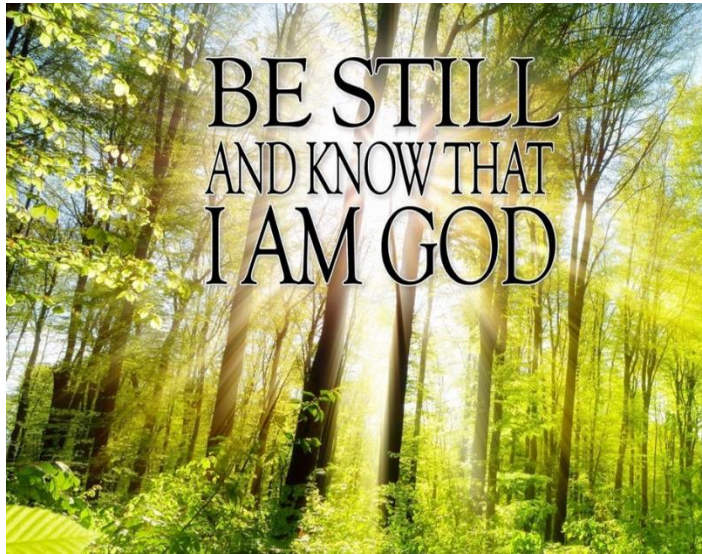


Be Still and Know That I Am God

Pastor Kelly Sensenig

Psalm 46:10

“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.”



This is a proclamation that God exists and that God can be known. It is one of the most beloved verses in the Bible. I have several wall plaques that have beautiful scenery which contain these words. To “be still” speaks of resting in God or experiencing inner peace. This brings up an important question. How do we experience this inner stillness or peace? The answer is that we must relax or rest in our personal

relationship with God and in His providential acts of sovereignty.

In the hustle and bustle of today’s living, many Christians do not find the time to be still, experience His peace, and know God in a more real and intimate way. Our accelerated tempos and schedules can keep us from being still and knowing God. How can we “Be still and know God” during times of sorrow and pain? How can we come to know God in a deeper and more personal way than we have before? How can our acquaintance with God become more real? How well do we really know God? How real is He to us? The answer to these questions lies in being still and knowing God.

To “be still and know God” means to experience rest and peace in God’s character and providential ways. It is to know God *intimately* as we experience His life in ours, but it also means to know God *providentially* as He performs His works in relation to the world and our own personal lives. We can only find rest when we know or realize that God never makes mistakes and that He always does what is right in the world and with our own individual lives.

Within this context, to “Be still and know that I am God” follows the statements of God destroying the evildoers on earth and bringing peace (Ps. 46:8-9). It also precedes the next statement: “I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psalm 46:10b). So, being still and knowing God is centered upon God’s powerful movements among the heathen and His ultimate exaltation among the nations during the Millennial Kingdom (Ps. 2:1-12; Rev. 20:1-7), which results in bringing about His purposes in the world. Therefore, being still and knowing God means to find peaceful rest in God’s character and ways as He acts in accordance with world events, which would include the daily events associated with our lives.

“I am God” (Ps. 46:10) is a repeated truth in Scripture (Isaiah 45:5,18). In essence, God is saying, “I am all-powerful and in charge! Any questions?” Let me say it less eloquently – “I am God, you are not, so get over it!” This means that we must “Be still” or experience rest and find peace in the fact that God can do whatever He wants to do, whenever He wants to do it, with whomsoever He wants to do it, and in the way He wants to do it (Rom. 9:21).



Being still in God is the secret to living the Christian life. It’s a call to experience peace or inner tranquility and live in such a way that we are totally relaxed and restful because we KNOW (recognize and acknowledge) God’s true character, that He is a just, righteous, merciful, gracious and sometimes a vengeful God. We get to

know God relationally and intimately as we learn of His character and attributes and therefore experience His life in ours (John 17:3; 1 John 5:20; 2 Pet. 3:18). Paul exclaimed: “That I may know him ...” (Phil. 3:10).

But we also KNOW and accept God’s providential ways occurring in the world and around us which include the difficult and delightful, the good and bad, and the right and wrong. In other words, we can see what is happening around us and with our own lives and conclude, “Lord, I know that you are a faithful God, a good God, and that You oversee all the events in the world and in my life. Therefore, I will accept them as coming from the hand of a loving, merciful, and righteous God who knows what is best for my life.” Being still and knowing God are linked together. You cannot

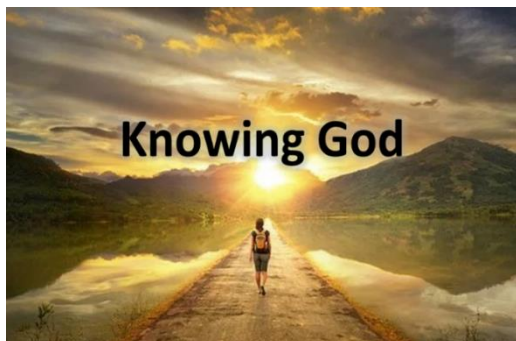
separate them. You cannot be still or find rest for your soul unless you know God, that His ways are always right, and that He is bringing His purposes to pass in relation to the world and your own personal life. God said, "... Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Isa. 46:11).

The Hebrew construction "be still" literally means "to sink down and relax." It carries a connotation of releasing, dropping, or sinking. The whole idea is that we must stop fighting, cease striving, and find rest in God's purpose. Think about sitting down in your favorite Lazy Boy chair or some other soft piece of furniture which causes you to become totally relaxed and restful. The word translated "be still" gives the picture of someone who is resting and quiet. This is someone experiencing inner calmness and tranquility of soul, as they rest in God's character and ways, and His sovereign purpose for their own life.



I'm thinking of the analogy of the proverbial, family road trip. You know the one, with the kids in the back seat saying, "Are we there yet? Are we there yet? Are we there yet?" The answer, of course, is be still or hush! This is what God is asking us to do. We must be quiet and still and let Him take us on the journey He intends for our lives. It's easy to be fearful when things aren't going well or when we are faced with challenges and conflicts in our life. However, in the midst of our struggles, God tells His people to "be still" by recognizing that He is on their side and His perfectly ordained plan is coming to pass in their lives.

Being still is living a life of inner peace and tranquility as Christians reflect upon their relationship with God (who He is and what He means to them) and realize that He is providentially overseeing and orchestrating all the events in the world (what He does or allows), even the incidents associated with their individual lives.



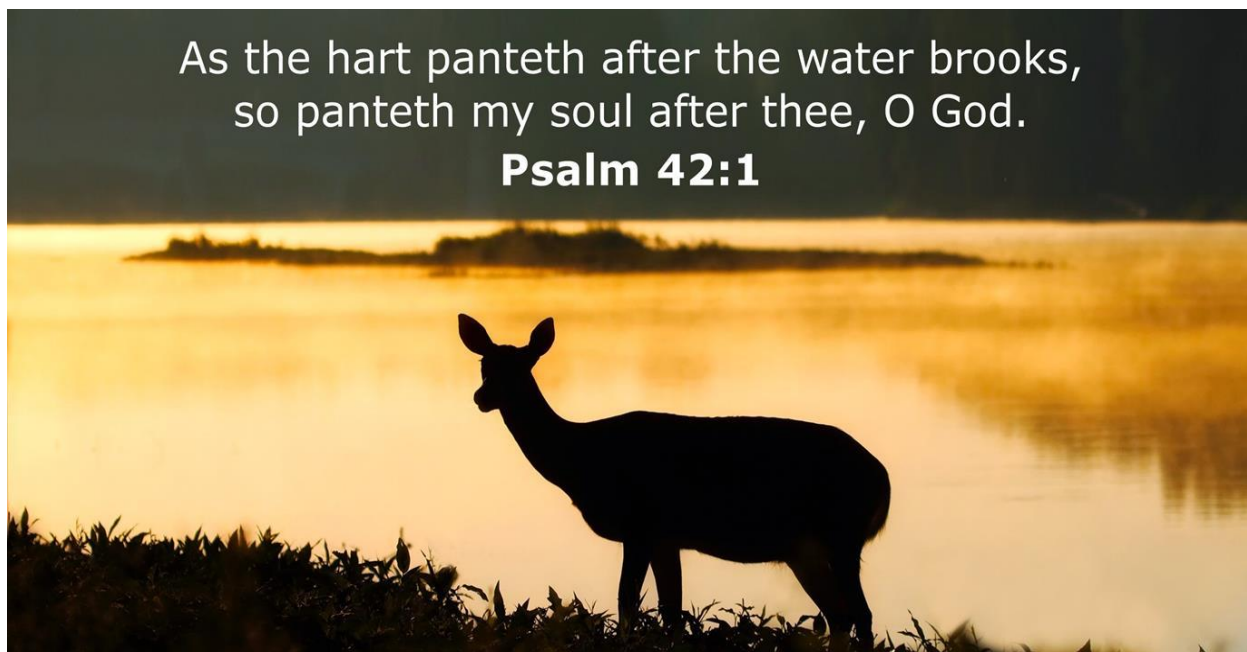
As a Christian, I must KNOW God *experientially*, that He is a faithful, loving, merciful, and righteous God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. I discover this in my own personal relationship and walk with God as He reveals His presence to me. There is an inner quietness of heart and spirit which comes from being

