

Devotional: Be Still and Know  
Kate Glerup

Hi! This is Kate Glerup. I am a Clinical Supervisor/ Counselor in New York City at Redeemer Counseling Services. We are affiliated with Redeemer Presbyterian Church which was founded by Timothy Keller, a well-known author and teacher who has had a huge impact on bringing the Gospel to New York City. We take a biblically integrated approach to psychotherapy, and like Augustine, we believe that there is no psychological problem that is not also a spiritual problem as well. As I have had the privilege of walking along side my co-workers and clients in the midst of this crisis, I have noticed that the quarantine has brought to light what I describe as the struggle to just “be still.” We live in such a time that a person can go through an entire day without ever experiencing silence or solitude. A person can remain completely distracted and full until falling asleep. But this quarantine has forced people to do some or most things differently which includes slowing down. And the result of this slowing, is that people are forced to pay attention to things they would have missed or ignored in the past. This includes being forced to pay attention to thoughts, feelings, people, relationships and God. The irony is that while “being still” produces anxiety in and of itself, this chance to be still and know is of utmost importance in managing this crisis well. And Psalm 46 from our lectionary reading discusses this experience as well.

Psalm 46 (NIV)

**For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to *alamoth*.<sup>(b)</sup> A song.**

<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>(c)</sup>

<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<sup>(a)</sup> 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.

Another way of describing "Being Still" is to make space for God. This is the whole spirit of Lent-to give up things so that God can fill those spaces. I am reminded of the image of how monkeys are caught in India and Africa. They make a hole in a gourd or jar that is big enough for the monkey hand to go in. They then fill the jar with food. The Monkey then puts its hand in the jar and grabs the food. But this makes his hand too big to pull out. But no matter what, even when the Monkey knows it is being captured, it won't let go. All it has to do is let go of the food and it will be free. I believe that the quarantine has forced most of us to let go of what we believed would nourish our bodies and souls. And now the question becomes, how are we going to fill ourselves back up? Where are we going to turn for nourishment?

In a recent livestream event, Tim Keller made the following recommendations for how to respond to the present crisis by referencing how Job handled his trials:  
"We should weep but trust, pray but think, reorder our LOVES and hope."

Weeping means embracing and accepting the anxiety and all the emotions we are feeling, but Trust in who God is;  
that, "God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble."

Prayer means directing the weeping towards God and stay in communication with him as we struggle, but use your head and knowledge to remember "<sup>11</sup>The Lord Almighty is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Reprioritize your life and loves-figure out what you need to let go of in order to refocus on a life lived in relationship with Jesus; And fill your life with the Hope we have through the grace of Jesus Christ has offered to us!

And finally, “Be still, and know that I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations,

I will be exalted in the earth.”

Prayer:

Lord, please help us to be still. To slow down. To make space for you. Help us to use this season to “reorder our loves” and to make our relationship with you the priority.

Amen