

## Psalm 46 - Be still, and know that I am God. (v. 10)

<sup>1</sup>God is our refuge and strength,  
 an ever-present help in trouble.

<sup>2</sup>Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way  
 and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,  
<sup>3</sup>though its waters roar and foam  
 and the mountains quake with their surging.

<sup>4</sup>There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
 the holy place where the Most High dwells.

<sup>5</sup>God is within her, she will not fall;  
 God will help her at break of day.

<sup>6</sup>Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;  
 he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD Almighty is with us;  
 the God of Jacob is our fortress.

<sup>8</sup>Come and see what the LORD has done,  
 the desolations he has brought on the earth.

<sup>9</sup>He makes wars cease  
 to the ends of the earth.  
 He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
 he burns the shields with fire.

<sup>10</sup>He says, "**Be still, and know that I am God;**  
 I will be exalted among the nations,  
 I will be exalted in the earth."

<sup>11</sup>The LORD Almighty is with us;  
 the God of Jacob is our fortress.

### Introduction

What troubles you?

- Is it your circumstances? Are finances tight?
- What about job security?
- Or perhaps it's your family? Or maybe it is yourself?
- Does your conscience trouble you? Are you troubled by sin in your life?
- Do you feel as though you lack faith? Joy? Peace?

Or is it some jumbled up mix of "***all of the above***"?

If you have 'stuff' going on in your life then God wants to speak to you this morning. If your life is just fine thank-you then you should probably pay attention as well. You will then be in a position

to pass on the solution to life's troubles to those of your friends and acquaintances who are having difficulties.

The world is in a mess – wild fires, floods, earthquakes, famines, wars and rumour of wars, etc. Just yesterday Hurricane Harvey battered Texas with initial winds of up to 130mph pounding the coast. Catastrophic flooding is also expected.

Being a Christian does not exempt us from these problems. These things are the 'noise' of the world. We are constantly bombarded by negative things and thoughts. Another source of 'noise' is technology and gadgets – the iPad, iPhone, cell phone, smartphone, Apple Watch, tablets, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, What's App – all of these things create noise in our lives but they generally don't help us to draw near or closer to God. Just imagine if Jesus was living with us – would He copy our lifestyle?

Many of these things (I call them 'stuff') – things that we possess - are things that hinder our relationship with God because most of these things do not make us quiet. We have all these gadgets / time saving appliances but what do we do with all this time we are saving?

This morning we are briefly going to look at three things:

- 1) **Our Duty – to be still**
- 2) **Our Privilege – to know**
- 3) **Our Objective – to exalt God**

### 1) **Our DUTY**

The phrase '**Be Still**' means **stop moving and be quiet**. There are two biblical meanings to this phrase.

The first meaning is found in Psalm 46:10 – "**Be still and know that I am God**" – and it means (in Hebrew) to stop striving, to let go, surrender. Note that Psalm 46 begins and ends with '**God is our refuge**'. In effect we can take comfort in letting go and resting in God to provide help, strength and safety.

The world asks us to be busy. God asks us to be still and in that place of stillness we can receive love, joy, peace and guidance.

The second biblical meaning is found in **Mark 4:35–41**

<sup>35</sup>That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." <sup>36</sup>Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup>A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup>Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

<sup>39</sup>He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "**Quiet! Be still!**" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

<sup>40</sup>He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

<sup>41</sup>They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

**“Quiet! (some versions say Peace!) Be still!”** This is Jesus speaking and notice the exclamation point. Jesus has had an extremely busy day healing people, casting out demons and speaking. Jesus was exhausted and asked for a boat to get away from the crowds for a rest.

On the journey, a huge storm rolls in and the disciples were afraid for their lives. They looked for Jesus to help them and found him fast asleep from exhaustion. The disciples were terrified because of the storm and woke Jesus up. Jesus was not happy and in his frustration he yelled, **“Peace/Quiet! Be Still!”** The storm and the huge waves stopped immediately. The literal translation of, **Be Still**, taken from the Greek, is **Hush!** - in modern terms **Shut Up!**

It’s been estimated that we have more than 50,000 thoughts a day. These thoughts aren’t always pretty. You know the ones - I can’t believe I messed up, I’m a fool, I can’t do it, life’s too hard, I’m a failure, I’m a fraud, I’m too old, I’m too young. We must learn to tell our fearful and anxious thoughts – the storms of our life – to **shut up**, just as Jesus did when he calmed the physical storm.

We are so used to noise - car alarms, ringtones, television, etc. that we often don’t even hear it. Which of us responds to car alarms? Silence focuses us, brings us closer to the people around us, calms us down and even improves our health, and can lead to lasting peace and contentment. In deaf communities paying attention to other people is critical in almost every aspect of life. If two deaf people are walking together, using sign language, they constantly watch out for each other – maintaining eye contact and holding the other person in their gaze like two people in love. They are connected to each other yet fully aware of their surroundings.