aware of God's presence, who He is, and what He means to us personally. I can know God in this way. In 1 Kings 19:11-12 we read that it was not in the wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire that God spoke to Elijah, but in a still small voice (a gentle whisper). The whisper of God! We have a sign hanging in our kitchen which was given to me by a friend. It reads, "Let us be silent that we may hear the whisper of God."

Although God does not verbally communicate to us today in a whisper, it is in the stillness or quietness of the soul that God reveals Himself to us, so we might experience His peace and stillness in the inner man of our lives (Eph. 3:16).

"In a still small voice He speaks to me,
Through His Holy Scripture changes me.
For the Lord is great and mighty
Yet He speaks in a still small voice."

As God ministers to our hearts we get to know Him better. I can know God experientially and worshipfully in my daily routine of life. Knowing God is drawing closer to God through communion with Him. The Bible says, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). How close are you to God?



Knowing God means that we experience God's life in ours, as we read the Scriptures (Ps. 119:11, 16-18, 25, 28, 38, 41, 50, 58, 65-66, 76, 105, 133, 148-149; Jer. 15:16;

Luke 24:27) and contemplate who God is (His character) and what He means to us personally (His companionship). Knowing God is staying close to God and experiencing His personal presence in our lives when our world is turned upside down. God reveals Himself to us as the great Creator, Lover of our soul, the One who cares for us deeply (1 Pet. 5:7; Heb. 4:15), and Who wants to draw close to us (Rev. 3:20). Open the door of your heart to Him!



I must also KNOW God *providentially* by accepting His ways and movements in the world and with my own life (“Come, behold the works of the LORD” - Ps. 46:8). I must know that God is in charge and never makes any mistakes. Knowing God also means to accept His

providential ways in the world and with our own personal lives. This is also what Psalm 46 is declaring to us when it speaks about knowing God. We must know that He is in absolute charge of everything, including all the events of our lives.

“God never moves without purpose or plan.
When trying His servant and molding a man.
Give thanks to the LORD, though your testing seems long.
In darkness, He giveth a song.

O rejoice in the LORD,
He makes no mistake.
He knoweth the end of each path that I take!
For when I am tried and purified,
I shall come forth as gold.”



To summarize, we get to know God as we fellowship with God and worship Him “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). We can KNOW God by reflecting on His unchanging character in our time of Bible reading, meditation, and worship and how the Lord relates to our personal lives. We reflect on how He is a faithful, loving, merciful, and caring God. We also remember that He can be a holy, just, righteous, and even a vengeful God (Rom. 12:19). But we also KNOW God by reflecting on His sovereignty and how this relates to our individual lives. We can realize that whatever He does or allows to occur in our lives is under His controlling hand and comes from the heart of a loving, caring, and all-wise God - “the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God” (1 Timothy 1:17).

