE

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS – “WHEN GOD SEEM SILENT”

### *Getting Started*

Have you ever given or have been given the “silent treatment.” Usually, people use the silent treatment as a method of passive aggressive behavior to indicate their disappointment, anger, frustration, ignorance, or resentment towards someone without having actual confrontation. Describe a time when you’ve experienced this. What are other circumstances or reasons behind why people (or God) might use SILENCE?

### *Digging Deeper:*

This past Sunday, Pastor Mickey Stonier taught on Matthew 15:21-28. This account provides insight on the desperate plea of a Gentile woman who needed Jesus to heal her demon-possessed daughter. On the surface, it seems as though Jesus was being both prejudice and cold-hearted towards her, ignoring her requests. But when we look deeper, Jesus was setting up both the disciples and the Canaanite woman for a unique experience.

- 1.) The woman in the story was going through a very hard and overwhelming circumstance. Her daughter was suffering at the hands of some demonic forces. In addition, even though she was a Gentile (the Scripture indicates she was from the region of Tyre and Sidon, a place where Gentiles and Jews hated each other), she was able to HOPE in Jesus’ identity and power, calling him, “Lord, Son of David. When was a time you might have been overwhelmed in life? What does it mean to you to place your HOPE in God?
- 2.) After the woman begs Jesus to heal her daughter, the disciples completely ignore her, bypass her, and beg Jesus to send her away for bothering them. Many times, we ourselves have been turned away and hurt by people in the church today! And Christians are supposed to people who love and care for people well, right?! Despite being ignored by the disciples, the woman in the Bible CALLS on Jesus anyway. Have you ever been burned by the church/Christians? If yes, describe your experience. If not, why do you think this happens? How does your experience of Christians affect your experience of God??

3.) After she continues to plead with him, Jesus continues to still ignore her and answers the disciples' requests. Here, Jesus plays what I call "sinner's advocate," where he pretends to go along with the disciples' point of view, only to reveal their own judgmental and cold-hearted attitudes. But to the woman, he could have seemed SILENT and UNREACTIVE. Through his "roleplaying," Jesus is able to highlight this woman's unwavering faith. The Scripture shows that she still WORSHIPS and WAITS on Jesus. Read Psalm 27:14. When God seems silent and unreactive, how do you tend to respond?

### ***Bringing it Home***

Even though she was being seemingly ignored and Jesus was being silent and unreactive, the woman's faith was strong enough for her to continue pursuing Jesus. Do we truly pursue God when life is hard? What do you desire your relationship with Jesus to look like? Where are you at today in your relationship with Him, and what do you need to change in order to have unwavering faith in His sovereignty and power? Read Psalm 63:1-2.

Close in prayer for one another. I pray that you and your group would commit as a community to allow each other to need each other, especially when life's circumstances are difficult. Amen.