

2/23/25 (Pot Luck Sunday)

## The Black Hole

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength (power ESV, NIV) is made perfect in weakness”

(2 Corinthians 12:9) NKJV

On February 20, 1962, at 9:47 A.M., the spacecraft Friendship 7 rose on a pillar of fire, piloted by lone astronaut John Glenn. Leaving the coast of Florida far behind, the space capsule orbited the earth three times, traveling 81,000 miles in less than four hours. As the craft began its descent from space, mission controllers in Houston received a warning signal. A sensor indicated that the capsule’s heat shield was in danger of detaching. If the heat shield came loose during reentry, the capsule would burn like a meteor—and John Glenn would die.

Because radio waves cannot penetrate plasma, the spacecraft experienced a total communications blackout—what astronauts and mission controllers call a “black hole”.

The minutes crawled by and the suspense mounted in the Houston control room. NASA engineers felt totally helpless. Finally, after five minutes of silence, mission controllers heard Glenn’s voice crackling over the radio: “Friendship 7 to Houston?”

Shouts of joy shook the control room. John Glenn was coming home. Although neither Glenn nor the mission controllers knew it at the time, the heat shield was absolutely firm and reliable. The fears for John Glenn’s safety during his black hole experience were unfounded.

If you’ve ever been through a major crisis, you probably know what a communications “black hole” feels like. While you are in the pit of adversity, you may feel that your world is collapsing, that your life is out of control—and in the middle of that, God is silent, and you might start thinking that your ‘heat shield’ is failing. Sometimes the sound of silence can be deafening. You feel isolated and alone. You question God’s love, His care for you, and even His existence.

But even when it seems that God is distant and silent, your “heat shield” is still there, firm and reliable. In your black hole experience, God is drawing **you** and teaching **you** to go deeper into **your** relationship with **Him**. You may think that your life is out of control and burning to the ground, but in reality, God, your Lord and Savior, like the heat shield, protects you from the fiery forces that surround you.

Psalm 3:3 NKJV — But You, O LORD, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.

Psalm 23:2 NKJV — He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

God's Silence Is Not God's Absence, Abandonment or Indifference! His silence may very well be because the present situation is His will, so keep going! Just like Jesus received no response when he cried out on the cross (Mark 15:34), "Then at three o'clock Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

Psalm 22:1

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Why are you so far away when I groan for help?

Sometimes God's silence means that what we are experiencing is God's sovereign will, and we need to pray for His grace to accept it, His strength and steadfastness to endure, and His peace to comfort us while we walk through it all.

2 Corinthians 12:9 (AMPLIFIED) says it best:

"My grace is sufficient for you [My loving-kindness and My mercy are more than enough—always available—regardless of the situation]; for [My] power is being perfected [and is completed and shows itself most effectively] in [your] weakness."