

## **Be Still...**

By Paul Norcross

"Be still, and know that I am God." As I was spending some time with the Lord this morning, He told me, "Paul, 'be still and know that I am God' is worship. He gave me to understand that of all the things we do, even those things we do in obedience to Him, it is in setting aside ourselves to be still before Him that we enable worship.

I thought about the rest that is spoken of Hebrews 3 and 4, and the amazing things that happen when we choose to enter it. Stillness is what we do with our heart in order to enter His rest. And it is in this place we finally mortify our flesh. All our thoughts, our remembrances of looming tasks and recent turmoils, or troubles with neighbors, kids, bosses and spouses, girlfriends or boyfriends, projects and deadlines, etc. – all of these must fade into distant stillness in order to enter His rest. In the setting aside of self, there is the entrance of His rest.

*Hebrews 3:12-14*

*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. [Is it possible to depart from the Living God? Yes. Is there an antidote? Yes – stay in His rest, and exhort others to do so every day too!]*

*But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

*For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;*

Holding our confidence stedfast unto the end requires some programming. I was struck by how King David programmed his heart to stay confident in his relationship with the Lord. This is precisely the message of Psalm 26. How cool!

*Psalms 26:1-12*

- (1) A Psalm of David. Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.*
- (2) Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.*
- (3) For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth.*
- (4) I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.*
- (5) I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked.*
- (6) I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:*

- (7) *That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.*
- (8) *LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.*
- (9) *Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men:*
- (10) *In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.*
- (11) *But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.*
- (12) *My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD.*

*Hebrews 4:9*

*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*

How few of us really mine the full depth and full benefits of entering the rest of God. We enter His rest when we learn to still our hearts. His rest is associated with hearing His voice, which only comes to hearts that are softened with stillness. Three times, we are warned in chapters 3 and 4 to steer clear of hardness of heart – that which keeps us from hearing His voice in soft stillness in His rest.

*Hebrews 4:10*

*For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.*

Lately I've been spending a lot of time counseling believers through their deeply buried roots of bitterness – things from their past that have caused broken relationships and attitudes regarding other people, themselves, or God. These broken relationships, so often indicated by painful memories and sorrowful wounds with each remembrance, can each be healed in His rest.

*Hebrews 4:11*

*Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*

It takes work to lay down your favorite soapbox. It takes a seeking heart, one that longs to be one with the Master, to lay down the troubling, preoccupying thoughts of our lives, and in stillness seek those things which are above, which are in His rest waiting for us! Notice the consequence of not entering His rest – the consequence is falling (pepto = to descend from a higher place to a lower place; it includes the idea of being overcome with terror by an evil spirit; metaphorically used in falling into judgment or condemnation, etc.) and that into unbelief. Faith is

a perishable thing! As it says in Romans 10:17, we maintain and build our faith by posturing ourselves to hear the voice (the *rhema* word) of the Lord (Romans 10:17), which happens most especially in His rest.

*Hebrews 4:12*

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

The word of the God can only be quick and powerful to us in the context of entering His rest. This is a verse we have quoted for years, handily using it to encourage ourselves in the Scriptures. But really what this verse is saying in context is that the Word of God comes alive to us when we are accessing the rest in Him (which so few are laboring to enter into).

Beloved, we may have some serious re-aligning to do in our walks. We may have to do as the Lord reminded me this morning – “Paul, if you will worship Me every day, I will raise your ministry out of obscurity, and increase its effectiveness.” The last time He told me this, within three months He placed Me into a church, and shortly thereafter I was asked to become the pastor. Now, nine years and six books later, He is again telling me the same message. There is something coming, which only diligence in His rest can prepare me for. Is there something the Lord is wanting to tell you also? I think so. You’ll find out what this is in His rest, as you become still before Him.

*Hebrews 3:13-15*

*Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.*

*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

What competes for the attention of our souls are the many infirmities, temptations, and “stuff” of life. Jesus dealt with all of them, hence we can set aside them all – we really can! – as we enter His rest. Therefore....

*Hebrews 3:16*

*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

A precious old song begins, "How long has it been, since you talked with the Lord, and told Him your heart's hidden secrets?"

With you in love with Him,

--Paul and Rita Norcross