Sitting quietly before the Lord and meditating upon His greatness, glory, promises, and sovereignty over our lives is both a resting and rewarding experience. To become better acquainted with God necessitates spending time with Him. We call it devotions, but the Bible calls it “Be still and know that I am God.” We need a quiet time, a “Be still” time each day, alone with the Lord, meditating on Scripture and God, so we can become better acquainted with Him.

Mille Stamm wrote:

“We need to enter our spiritual closet, close the door, and become quiet in His presence, meditating on who He is and what He has done for us.”

Sometimes being still and knowing God means to literally be still from the rapid pace of life. Being still or experiencing inner quietness and peace in life often involves slowing down and reflecting on God, His Word, and His ways.

Psalm 4:4

“Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.”

“Blessed quietness, holy quietness,
Blest assurance in my soul!
On the stormy sea, He speaks peace to me,
And the billows cease to roll.”



“Be still, and
know that I
am God...”

Psalm 46:10

One day a little girl slipped into her father’s study. Without saying a word, she quietly sat on the floor close beside him, watching him at work. After a while he said, “Honey, is there something that you want?” “No,” she replied, “I am just sitting here loving you.” Soon she left as quietly as she had come in. Little did she know the lesson she had taught her father. She had not come to ask him for anything. She had just wanted to

be near him and love him. The thought came to the father, “How often do I spend time in God’s presence, just loving Him and becoming acquainted with Him?”

This reminds us that we need to be still and get to know God better through the revelation of His Word (2 Tim. 3:16; Eccl. 12:13) and His presence in our lives. God not only wants us to bring our requests before Him (Phil. 4:6) but also to spend time with Him (Psalm 5:3). We need to be still or quiet enough to allow Him to speak to our hearts.

“Give ear to my words, Oh Lord, Consider my meditation.
Hearken unto the voice of my cry, My King and my God.
For unto thee will I pray, My voice shall thou hear in the morning.
Oh Lord in the morning will I direct my prayer,
Unto thee and will look up!”

As God’s saints, we can find rest or stillness in the presence of God and the work that He chooses to do with our own lives and the lives of others. We can experience peace when we know that God is always merciful, gracious, loving, and wise, and that He is in charge of whatever is occurring around us and overseeing the events that touch our own lives.

Psalm 115:3

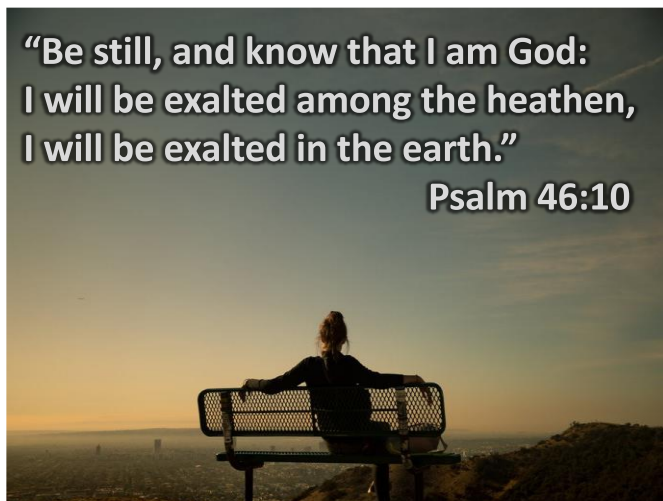
“But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.”

We must learn the secret of resting in our relationship with God and His sovereign will and purpose for our lives, whatever He chooses to bring to pass. We must rest and be quiet, experiencing God’s inner peace, knowing that God is guiding and

superintending the events of this world and our own personal lives. God is still on the throne!

Remember there are no accidents in life, only divine appointments! Simply put, God is telling His people to relax and rest in Him as He accomplishes His providentially ordained plan for their lives. To “be still and know that I am God” means to experience inner rest or peace by letting go of our plans and ideas, while realizing that God is working in every situation and phase of our lives to bring about His eternal purposes.

