

Introduction:

- *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* (John 1:1, NKJV)
- Luke 1:1-4
 - vs1. events that have been fulfilled. Things spoken/prophesied have become reality.
 - vs4. written so the we can be certain of the things we have heard.
- We were reading the Christmas story in staff this week. I asked, "What stands out to you most in this passage?" Several including myself were moved by the fact that this whole story happened while people were doing everyday life! You might say God interrupted their lives. Out of the silence of the day, BOOM! God is talking! Surprise!
- During his years as premier of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev denounced many of the policies and atrocities of Joseph Stalin. Once, as he censured Stalin in a public meeting, Khrushchev was interrupted by a shout from a heckler in the audience. "You were one of Stalin's colleagues. Why didn't you stop him?" "Who said that?" roared Khrushchev. An agonizing silence followed as nobody in the room dared move a muscle. Then Khrushchev replied quietly, "Now you know why." Silence is powerful. The Bible has much to say about it and you might want to do a personal study of silence in the scripture. This morning, I want to talk about: The Power of Silence, When God Broke Silence, The Word Was the Message.

I. The Power Of Silence

- A. There are 400 years of silence between the OT and NT. We cant imagine 400 years of silence. Our country is only 243 years old! What happens to a nation, a people, when their God goes silent for 400 years. Ie. There is a phrase called 'Radio Silence.' It is typically used when communication is temporarily stopped.
- B. Radio Silence - is when all radio transmitters are shut down and no longer receive or send signals. Radio silence is also what relationships gone bad produces. IE. I went out with her. Had a good time but she went 'radio silent' on me. What is the purpose of 'radio silence?'
- C. Silence is to keep secret. It is your cover. It is like darkness - it hides activity. But when radio silence is broken, it means that something big is "going down." God was 400 years silent.
 1. Ps 18:1 *"He made darkness His secret place."* God hides himself in mystery that we would seek Him.
- D. Two things happen when radio silence happens or when God goes silent for 400 years.
 1. People stop listening.
 - a) IE. How many have been listening to a radio station when it goes silent? When a radio goes silent...that is bad. Why? People stop listening and find another station.
 - b) What do you do when God goes silent? Stop listening? Do you start listening to other voices?
 2. People start seeking in times of silence. If you are attentive when things go silent you start looking.
 - a) IE. When my boys were little, if it suddenly got eerily silent in the house...my antenna went up to listen. Because something is "about to go down!"

- b) If you are used to hearing the voice of God and suddenly He goes quiet...you listen all the more closely.
- E. When God is silent know that God is at work. We (you and I) must realize that when there is radio silence, something is up. Just because you can't hear God does not mean that He is not moving, working, and establishing.
1. Ie. In the military movies, when the radios went silent there were lots of things going on.
 2. When God was silent for 400 years there were a lot of things happening in the economy God.
 3. *"Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation."* (Psalm 62:1, NKJV)
 4. 400 years of silence sets the stage for the loudest message/voice of God to date!

II. When God Broke Silence Have you ever been in a place of enjoyable silence and all of sudden there is a noise you were not ready for and it startles you?

- A. When God broke... silence communication and confirmation was taking place everywhere.
1. First of all, the Word which was with God in the beginning is now here! Jesus, The Word, comes roaring out of eternity into the present making history.
 2. What was shrouded in darkness and silence is now made flesh. The WORD gave life to everything that was created and that life was the light of men. Jn 1:4, 5. And the darkness could not overcome it! Jn 6:63 *My Words are spirit and life*.
- B. God speaks and everyone "Jumps!" Having been startled by the voice of the Lord. We have seven people in the Christmas story who are shocked by God's voice!
1. Zechariah - Lk 1:12-13. Was shaken and overcome with fear. The angel Gabriel says, *"Don't be afraid!"*
 2. Mary - Lk 1:29. Confused and disturbed Mary tried to figure out what was happening. Vs 30 The angel, Gabriel says *"Dont be afraid!"*
 3. Joseph - Mt 1:19. Joseph is wrestling with all the communication taking place. Doesn't want hurt Mary and planning to divorce her. In a dream, the angel says, *"Do not be afraid!"*
 4. Shepherds - Lk 2:9. *Suddenly an angel appears*. Glory surrounds them. *"Don't be afraid!"*
 5. Wise men - Mt 2:12. God warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.
 6. Simeon - Lk 2:27 The Spirit leads him to the temple. Sees Jesus starts singing.
 7. Anna - Lk 2:38 As was her custom and dedication to the Lord. Starts Praising!
- C. The Message who IS THE WORD! Is announced, made manifest in the earth!
1. Zechariah - Lk 1:17. He will prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. He will turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers. This bridge the 400 years of silence. Gabriel picks up where Malachi stopped and God closed the door: *"And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."* (Malachi 4:6, NKJV) IE. Apostle Andreas ministered a Word that Father's transitions sons. This is a great transition! The Word becoming flesh. The Word is the message! It is the comm! He is being broadcast to the nation!
 2. Mary - Lk 1:31-33 He is Jesus! Son of the Most High! His Kingdom will never end!

3. Joseph - Mt 1:21. He is Jesus! He will save the His people from their sin.
4. Shepherds - Lk 2:11 Angels - announce; The Savior, the Messiah has been born today in Bethlehem. God sent him! The angels lit the place up and sang Glory to God!
5. Wise men - Mt 2:11 Gentile wisemen bow the One born King of the Jews and worshipped Him.
6. Simeon - Lk 2:27 led by the Spirit to the temple. I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared. (Lamb on the altar talk). He will even light up the Gentiles!
7. Anna - Praised God, talking about Jesus to everyone who had been waiting to hear! Lk 2:38

III. The Word Was The Message?

- A. I like how the write in the book of Hebrews puts it. He kinda 'keys' up on God speaking:
 1. *"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;"* (Hebrews 1:1-2, NKJV)
 - a) He spoke in fragments many times over time.
 - b) But now He has spoke to us the last time with the greatest message...His Son!
- B. When we read the Christmas account, here is what we find...and this is what we receive.
 1. Jesus - meaning the Lord is salvation.
 2. A Savior - One who will save us from our sin...Jew and Gentile alike!
 3. Messiah - the Deliverer!
 4. The Good King of an everlasting Kingdom.
 5. Hope! God has not forgotten us.
 6. Life! That life was the light of me.
 7. Light! No more living in the darkness of sin.
 8. Acceptance - to those who received Him ... He gave them the right become children of God.
 9. A family - children of God.
- C. The Word was the message! And the message was in the Word, when God broke silence.

Conclusion:

- Maybe God has been silent in your life. But today you have heard that still small voice calling you by name.
- Maybe you have been startled by some of the things that God has said to you, but like our Christmas people you have to step out in faith.
- Invitation