

Be Still and Know

by Devotionals

"Be still, and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10

The classic hymn "It Is Well" begins with these famous lyrics:

"When peace, like a river, attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll; whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul."

Have you heard the story of the man who wrote it? The author, Horatio G. Stafford, was a lawyer whose first major test of his faith came in 1871 when the Great Chicago Fire ruined him financially, destroying most of his real estate investments. Two years later, when his family had finally pieced their lives back together, he decided to take his wife and four daughters on a vacation. However, at the last minute, Stafford was called back on business, so his wife and children went ahead on the ship. A short time later, the ship sank, killing all four of his daughters; only his wife survived. After hearing the tragic news and setting out to travel to meet his grieving wife, Stafford penned the classic hymn. How was Stafford able to write "It is well, it is well with my soul" despite the tragedy he experienced? And how can we remain faithful to God's truth even in desperate times when we feel far from Him? The few short words of God in Psalm 46:10 will help us understand. First God says to "be still." In other words, don't panic! Sure, you may be thinking, that's easy enough to say, but quite tough to do when it feels like your world has been turned upside down. That's why God told us to "know that I am God."

Note carefully what God did *NOT* say. He did not say "Be still, and *FEEL* that I am God." He said "Be still, and *KNOW* that I am God." Regardless of how we may feel, if we know that God is there alive awaiting us in the Blessed Sacrament, and that His Word is true, we will be able to have confidence in Him and praise Him, regardless of our temporary feelings. This doesn't mean that feelings should be ignored or marginalized. But it does suggest that feelings are fleeting and uncertain, while God's promises are everlasting and certain. Therefore we must try to pray and trust based on what we know in times of tragedy rather than primarily on how we feel.

If today you are feeling "peace, like a river", thank God and increase in knowledge so that you will prepare yourself for times of trouble. And if you are instead at a time "when sorrows like sea billows roll" don't focus on your temporary feelings, but focus instead on the knowledge that God loves you, Jesus died for you, and, like Paul said as he suffered in prison, "I know the one in whom I trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until the day of his return." (1 Timothy 1:12)

"Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul."

Take time to listen to this great song: It is well with my soul by Kristene DiMarco https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Wb_WD1emFQ