



SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Be Still and Know

In many ways, each of us is being reminded in present days that we are God's children, greatly in need of our Heavenly Father's love and assurance. This practice invites all of us to become children and rest in our Father's arms during this season of change and uncertainty, no matter what our age.

In this exercise, we will focus on Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God." For many of us, our world is being turned upside down. The Psalm begins with the reminder, "God is our place of safety"—when routines fall apart, plans change, and storms enter our lives. And though this exercise is pertinent for our time, we will all face challenges and changes throughout life. "Be still, and know that I am God," will ALWAYS be relevant. God never changes. Our need for him never changes.

We offer two options for this practice: one for ADULTS and one for FAMILIES—you choose!

FAMILY PRAYER EXPERIENCE

Note to Parents: The Creek's vision is: Connect People to Jesus. As parents, our heart's desire is to hear our children say, "I want to follow Jesus." This prayer experience will help your children connect more deeply with God as they watch you deepen your connection with God.

PREPARE: Gather Bibles; the two pieces of artwork for #7 (at the end of this PDF, print out or have them available on a screen); plain paper, colors or markers for #8

Consider when will be a good time for this experience and let your children know in advance. Allow 15-30 minutes, depending on the ages of your children.

Begin by reading all of Psalm 46 to familiarize yourself and observe the big picture of the entire Psalm (song) and to more fully value God's invitation to, "Be still, and know that I am God."

Psalm 46 *New International Reader's Version*

- 1 God is our place of safety. He gives us strength.
He is always there to help us in times of trouble.
- 2 The earth may fall apart.
The mountains may fall into the middle of the sea. But we will not be afraid.
- 3 The waters of the sea may roar and foam.
The mountains may shake when the waters rise. But we will not be afraid.
- 4 God's blessings are like a river. They fill the city of God with joy.
That city is the holy place where the Most High God lives.
- 5 Because God is there, the city will not fall.
God will help it at the beginning of the day.
- 6 Nations are in disorder. Kingdoms fall.
God speaks, and the people of the earth melt in fear.
- 7 The Lord who rules over all is with us. The God of Jacob is like a fort to us.
- 8 Come and see what the Lord has done.
See the places he has destroyed on the earth.
- 9 He makes wars stop from one end of the earth to the other.
He breaks every bow. He snaps every spear. He burns every shield with fire.
- 10 He says, "Be still, and know that I am God."
I will be honored among the nations. I will be honored in the earth."
- 11 The Lord who rules over all is with us. The God of Jacob is like a fort to us.

PRACTICE with your family: Follow this step-by-step guide, speaking the words in bold print.

Gather your family together and invite EVERYONE (adults too) to quiet their bodies.

Let's get the wiggles out

Shake your body

Jump up and down a few times

Who can be a little silly?

Ok...stop! Take a BIG breath in...blow it out...

(Whisper) Let's sit down quietly...and get comfortable

Take a few more big breaths in...and out...in...and out.

Lead your family in seeing how still they can be. Use this exercise to help them quiet and relax their bodies:

Start by gently rolling your head and then hold it still.

Now, relax your neck...and shoulders.

Inhale and let your tummy/stomach be still.

Now relax your arms, your legs, and your feet.

See, we can be still.

Open Bible to Psalm 46:10

Our Bible verse today talks about being still. It says, "Be still, and know that I am God." The Bible tells us that God is everywhere—right here, right now—even though we cannot see him. We are being still WITH God.

While we are still, think about something you would like to say thank you to God for.

Share your thanks to God. Allow time for each family member to express gratitude to God.

We are being still with God.

This is prayer—talking with...sitting with...and paying attention to God.

The second part of our verse says, "Know that I am God."

Who is the person you know the best in the whole world?

Allow for conversation, using questions like the following:

How have you gotten to know this person?

Does he/she help you? make you feel safe? give you food and a place to live?

Can you tell this person if you are happy, sad, scared, disappointed, or mad?

Does this person love you? How do you know?

God wants us to know him too.

He wants us to know that he loves us.

He wants us know him as a good Father who cares about us and for us.

When have you felt afraid, sad, or disappointed and need God's help?

Share a few of the changes or difficulties in your home and life: school, work, and church from home; sports & activities canceled, carryout instead of dine-in at restaurants, etc.

Invite others to share:

What changes have you noticed?

What things do you miss?

How do you need God to care for you right now?