“Come behold the works of the LORD” (Ps. 46:8); He maketh wars to cease on the earth” (Ps. 46:8); “I will be exalted among the heathen;” I will be exalted in the earth (Ps. 46:10). God is saying, “I will do this!” This is God’s work – the work of a sovereign God! Elsewhere, God says, “Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? (Ex. 4:11).



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

“Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?” (Amos 3:6). As a Christian who lives close to God, we need to be still and find rest in the person and providential works of God that are occurring in the world and in relation to our own life.

Of course, God defeating and ruling over the heathen is a good thing (“I will be exalted among the heathen” - Ps. 46:10). But how do you react when God in His sovereignty says, “I will allow you to experience cancer, a heart attack, or an injury in a car accident, I will allow you to lose a job, so you can grow in your sanctification and I might receive the glory” (John 11:4)? Can you find rest in these sovereign acts of God? Can you “be still” (experience peace) in the other “I will” statements and events that God chooses to bring to pass in your life?

Behind the scenes of your life, God says, "I will do this." Then comes the test of your faith (James 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:7). You must learn to accept God's will for your life, even when it might be difficult to pass through.

2 Corinthians 4:15 declares:

"For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."

Are you willing to accept the reality that "all things" (everything) which God allows to come into your life is "for your sakes" (your spiritual growth and advancement) and ultimately for God's glory? Stillness and peace cannot be experienced in our hearts unless we learn to KNOW God personally and intimately, but more than this, to KNOW and accept by faith that all the events of our lives have a providential connection with God and His working, understanding that "all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28).

What if God says, "I will allow you to experience a time of illness, I will allow you to suffer financially, I will allow you to have a handicapped child, experience the loss of a loved one, I will allow you to experience a broken heart and pass through the deep waters?" What is your reaction to God during the trials of life? God wants to strengthen your personal relationship with Himself and have you bow the knee to His providential ways over your life. Stillness cannot be experienced in your heart without surrender to God's sovereignty. "Be still and know that I am God."

The Scripture is saying we must "be still" (rest and relax) in whatever God is doing in the world, with our personal lives, and the lives of others. We must rest in the unchanging and unalterable fact that God is God - "I am God." This means God is in charge. It's one thing to be still, but it's another thing to be still and know that He is God, which means to know that He is sovereign, and to know that whatever He allows is right and in keeping with His character and plan for our lives ("to give you an expected end" - Jer. 29:11). When we come to rest in God's sovereign purpose for our lives, whatever He wants to do with us, it's then we will have discovered a very important spiritual secret in life.

An explorer went on a trek into the jungle with some nationals as his guides. The first two days the group hurried so fast that they were able to cover many miles. On the third day the explorer planned to start at daybreak. When it was time to leave, he discovered the guides were not ready. He asked them what was wrong. They

replied, “We must wait.” “Wait” he said, “Wait for what?” The guides replied, “We have been going too fast. Now we must wait for our souls to catch up with our bodies.” Beloved, we must take time to be holy and we must also take time to be still and let God speak to our hearts, reveal Himself to us, and yield ourselves to His working and way for our lives. We must sit back, relax, and let God be God!

- ✓ Have you been hurrying along in life and forgotten to be still?
- ✓ Have you been experiencing inner stillness or rest in your relationship with God?
- ✓ How close are you to God?
- ✓ How well do you know Him personally?
- ✓ Have you found stillness or rest in what God has been doing with your life and where He has placed you?
- ✓ What difficult event has God recently allowed to come into your life?
- ✓ Are you being still by accepting God’s sovereign ways, purposes, and plans for your life?
- ✓ Do you know experientially that He is a faithful, loving, merciful, and righteous God?
- ✓ Are you finding stillness and rest in the places, people, and planned events which God has allowed to come into your life?
- ✓ Have you found inner peace by committing the future to Him and His way for your life?
- ✓ Are you resting in His right to rule your days and do with your life as He so desires?

The “still” person is someone who finds peace and calmness in their relationship with God and His purpose and plan for his life (Ps. 37:1-8), even when that plan might include suffering. While suffering heartache, deep emotional pain related to manifold trials, the loss of a loved one, loneliness, living with pain or sickness, and the stress and problems related to life in general, we need to keep coming back to God and His Word which constantly reminds us: “Be still and know that I am God.”

“Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side;
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to thy God to order and provide;
In every change he faithful will remain.
Be still my soul thy best, thy heavenly friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.”

While driving one day I approached a squirrel that was sitting in the middle of the road. The squirrel did not know what to do. It started to nervously move to the right and then to the left. It went in circles and stood up before it finally got out of the way of my approaching car. The fidgeting squirrel reminded me of someone who was all shook up! Is this a picture of your life? We can move about with fear and sense that we are about to

Fretting and Fidgeting in Life ...



Or “Be Still and know that I am God?”

be run over and crushed by life’s trials. But God is calling us to a higher way of living. He summons us, “Be still and know that I am God.” In essence, God is saying, “Relax and stay calm. I’m in charge.” Stop fretting and fidgeting; stop panicking and parading about like a squirrel in the middle of the road with traffic approaching!

“Be still and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10). I experience inner peace and tranquility when I experience God’s person (who He is) and submit to His purpose for my life (what He does). For instance, I KNOW that God is the Creator when I see the beauty of a sunrise and sunset. I sense that He wants to be near or close to me.

“This is my Father's world:
He shines in all that's fare;
In the rustling grass I hear him pass,
He speaks to me everywhere.”

I KNOW that He is a loving and merciful God, when I reflect upon what the Bible says about Him, and through my relationship with Him experience His many spiritual blessings (Lam. 3:22-23).

"Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!"

I also KNOW that God is sovereign when He allows pain, suffering, and heartache to come into my life. I can know that He has allowed all the events of my life to transpire to fulfill His perfect plan for me and mold me into the person He wants me to be (Job 23:10). Here is an honest evaluation of learning to know God during the hard and difficult times. Christine Wyrzten wrote:

“I’ve been through a fire,
That has deepened my desire
To know the living God more and more.
It hasn’t been much fun,
But the work that is has done
In my life has made it worth the hurt.
You see, sometimes we need the hard times,
To bring us to our knees,
Otherwise we do as we please,
And never heed Him.
But He always knows what’s best
And it’s when we are distressed
That we really come to know God as He is.”

Peace in the never-ending circle of God’s sovereign purpose is what Psalm 46:10 is talking about.

Jesus said in John 14:27:

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

“When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.”

Stillness in the sovereignty of God is the secret to peaceful living. In fact, stillness and sovereignty are inseparably bound together. “Be still (serenity) and know that I am God (sovereignty).”

God declared in Isaiah 45:7:

“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil (*orchestrating and superintending all calamities, including wars, natural disasters and moral evil in the world*): I the LORD do all these things” (*as the sovereign God*).

God is not the author of sin (James 1:13) but He does providentially direct every event within this fallen world, including the various trials and ways associated with our lives, both good and bad. God has a path, plan, and purpose for each one of us and everything we pass through in this life is in some way ordained by an all-wise and loving God. Everything in some sense is under God’s guidance and control. Yes, even the dark and difficult times of our lives fall under the category of God’s providence.



“What tho’ the way be lonely,
And dark the shadows fall;
I know where’er it leadeth,
My Father planned it all.
I sing thro’ the shade and sunshine,
And trust Him whate’er befall;
His way is best—it leads to rest;
My Father planned it all.”

How should we respond to God's sovereign ways? We must by faith accept His providential dealings with our lives and discover the rest and stillness described in Psalm 46, knowing that God is overseeing everything that happens around us and with us. We must come to know God in this way. He is a loving God who is in charge of everything that pertains to our life.

Job 23:10

"But he knoweth the way that I take (*God's providence*): when he hath tried me (*God's pressure*), I shall come forth as gold" (*God's purpose*).

"Higher hands are leading me.
I am not alone, I know
As I walk this world below
For Higher hands are leading me."



