

Finding Rest amidst the Chaos

“Be still, and know that I am God...” (Ps 46:10)

Isn't that a curious instruction? I wonder which is more difficult, the “knowing God” part or the “being still” part. Life whirs along so fast, we're not accustomed to being still. But that is the invitation of this passage, with a special blessing for those who pause in that stillness to know God.

A century ago, people thought that technology was going to make life less stressful. I have an old volume on my shelf called *Achievements of Americans*, published in 1859, that illustrates that optimism. Marvelling at the pace of innovation even then underway, the 19th century writers of that book exclaimed, “invention after invention crowd so thick upon us, that astonishment ... is only equaled by our wonder ... [at] the eventual result of all these ... upon our condition.” The hope was that improved technologies would bring greater harmony and peace to the human condition.

Indeed, technology has brought many improvements to modern life. But stress and distress are still with us. We can benefit greatly from continuing innovation; but we now know better than to expect technology to give us peace.

In the midst of life's pressures, Psalm 46 invites us to pause for a moment and find peace in Someone whose work transcends all our innovations. Psalm 46 calls us to the comfort of being still from our own frantic efforts long enough to refresh our hearts in the peace of knowing that the Lord is God — he watches over this wild and crazy world.

“Know that I am God,” the Scripture urges. He is there. He is in control. He carries the weight of the world. Consequently, we do not have to bear that burden. As crazy as life can be, what a comfort to remember this simple but profound truth. Good or ill, fair weather or storms, there is a Wisdom that comprehends it all and a Power that works through it all. Be still for a moment from all your pressures and strains, and know that the Lord, he is God.

Now here is the blessing we receive as we do so: we discover a stillness that remains in our hearts, even after we do go back to our work. After all, we do have work to do. And Scripture commends us to our work. But having stilled ourselves to focus afresh upon him who rules over all, there is peace in our labors. We know there is one who governs over them all and whose good purposes shall never fail.

Take some time, today, to be still and remember that the Lord, he is God over all. And rest in that comfort. If you do not know much about God, let me suggest that you sit down with a cup of something hot and thoughtfully read Isaiah chapter 45 in the Bible. Absorb what you can of that profound description of God's governing care over the world, and may you find the rest that comes from being still and knowing him.