Many people are unsettled by silence. Silence can force us to address issues that we might be running away from, issues we would rather forget. It’s easy to fill each day with busyness and then block out our concerns by spending hours watching mind-numbing television, Internet surfing or reading magazines. None of these activities are bad in themselves but they could be being used to fill a spiritual void in our lives. Over time, the consequences will manifest themselves in the form of lost relationships, lost opportunities and lost dreams – dreams which never get fulfilled.

The next time you have fearful and anxious thoughts raging within you like a violent storm, do what Jesus did. Silence those thoughts by saying, **“Peace, be still”** or **“Shut up!”** The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV) to **“... take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”** When you need strength and help, let go and rest in God, your refuge. **“Be still and know that I am God.”**

Our duty is to **be still** – not to complain, not to murmur, but to sit down and wait patiently upon God.

***But you don't know my schedule - I don't have time to "be still!"***

Martin Luther once said that he was too busy to pray less than three hours a day. In Luke 10:38-42 Jesus commended Mary because she sat quietly at His feet, and He spoke to Martha about her being too busy.

38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. 39 She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. 40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

God was not best pleased with the Israelites because of their constant murmurings and complaints. Many of us, if we are honest, have a tendency to cry, murmur or complain about our situation; that we are always being tested; that life is unfair and we are always the victim of circumstances.

Our duty is to be still and listen before God – to wait upon His instruction. To hear that still small voice – the voice of the Holy Spirit that is in us - the Holy Spirit that we may struggle to hear if we don't listen to Him in stillness. God wants to teach us how to be happy, productive, fruitful, and how to live victoriously. Our problem is we don't have, or make time to listen.

## 2) Our PRIVILEGE – to know

Watch video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiENXGSAu94>

I remember when me and Di first got together. Di was besotted and madly in love with me. She told me that she was quite happy to just be in the same room as me, that she loved everything about me. We should be like that with God – totally besotted with Him.

The most important thing in our Christian life is our relationship with God and this relationship must be nurtured and grown. Do you really know God? Do you know that you have a friend who is closer than a brother? (Proverbs 18:24)

When we are 'being still' we are actually listening to the God of the Universe. That one fact alone is enough reason why we should be still before Him, not murmuring or complaining but calmly and humbly submitting to Him. Many of my best ideas were developed in silence, praying and listening to God.

When we truly know God, who He is, what He has done, when we realise what He did on the cross for us **even before we knew Him** - this is the greatest revelation that can ever come to a person.

We can't really get to know God like we should if we are rushing about here and there. One of the enemy's traps is to get us so involved in activities that we have no time to be still in the presence of God.

To get to know someone you have to spend time with them. If you spend time with God you will discover so many things about Him. I found one website that listed 947 names and titles of God. Each name / title describing a different aspect or attribute of God -

<http://www.christiananswers.net/dictionary/namesofgod.html> or <http://www.lwf.org/names-of-god>

For example, Abba Father, Alpha & Omega, Ancient of Days, The God who gave you birth, the anointed one, the God of knowledge, the God most high, the everlasting God, the creator, the God who sees, the Shepherd, Banner and so on. Each of these names / characteristics is a sermon in its own right. My personal favourite is "God is a wall of fire" (Zechariah 2:5). God protects us from attack and this can also be seen in Isaiah 54:17 *"no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me," declares the Lord.*

Our privilege as we listen to Him as we wait upon God is that we will get to know Him better.

### 3) Our OBJECTIVE – to exalt God

Your goal in life may be to just have a bit of peace and quiet. You may have a difficult, demanding job, filled with difficult people. You may have a large noisy family that demands a lot. All you want is a bit of peace and quiet. Is that too much to ask?

Maybe the commute to work, driving back and forth between home and work is the only time when you are able to relax. At least, you could if the other drivers on that road weren't so annoying! Don't they know that you own the road? You might even ask God for help, "Please God, how do I find peace?"

Surprisingly the answer isn't found in having a quiet time, although that is important. The problem is that we are trying so hard to relax but that is the wrong goal!

**Romans 5:1** "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our main goal and objective should be that **God is exalted and glorified**. **Psalm 46: 11** – *I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*

**Acts 1:7-8** *He (Jesus) said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

**Matthew 5:16** *"let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and **glorify your Father in heaven.**"* (This is part of the Sermon on the Mount)

### CONCLUSION

Our RESPONSIBILITY/DUTY is to be Still

Our PRIVILEGE is to know God

Our OBJECTIVE/GOAL is that God may be Exalted

Our challenge is to be still in a society that encourages a hectic lifestyle. Everything must be faster, better and new! In our busyness, are we really accomplishing anything?

God wants us first to be still and listen to Him and then develop our relationship with Him and really get to know Him because He wants us to exalt his Holy name.