

**The Summer Devotional Series is written by a variety of different Jacob's Well staff members, overseers and leaders, based on their real-world experiences. May the broad perspective and style minister to you throughout these summer months! You can also find the Summer Devotionals on our website [jacobsowellchurch.church](http://jacobsowellchurch.church).**

**Monday, June 24th** (Contributed by Katrina Clary)

Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10

Have you noticed this verse lately? It's everywhere. We see it—in whole and in part—in swirly font on barn board, coffee mugs and all over social media. Seeing it so frequently might cause us to tune it out or look past it. Recently it dropped right into my thoughts and I haven't been able to set it aside.

I like how it's a command in the affirmative, not a "thou shalt not".

Initially, I thought its popularity might stem from the command requiring little effort on our part. If I'm honest, though, I'll admit I'm not very good at being still. I like checking things off my list and my mind regularly swirls with thoughts and ideas. I'm rarely in a state of true stillness.

"Be still" was one of my dad's top phrases—especially on road trips. For the wiggly kids in the back seat, honoring that command meant freezing every muscle and maybe even holding your breath.

I think we can agree that Psalm 46:10 is not suggesting we freeze every muscle and turn blue. We seem to find ourselves in tense and breathless situation more than we'd like, though.

Let's take some time to become aware of our responses to everyday challenges. What things cause your muscles to tense up? Can you catch yourself holding your breath? What situation or interactions cause this unsustainable state of "stillness" for you?

Give yourself time to identify an example or two and let's meet back here tomorrow.

**Tuesday, June 25th** (Contributed by Katrina Clary)

[Important note: I'm writing about life's ordinary challenges. Maybe there is nothing ordinary about the burden you're carrying today. If you're in crisis, let's pause, breathe and remember the God of the universe understands the situation. If you feel alone in this difficulty, you can connect with a member of the Jacob's Well Care Team by emailing [care@jacobsowellchurch.church](mailto:care@jacobsowellchurch.church)]

Welcome back! Did you do the assignment? If not, take a moment to think about it now. What events caused you to tense up? Did you hold your breath in response to any situations throughout your day? (Sometimes it helps to recognize what something isn't before we can identify what it is.)

Let's look closer at the word still. What does it really mean? How does it feel to be still? Circle your favorite words or ideas below:

Tuesday continued...

(dictionary): abstaining from motion, uttering no sound, calm, free from turbulence, quiet, settled, silence, muted, tranquil  
(synonyms): smooth, stable, at rest, peaceful, serene, undisturbed

(scripture verses also using the word still):

*He leadeth me to still waters. Psalm 23:2 (KJV)*

*...a still small voice. 1 Kings 19:12b (KJV, describing the voice of God)*

*He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. Mark 4:39 (NIV)*

Rest, refreshment, a gentle whisper, a savior willing to still wind and waves so his friends could feel safe...that type of stillness is available to us. That's amazing! Yet--

In our society, loud voices get a lot of play these days. Controversy and agitation are produced and consumed regularly – and this verse advises us to be still. We love quick answers to our questions. We like to take action, to power through projects and problems. This verse advises we cease striving long enough to remember Who really does have the answers.

Can we, together, take steps toward that sort of stillness? Let's pray together:

*Father, sitting with you in stillness sounds wonderful, but my mind can be cluttered and full. My life is noisy right now, please help me find a quiet space for us to be together. When there are opportunities to be with you, help me notice them. In Jesus' name, amen.*

**Wednesday, June 26th** (Contributed by Katrina Clary)

*Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10*

The study notes in my bible tell me that in this stretch of the Psalms, "God's voice breaks through as he addresses the nations" (NIV study bible, verse notes, page 847, Zondervan).

When God's voice breaks through a piece of writing, it's a good idea to pay attention to the order of the words. Notice that "be still" comes before "and know that I am God". Stillness is a prerequisite to knowing. Quieting ourselves comes first.

Yesterday we asked God to help us notice opportunities to be still. Now let's practice. If, like me, you have a busy mind, take a small step toward stillness. Start by intentionally doing just one thing at a time. Need to run errands? Just drive the vehicle (turn off the music/news and save the podcast for another time). Dog need a walk? Just walk the dog (turn off or silence your phone).

If mono-tasking is too easy for you, try this: sit in a comfortable and supported position. Set a timer for three (or more) minutes. Close your eyes and sit quietly. Allow yourself to be still, with no expectations of accomplishing anything.

(When you're new to moments of stillness, grocery lists and work projects might pop into your mind. That's ok! With practice, you'll eventually be able to dismiss stray thoughts with ease. It might help to focus on a verse or a short prayer, but sometimes it's best to just be.)  
Psalm 46:10

**Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup>** (Contributed by Katrina Clary)

*Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.* Psalm 46:10

We've identified what being still doesn't look like, and what it does. We've identified that stillness comes before "knowing", and now we've arrived at the second sentence of our verse.

This verse ends with a promise: "I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth."

*Will be exalted.* Future tense. God will be exalted by one and all. Eventually. We're not there yet. Things aren't as they should be, yet. That time is still to come.

While we're waiting, we rest in Him. We ask for help in settling ourselves. We find rest in the knowledge that God is working things out in ways we could never imagine. We celebrate and share the story when God shows us how He is working in us and through us and around us.

Be still and know that God is God, and one day will be exalted by all...

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End note: The Parent Summit happened in February, but I finally listened to it this week. In "A Talk About Race and the Family" Trillia Newbell said, "To truly love your neighbor, be quiet and listen".

I just noticed a sign in my boss' office that says, the quieter you become, the more you can hear.

Recently I read an article about turkey hunting. The author condensed strategies for successful hunting to this: Spend less time obsessing over gear and more time in the woods. Walk slow, be quiet, and listen. (Outdoor Life, Spring 2019).

Do you think God might be encouraging me to be quiet and still? What encouragement is coming your way this week?

**Friday, June 28<sup>th</sup>** (Contributed by Joshua Skoyen)

Watch the video *The Gospel of the Kingdom* by *The Bible Project* on YouTube or on *RightNow Media*.

*How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.* Romans 10:15b (NIV)

The Gospel is the good news of Jesus' life, passion and resurrection... and it has richer meaning than many people think. For many of us the main thing that comes up when we think of The Gospel is the death of Jesus that paid for our sins. That is absolutely a major part of The Gospel, but this good news goes much further. It includes Jesus' whole life - his ministry, teachings, and example. We find our hope in the resurrection where Jesus conquered death once and for all. And then there is this Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven that Jesus talked about all the time. Not only does The Gospel point to how Jesus has redeemed our eternal lives... in The Gospel of the Kingdom we see that Jesus has started and upside-down kingdom where we respond to evil by loving our enemies and forgiving them and seeking peace.

