

## Silence: A Christian History



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Viking. 1 Cloth(s), 2013. hard. Book Condition: New. How should one speak to God? Are our prayers more likely to be heard if we offer them quietly at home or loudly in church? How can we really know if God is listening? Here the author of Christianity explores the vital role of silence in Christian practice and history. Diarmaid MacCulloch shows how Jesus chose to emphasize silence as an essential part of his message and how silence shaped the great medieval monastic communities of Europe. He also examines the darker forms of religious silence, from the church's embrace of slavery and its muted reaction to the Holocaust to the cover-up by Catholic authorities of devastating sexual scandals."Silence has all the spark of Christianity. In MacCulloch's hands, reading about Christianity often feels as soulful, as silently consuming, as prayer itself."Harper's Magazine"Silence is excellent: a beautifully written, factually dense, intellectually sophisticated look at the theological uses and abuses of silence, from the spirituality of quiet to the Catholic Church's horrifying reticence about child abuse and the Holocaust."NYMagazine"Erudite and witty. The first half of this book is a brilliantly wide-ranging yet concise survey of the idea of silence in Christian theology and in the practices of all kinds of Christians through the centuries. In the second half, different kinds of quiet in Christian history come under scrutiny. There has been historical amnesia on the role of women in the early church, and recent reticence about clerical child abuse has unsettling parallels in the past. Whether considering silences that brought worshippers closer to God or those that should be broken for the health of Christian society, MacCulloch has written a clever, demanding, and insightful book."Sunday Times (London) 338.

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