

SOUL SABBATICAL

Have you ever thought about your soul taking a sabbatical? The thought occurred to me this week as I was sitting on our boat in the middle of Lake Ouachita in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The lake looks like glass as you peer out. It is amazingly beautiful, especially since most of the lakes we've been on in Texas about knock you out of the boat when you're sitting still (*I may be exaggerating a little for effect ☺*). Anyway, God laid on my heart how incredible the scene in Mark 4 must have been when Jesus calmed the storm.

"That day when evening came, He (Jesus) said to His disciples, 'Let us go over to the other side.' Leaving the crowd behind, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat. There were also other boats with Him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, don't you care if we drown?' He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, 'Quiet! Be still!' Then the wind died down and it was completely calm."

This story that we have somehow minimized to a children's Sunday school story is incredibly applicable for us today. It is a truly awesome thought to know that Jesus has that kind of authority. God didn't stop there with His "teachable moment" with me on the lake. He reminded me of the verse in Psalm 46:10:

"Be still, and know that I am God."

We all know this verse. Most of the time I think of it as a verse that is telling me to slow down...to be still before Him. I'm sure that is true, but one other way to look at it is in reference to our souls being still. One might say that it is impossible for our souls to be still if we are busy, and I think there is truth in that statement. However, I have met people that are constantly doing things at the church or in the community.....those are the people that seem super-human because they seem to have joy and peace while they are doing it. These are the same people who continue to serve or give joyfully even when the storms come in their own lives. I KNOW THESE PEOPLE! WHAT IS THEIR SECRET? I would say that these people have found the secret of Psalm 46:10, the deeper meaning...they know that He is God, and their souls find refuge and strength in it. The joy and peace we see in them is GOD IN THEM! Psalm 46:10 goes on...

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

So, in the midst of my solitude on the lake that day, my body was still, the boat was still, the lake was still, and God taught me that it doesn't take these moments alone to help my soul be still. I prayed that the Lord would show me after that moment--when all the waves start crashing around me in the storm I

would be going home to – I prayed that He would remind me that HE has the ability to calm my soul, to be exalted in me.

What waves are crashing around you right now? Has the wind relocated your soul and distracted you from His great ability? If so, stop and pray for faith in His sovereignty, for peace in His ability. God's past has provided stillness for our souls in the future, and He has done so all for HIS glory. He WILL be exalted in the earth!

BE STILL, MY SOUL

Words: [Katharina A. von Schlegel](#), in *Neue Sammlung Geistlicher Lieder*, 1752 (*Stille, meine Wille, dein Jesus hilft siegen*); translated from German to English by [Jane L. Borthwick](#) in *Hymns from the Land of Luther*, 1855.

Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side.
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.
Leave to thy God to order and provide;
In every change, He faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heavenly Friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul: thy God doth undertake
To guide the future, as He has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
His voice Who ruled them while He dwelt below.

Be still, my soul: when dearest friends depart,
And all is darkened in the vale of tears,
Then shalt thou better know His love, His heart,
Who comes to soothe thy sorrow and thy fears.
Be still, my soul: thy Jesus can repay
From His own fullness all He takes away.

Be still, my soul: the hour is hastening on
When we shall be forever with the Lord.
When disappointment, grief and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

Be still, my soul: begin the song of praise
On earth, be leaving, to Thy Lord on high;
Acknowledge Him in all thy words and ways,

So shall He view thee with a well pleased eye.
Be still, my soul: the Sun of life divine
Through passing clouds shall but more brightly shine.

I LOVE YOU ALL. May your soul find a sabbatical in Him today!

Laura