Refer to the pictures accompanying this practice

Show the CLOSE-UP artwork of the father & child

Talk about your love for your child and relate it to God's love for us

When you look at this picture, how do feel?

Allow for interaction within your family. Be the example of vulnerability.

Show ZOOM-OUT artwork with storm/darkness

No matter what happens, God ALWAYS loves us.

He wants us to come to him and be comforted.

He says, "Come close, sit with me. Let me hold you. Talk with me."

This is prayer.

This is being still, and knowing that he is God and he loves us.

How does that make you feel?

Pass out paper and markers or crayons so each person can draw their own picture

What is going on in your life that you want God to see?

What do you want God to know about how you are feeling?

How can you show in a picture what it looks like to be close to God?

Invite each family member to draw a picture of the fears, disappointments, changes going on around them, and then God's care for them,

Let's talk with God about our pictures and how we are feeling.

Lead by talking about your picture with God and how you are feeling. No need to close eyes.

Invite each person to talk with God about their picture.

Remind your children that this is prayer.

Psalm 46:10 is a verse that will be helpful ALL of our lives.

Let's repeat our verse together a few times: "Be still, and know that I am God."

Debrief by talking about this experience as a family.

What did you like or dislike about sitting still? talking about how you feel?

Is this something we should do as a family more often?

If so, when would be a good time for us to do this?

What are ways we can know God? (being thankful, talking to Him, reading Bible)

We encourage you and your family to be still, and know that He is God regularly, even finding a time daily, to come together to hear one another and talk about it with God.

ADULT PRAYER PRACTICE

The Creek's vision is: Connect People to Jesus. This prayer experience will help you connect more deeply with God AND connect more deeply in community.

PREPARE

Practice our priority of COMMUNITY by inviting others to engage in this practice with you—possibly separated by distance while being close in heart.

There will be a space for you to be still—stepping away from phones, news, social media, and other distractions that vie for your time, attention and heart. Determine the time frame for which you will do this: 15 minutes? 30 minutes? 1 hour?

Gather your Bible, pen, journal or paper, candle (opt.), a timer, the two pieces of artwork (print out or have them available on a screen) plain paper, colors or markers

QUIET

(Candle opt.) Get comfortable. Withdraw from distractions. Light a candle if you like. Quiet your body and mind. Release tension. Rest in God's presence.

Take a few slow, deep, cleansing breaths—inhaling God's love...exhaling stress...inhaling God's goodness...exhaling distractions...inhaling God's peace...exhaling heaviness.

(Bible, to read another version) Read Psalm 46 thoughtfully, taking note of what stands out to you, what pictures form in your mind.

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NOTICE

(Journal or paper, pen) What stood out to you or what pictures came to mind? Write about these in your journal or on paper. How might this relate to you right now? Write your thoughts.

Consider verse 10, "Be still, and know that I am God." The Bible tells us that God is everywhere—right here, right now—even though you cannot see him. You are being still WITH God.

Being still in this verse is a drop-your-arms, let-go-of-everything kind of still. It means release control, cease striving. How does this feel? What do you want to let go of? Write about it.

PRACTICE

(Artwork, timer) Set your timer for the allotted time you wish to be still—quieting, releasing control, ceasing to strive, receiving God's gentle presence, listening.

Enter into stillness. If you struggle, if thoughts come to mind, or if you feel the need to keep talking to God, one of these may be helpful: Picture a stream or cloud passing by on which distractions can be carried by God. He knows this is difficult for us. He invites us into this stillness with him.

While still, reflect on the artwork, not studying it, but noticing what comes to mind and what happens in your heart as you consider the verse, "Be still, and know that I am God." Be still. Know.

REFLECT

(Journal or paper, pen) When your time of stillness ends, spend time reflecting on this with God. Write out your thoughts.

PRAYER

(Artwork, plain paper, colors or markers) Prayerfully consider the changes, challenges, sadness, disappointments, fears, or loneliness you have been facing in this COVID-19 season. Write or draw these on the plain paper, to represent the dark, stormy parts of the artwork. Now, prayerfully, write or draw what you know to be true about God—the truths and attributes that remind you of his loving care—on your paper, to represent the father and child in the artwork.

(Journal or paper, pen) Reflect on what you have heard from God, what you have written, invitations you are receiving from Him. Write a prayer of response to Him.

DEBRIEF

Connect with someone and share your experiences with one another. If you didn't arrange ahead of time, ask God who you can invite to do this prayer practice, and then debrief with one another.



