

Doing More by Doing Less
Be Still and Know that I Am God
Psalm 46

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Feb. 5, 2017

We live in such a fast-paced world of stress, noise, news and calendars that if we're not careful we can get sucked into the mentality of thinking that doing more and moving faster always equals being more effective for the Lord.

That's not what you see in God's Word! **Psalm 46** has the remedy for having courage and joy in the midst of calamities and confusion in this world.

I. You Can Have Courage in the Midst of Calamities Because God Is In It With You

Psalm 46:1 "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

God is never located outside of our trouble. He's in it with us!

We can have courage in the context of incredible calamities.

Psalm 46:2 "Therefore we will not fear even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea..."

II. You Can Have Joy in the Midst of Political Confusion Because God has Always Been Doing Something Bigger than Political Parties and Earthly Powers

Right in the middle of what looks like terrifying confusion and calamitous change the Psalmist reminds us of what God is doing that cannot be shaken and cannot be taken away from us.

Psalm 46:4-6 "There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn. The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved; He uttered His voice, the earth melted."

There is a city of God in the midst of this fallen, broken world and different political structures. It's God's people who are citizens of another kingdom who gather for worship all over the world.

The river speaks of the satisfying and thirst-quenching presence of God regardless of how barren the circumstances might be.

This river and city of God should solicit emotions of gladness and steadfastness that have nothing to do with immediate circumstances!

- How do you get that kind of joy and confidence in the midst of such unsettling circumstances in your life and our world today?

III. Take a Deep Breath and Let God Be God

This idea of 'take a deep breath' comes from the fact that this Psalm uses the word 'SELAH' 3x.

Biblical scholars aren't sure exactly what the word means, but all are agreed that it was some type of musical notation that meant to pause, to think about it, or to take it all in.

The interludes in this Psalm are where the psalmist wants you to pause and ponder on what's been said so far for two reasons: because it is so good and it is so foreign to our natural responses.

We're given bold commands in **v.8** and **v.10** as to what we have to do if we're going to keep our spontaneous joy and confidence alive.

A. Take Another Look at Who's Really in Charge

Psalm 46:8 "Come, behold, the works of the Lord, who has made desolations in the earth"

He commands us to move towards a position of being able to take a long, scrutinizing look at what God is doing in our world. The verb for 'move' entails being intentional and unhurried.

To obey the command to 'come, behold, the works of the Lord,' you have to read your Bible! Read all of it- not just the New Testament or you miss out on books like **Jeremiah** that can help you obey **Psalm 46:8**.

B. Take a Step Back and Rest in the Sovereignty of God

Psalm 46:10 "Be still, and know that I am God."

The Hebrew verb isn't even speaking so much of lack of movement as it is lack of control. It means to let go, release something, and to relax.

You can't really start knowing God intimately until you stop trying to be in control all the time.

We need an intimate relationship with God where we trust Him, where we rest, and where He knows us and we know Him.

The need for trusting and resting in the sovereignty of God is a universal human struggle and need, but we have the advantage over the Psalmist of living on the other side of Christ's life, death, and resurrection which solved our biggest problem, which was not earthly calamities or political confusion, but our sin problem that separated us from a holy God.

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."