

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA
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Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will deal with Ps. 46:10: **"Be still and know that I am God"**. We have made reference to this psalm before. It is thought to have been composed after God miraculously delivered Hezekiah from the King of Assyria. The "coup de grace", as you recall, came when God sent an angel who killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in a single night (2 Ki. 19:35). Among other things, this psalm admonishes us to "be still" even when the earth gives way, the mountains fall into the sea, the waters roar, and the mountains quake. We are to "flee fornication" (1 Cor. 6:18), but the Psalmist said on this occasion to "be still". "Being still" is not easy in the midst of violent earthquakes and storms. "Being still" in times like this takes tremendous faith and focus. It is, however, one key to knowing God.

Many years ago Granny and I were active in Christian Service Camps. Many became Christians and made life time commitments to Christ at these camps. Most making decisions had been in church every Sunday, but did not make decisions for Christ until they came to camp. Why? While there may be many reasons, one major factor is that radios, boom boxes and other distractions were forbidden at camp. For the first time in the year the constant drum beat of secular sounds bombarding them day and night was gone. At camp they were able to "be still" and hear the voice of God.

The Voice of America radio broadcast was established in 1942 in the midst of W.W. II. In this way the U.S. Government sought to communicate it's views around the world. The enemies of America, however, routinely "jammed" those radio programs to keep them from being heard. They did this by tuning a powerful transmitter to the same frequency with the same type of modulation. In this way music or random noise with sufficient volume could drown out the message so that it could not be understood. The point is, "being still" helps us to hear God and the Devil does everything he can to "jam" the voice of God. What about you? How much quiet time do you have every day? Too often every waking moment is bombarded with blaring radios, TVs, cds, Etc. Thus the voice of God is "jammed" and cannot be understood. It's not just what we hear, but also what we see that distracts us. Billions of smart phones, for example, captivate our attention. Americans average around 5.4 hours a day "watching" their phones. Millennials are on their phones 5.7 hours per day, while baby boomers devote 5 hours a day to their smartphones. If we would "be still" long enough, perhaps we could hear the voice of God.

A cow's stomach is divided into four different compartments. God has designed cows so that their food is digested, not when they eat it, but when they chew their cud. So their food goes undigested into their stomach, later to provide nourishment when they lie down and chew their cud. Dairy cows often chew their cud 8 hours a day. This computes to around 30,000 chews. What the cow does with grass and hay we can do with ideas if we calm down and stay quiet. "Being still" helps us to intellectually "chew the cud" and digest information so that we can know the reality of God.

Our word "Eureka" comes from a Greek word which means "I have found it". Legend has it that Archimedes, a Greek mathematician, made the word famous. It seems the king had given gold to a goldsmith to make a crown. When the crown was completed the king feared that his pure gold had been alloyed with cheap silver. He sought the help of Archimedes to find the truth without destroying the crown. Archimedes puzzled over the problem for several days with no success. Then he decided to take a bath. Since the tub was full, when he got in the tub some water spilled out. Legend has it that he jumped out of the tub naked and cried "Eureka" (I have found it). His solution involves the fact that

gold is heavier than silver. A solid gold bar is therefore smaller than a bar of the same weight alloyed with silver. So Archimedes merely balanced the crown with an equal amount of pure gold. He then placed both in the water one after the other. If the crown was pure gold the water would rise to the same level, but if the crown was alloyed with silver the water would rise to a higher level. Whether or not the story is true, it still demonstrates the importance of focusing our mental energies to solve a problem. Finding God, of course, is the ultimate challenge with the ultimate reward!

Jesus frequently spent time “being still”. If Jesus needed these quiet times surely we do too. Here are a few examples:

- After His baptism He spent 40 days alone in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1,2)
- When Jesus heard that John the Baptist had been killed He withdrew to a solitary place (Matt. 14:13).
- After healing many in the home of Simon and Andrew, Jesus got up before dawn, went to a solitary place, and prayed (Mk. 1:29-35).
- Before selecting His 12 apostles Jesus spent the night alone in prayer (Lk. 6:12).
- Luke reminds us that **“Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Lk. 5:16).**
- When the people wanted to force Jesus to be their king He again withdrew to a mountain by Himself (Jn. 6:15).
- In Gethsemane Jesus fell with His face to the ground and prayed alone (Matt. 26:39).
- Judas knew this place of prayer for Jesus often met there with His disciples (Jn. 18:2).
- Jesus taught us to pray by going into our closet and closing the door (Matt. 6:6).
- Etc.

E.T. is a science fiction movie produced in 1982 by Steven Spielberg. In the movie a 10 year old boy named Elliott leaves some candy for E.T. to lure him to his house. The Mars Candy Co. rejected the opportunity for this candy to be M&Ms. The Hershey Candy Co., however, happily paid \$1 million in advertising fees for the privilege of having E.T. eat Reeses Pieces. Within two weeks after the movie’s premier, the sales of Reeses Pieces shot up 65% - 85%. The point is, we are often influenced by what we see and hear whether we are aware of it or not. We should not be ignorant of the Devil’s devices (2 Cor. 11:3). Isolating ourselves from his influence can help us focus on God.

Who knows how our lives could be influenced by God if we spent more time in solitude, studying the Bible and calling out to God in prayer? As the Psalmist said: **“Be still and know that I am God”!**

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce