

Daily Devotional, June 16, 2020 Be Feeble, and Know God Intimately

There is a very familiar verse from the Bible that comes to us from the book of Psalm, chapter 46, verse 10, which reads like this: ***“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” (NIV)***

That one little line--"Be still, and know that I am God"--has been used in so many different ways. It has been published in greeting cards, painted or inscribed in wall art, on church signs and even on bumper stickers, and refrigerator magnets. This verse is used so much because it sounds so nice, doesn't it? But upon closer inspection, what does it actually *mean*?

What does it mean to be *still* and *know* that God is God? I suppose the way to get at its true meaning means to go deeper into the root of that phrase to see what it's really saying. Being that this verse is from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament, from the Jewish Torah, it was originally penned in Hebrew. The Hebrew word that is used here for the phrase "be still" is the word *rapha* (*ray fee*), which in various terms means "to hang limp, sink down, be feeble." That's quite a bit different than what we usually take the phrase "be still" to mean, doesn't it?

I don't know about you, but whenever I had heard that verse in the past, I thought it meant to sit calmly, to be perfectly still, and to quietly focus on meditating--which really is a good practice for us to do from time to time. But in the Original Hebrew context, *rapha* means to let yourself sink, to let go of your rigidity as in a limp wash rag, to allow yourself to be weak, to throw off all of the pretenses of strength and become "feeble." It's more than just being quiet and still. It's instead, complete surrender.

And what happens when we do this? By completely letting go of all our inhibitions, we come to experience a knowledge of God. And by *knowledge* or *know*, I'm speaking of the Hebrew word *yada*, which is the word used here, and which means to have *intimate* knowledge.

So let's retranslate that wonderful little phrase from Psalm 46:10:

"Allow yourself to become completely weak and feeble, letting go of your need to control and your misguided ideas about how strong you are, and when you do, what you will discover is an intimate, up close understanding of God that you would have never experienced otherwise."

Let this be your prayer today. And try to make it a part of your prayers every day. You don't have to stop and be quiet to experience God more fully, although there are many times in our lives when we know we should.

Instead, we need to simply surrender our need for control, to stop trying to be stronger than we are, to admit our frailty and our weariness over all of our striving, and to simply sink into God's presence. Let us take time to be still each day and to exalt God!

May this be true for you. And may the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you now and always. Amen.