



Part 2 // Toni Nieuwhof // August 23, 2026

When we're faced with suffering, loss, tragedy, or unanswered prayers, our instinct is often to search for explanations or to regain control. We want to know why God allowed something to happen, why he didn't intervene, or why he seems silent when we're desperate. Through the story of Moses, this message reminds us that deeper faith isn't built on having all the answers. Moses suffered greatly, even while faithfully following God's call. Yet instead of demanding full understanding, Moses asked for God's presence. God may not reveal all the "secret things" to us, but he does invite us to trust him, surrender control, and seek his presence in the middle of what we don't understand.

Scripture: [Deuteronomy 29:29 NIV](#) // [Exodus 33:15-16 NIV](#)

Bottom Line: Understanding informs—but only intimacy transforms.

Digging In:

1. If your week so far was described like the weather, what would the forecast say (sunny, partly cloudy with a chance of showers, foggy, thunderstorms, etc.)?
2. Toni asked, "How do you dare to trust God when you don't understand?" How would you rate your willingness to "dare to trust" right now, on a scale of 1-10? Why is that?
3. "If you wait until you understand everything, you'll never move forward with faith." In which current situation(s) are you waiting for more understanding before you're willing to make a move that requires faith?
4. Read Deuteronomy 29:29 together. What stands out to you in this verse? How do you understand the difference between God's knowledge and what's been entrusted to us?
5. The sermon described "secret things" as the mysteries of God's providence—the things we question God about but find no definitive answers for. Is there something in your life you may need to place in that category—a question, grief, disappointment, or unresolved situation you could choose to entrust to God?
6. How do you distinguish between questions that are healthy to wrestle with and questions where we may eventually need to accept that we don't have an answer?
7. Read Exodus 33:15-16. God offered Moses the Promised Land and an angel to lead the way—but without his presence. Why do you think Moses refused? What does this reveal about what he valued most?

8. "The destination means nothing without your presence." Is there an outcome you've wanted so badly that you may have valued it above genuine closeness with God? How willing are you to surrender that outcome?
9. Author Ann Voskamp writes, "Explanations can be cold—but God's embrace is warm." When have you experienced God's presence, comfort, or nearness even without receiving the answer you searched for? What difference does this make?
10. What would it look like this week to choose presence over answers or outcomes? Be specific: what prayer, habit, act of surrender, conversation, or step of obedience would help you move closer to God despite not understanding?

Moving Forward:

This week, choose one situation you've been trying to understand or control and honestly bring it to God. If journaling helps you, commit this exercise to writing. Ask God to help you file it under Deuteronomy 29:29 as a "secret thing." Try changing the focus of your prayer from "God, explain this to me" to "God, be present with me in this." Choose a promise from Scripture and use it as a reminder that even when you don't understand the road, you don't walk it alone.

Prayer Prompt:

Give everyone a moment to silently identify one unanswered question they're carrying right now. Then invite everyone to hold their hands open as a simple posture of surrender. Pray like this:

God, we don't want to walk through this trial without you. We may not understand what you're doing, but please give us the insight we need and show us how you're present with us. We don't need every answer, but we do need you. Teach us to trust you with whatever you haven't yet revealed. Stay close to us here. Amen.

Afterward, leave 30 seconds of silence for everyone to simply sit in God's presence before ending the group.