

BE STILL

TODAY'S TEXT: Exodus 13:17 – 14:31

TODAY'S KEY VERSE: "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."
- Exodus 14:14

TODAY'S QUESTION: What does this story in the Bible tell us about what it means to "be still" and let God fight for us?

I. TO BE STILL MEANS TO TRUST GOD _____ US

A. God knew the Israelites (13:17, 18)

- > The Israelite people started out full of _____ .
- "ready for battle" (13:18); "marching out boldly" (14:8)
- > But _____ their true state of mind and what they really could handle. (14:10)

B. God knows _____

- > He knows our hearts and our _____; he knows what we are prone to do or to say; he knows what we can handle and what we can't.
- Psalm 139:1-4; John 10:14
- > God can lead us in the best way for us because he knows us _____ and _____ us well.
- He is the Good Shepherd who knows what his sheep need (Ps. 23:1-3).

To be still means to trust God knows us and, therefore, will lead us in the way that is best for us.

II. TO BE STILL MEANS TO TRUST GOD IS _____ US

A. God was with Israel (13:20-22)

- > The pillars of cloud and fire were a visible _____ of God's presence.
 - to _____ them
 - to give _____
 - to give _____ along the way
- > God was making himself seen so His people could _____ him.
- > God also moves _____ them.
 - to _____ them from their enemy
 - to give them time and space to _____ forward

B. God is with us

- > Psalm 23- The Lord's presence with us means ...
 - We lack _____.
 - He cares for our every _____.
 - He _____ us.
 - His comforting presence is with us through the darkest of times.
 - He _____ us with goodness and love.
- > He dwells _____ us
 - 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:22; John 14:16, 17; Romans 8:11

We can "be still" because we can trust God to be with us and within us.

III. TO BE STILL MEANS TO TRUST GOD HAS A _____

A. God had a specific plan for Israel (14:1-4, 16-18)

- > There was clear _____ in every single thing that happened.

B. God has a plan for us

- > When we look back and can see how God has worked in our lives, it makes it easier to look _____ and trust that He will continue to have a _____ plan for our lives.
- > God's main plan for our lives is that we would become like _____.
- Romans 8:28, 29

To be still is to surrender to God's plan and trust He is working everything for our good and, through it all, making us a reflection of Jesus.

IV. TO BE STILL MEANS TO TRUST GOD IS IN _____

A. Israel's story is a story of God's _____

- > He controls Pharaoh and his army (14:5-9, 17, 23-25, 27-28)
- > He leads Israel (13:18, 21; 14:1-4, 15, 19, 20, 29)
- > He even uses and controls _____
(13:18; 14:3, 21, 22, 25, 26-28)
- > God is at the _____ of every victory.

B. Our story is a story of God's Intervention

- > Even before we know or acknowledge God's _____ in our lives, He is intervening. (Romans 5:6-8)

We can be still because God is at work and in complete control.

V. TO BE STILL MEANS TO _____ AND _____ GOD

A. Sometimes we need to be _____ (14:14)

> "Be still" in this passage means "be quiet" or "keep silent"

*"God will fight the battle for you. And you? You keep your mouths shut."
- The Message*

B. And then we need to _____ (14:15)

> God was doing the hard work but the Israelites still had to make a _____.

> Our _____ allows God to fight for us.

When we stop crying and get moving, we are actually being still and trusting God to fight for us.

CONCLUSION:

"And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant." - Exodus 14:31, NIV

"...The people were in reverent awe before God and trusted in God and his servant Moses" - Exodus 14:31b, The Message

This is a good outcome. But, wait, there's more ...

The story of the crossing of the Red Sea is really the _____ in Israel's story. Before this happens, Israel is _____ and enslaved in Egypt; and, after they cross the Red Sea, they are _____ from a life of slavery and embarking on a journey to a relationship with God like they've never had before.

> They moved from slavery to freedom.

Our story is that God _____ by sending Jesus who, through his death on the cross and resurrection from the grave, redeemed us from sin, and established a _____ with us.

> We move from slavery to freedom.

To be still means we allow God to rescue us from our bondage to sin and we move into a life-giving relationship of freedom with Him.

LIFEGROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

To open, read Exodus 13:17 – 14:31. If you wish, assign people different "parts" to read.

Look closely at the text and make some observations about what you've read.

> Who are the characters? What can we learn about them from what they do and say? How does the setting contribute to the story? What words stand out to you? (Descriptive, emotional, or action words)

Let's do a bit more digging.

> At the outset of this journey to the sea, what is God's assessment of the Israelites' emotional state? How did He allow for that?

> With God having defeated all the gods of Egypt (see Exodus 12:2), why do you think the Israelites were afraid of one more battle? Would you have been fearful, too?

> Why did God have the people backtrack from Migdol (14:2)? What was the strategy behind that? Have you ever felt that God has made you "backtrack" in life? For what purpose would He do this?

> Why do you think slavery is preferable to death for the Israelite people (14:10-12)?

> Retrace the movement from fear (14:10-12) to faith (14:29-31). What was instrumental?

> Discuss the parallel of God rescuing Israel from slavery and leading them to freedom with how Jesus redeems us from sin so we can live in freedom.

Our key verse was: **"The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."**
(Exodus 14:14)

> What is one "sea wall" or "pursuing army" that you are facing right now? How does the key verse speak to you as you face this situation?

In the sermon, we discussed how being still means we trust that God knows us, is with us, has a good plan for us, and is in control.

> Which one of these is hardest for you to believe? Why?

We also discussed that the words "be still" meant to "stop talking" ("shut up!") and obey. (see 14:15)

> Is there a challenge or a battle with which you are faced where you need to stop talking or "crying out" and "move on" (obey)?

Close by praying for each other as we follow God from areas where we are oppressed into the freedom He has for us.