God wants us to "be still" during the tragedies, tests, and tribulations that we face in life, as we accept by faith His providential workings in relation to the world, our personal lives, and the lives of others. The sooner we learn to accept, by faith, the working of divine providence, the sooner we will experience peace. We must remember that God loves His children deeply and with an everlasting love (Rom. 8:38-39), so whatever He allows into their lives ultimately points back to His loving hand and "the finger of God" (Luke 11:20).

Charles Spurgeon said:

"God is too good to be unkind and He is too wise to be mistaken. And when we cannot trace His hand, we must trust His heart."

The heart of God means that He loves you at all times, in all places, and in all circumstances! We do not always understand all the reasons for trials, but we can

know and experience the Lord's tremendous love that He has for us as we pass through them (1 John 3:1; Rom. 5:5).

As a Christian there is no replacement for being still and knowing God. God may say, "Be still and know that I am the Creator of everything as you witness the beauty of creation that surrounds you. Be still and know that I am interested in a personal relationship with you. Be still and know that I am the all-powerful God. Be still and know that I love you. Be still and know that I am concerned about every detail of your life and want to meet every need that you have. Be still in My plans for your life. Be still in My faithfulness toward you and trust in Me."



Dr. Gilbert Little, a Christian psychiatrist, was asked for a simple rule for mental health. He answered, "Be still, and know that I am God." The noise of the world can become louder and louder and this means we must take time to be still and know God better. We must develop a closer walk with Him and surrender to His providential ways over our life.

Proverbs 16:33 reveals: "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing (verdict or decision) thereof is of the LORD." This means that God is ultimately in control of the events of our lives. Proverbs 19:21 adds: "the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand." In Isaiah 46:10 God concludes: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

"God has measured time's duration,
Night and day are His creation.
And the changing seasons of the year;

He's the one who watches o'er me
And prepares the way before me
There is nothing now I need to fear.
God knows all about tomorrow
He can see beyond today;
Be it filled with joy or sorrow,
He has planned it that way.
So I do not fear the future,
On His promises I stand;
God knows all about tomorrow
For He holds it in His hand!"

James 4:13-15 is also a constant reminder of God's sovereign ways over our lives: "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."

Joseph bowed the knee to God's sovereignty and ways over his life by stating in Genesis 50:20: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." We must be still and know God by yielding to His providential purposes related to our lives.

Ron Hamilton wrote about knowing God better through learning to surrender to the Lord's way for his life.

"What a privilege to come into God's presence
Just to linger with the One who set me free.
As I lift my eyes and see His awesome glory.
I remember who He is and bow the knee.
Bow the knee, Bow the knee,
He is King of all the ages, Bow the knee.
God alone on His throne
See Him high and lifted up
And bow the knee.

Kneel before Him, All adore Him
As you live to love Him more
Bow the knee.”

Beloved, believe in God’s purpose for your life, let God be God, and find rest for your soul. When we reflect on God’s awesome, sovereign providence we should experience strength, reverence, security, freedom, and peace. There is an inner stillness or rest that we can experience when we learn to know God through possessing a deeper relationship and walk with Him and by accepting that He is an all-wise, righteous, gracious, and loving God that is providentially at work within the world, with the lives of others, and most importantly, with our own life.

Psalm 135:6

“Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”

Those who reject God’s sovereignty should consider what alternatives they have left. As a Christian, we must acknowledge the sovereignty of God and His claim on our life and find the stillness and rest that comes through our relationship with Him. It is true, God does as He pleases and purposes within the world and even with our own lives. This means we must take chance out of the picture and replace it with trust in God! So, here is the secret to living the Christian life: “Be still and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10).

Find your serenity, stillness, and security through your personal relationship with God and by accepting His sovereign ways over your life. Unless you know God personally, the character of His faithfulness, grace, mercy, love, justice, righteousness, holiness, and vengeance, you cannot accept the sovereignty of God, which pertains to His movements among the world and your own life.

Charles Spurgeon remarked:

“When you go through a trial, the sovereignty of God is the pillow upon which you lay your head.”

“Be still, my soul; Thy God doth undertake
To guide the future, As He has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence, Let nothing shake;
All now mysterious Shall be bright at last.

Be still, my soul; The waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them, While He dwelt below.”

