

THIS CHRISTMAS,

Be Still



grace is great. He gave us His only Son, Jesus Christ. You may wonder why God gave His Son. The answer is simple. God gave His Son out of love (1 John 4:10).

God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son to die on a cross for the forgiveness of our sins (John 3:16). Because of love, He paved the way for us to receive redemption: “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). Jesus gave His life for us because of love (1 John 3:16). He rose again on the third day and is sitting at the right hand of God, interceding on our behalf. You may wonder why He would go to such great lengths for you. It is because of God’s great love for humankind.

The Bible says we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Every single person is in dire need of salvation. Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick” (Matt. 9:12). In like manner, the souls of every single person on earth are full of sin. The only anecdote for sin is the blood of Jesus Christ. He is the only way to Heaven. If you are looking for everlasting hope, a constant friend and help in times of trouble, pray these words:

Dear Jesus, Thank You for loving me unconditionally. I believe You died on the cross and rose again. Please forgive me of my sins. Come into my heart and make me a new creation. I want to live for You. I want to worship and adore you forever. Help me share Your love with others. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

If you prayed this prayer, I encourage you to read the Bible, find a church family who can encourage you in your new walk with Christ, and most importantly, pray for God to help you.

May God bless you always,
Jennifer Campbell (jennifer@christwillreturn.org)

Visit www.jennifercampbell.net/sunshine to read a free chapter of Jennifer’s new inspirational book, *When You’re in the Sunset, There’s Sunshine Awaiting You*, which is now available on Amazon. You can also download a free mp3 of her original song, “There’s Sunshine Awaiting You.”

Visit www.cwrmusic.org and www.jennifercampbell.net for free articles, free mp3 downloads, and Jennifer’s *Be Encouraged* webcast.

©2019 Jennifer Campbell – Permission is hereby granted to print copies of this article in complete unedited form for free distribution. Download the free PDF version at www.christwillreturn.org. Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New International Version®, NIV®, Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked KJV are taken from the Holy Bible, King James Version.

This article was written by an English teacher. It was not written or produced by any particular religious group or denomination. It is provided free of charge as an expression of God’s love for mankind.

Earlier this month, I developed cellulitis in my arm. For nearly a week, I did little more than sit still as I rested my arm, praying the infection would subside. During this time, I had time to consider the things that are truly important. This Christmas season, let us not get wrapped up in all of the holiday preparations. Instead, let us slow down and focus on the One who matters most. The most valuable thing we can do is to be still and know that He is God!

One day as I was sitting at home, unable to be at school teaching my classes, I was reminded once again of God’s message to all of us. He said, “Be still, and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10). As I pondered this verse with my arm propped up on two pillows, I made a choice right then and there. Rather than worrying about everything I should have been doing, I chose to put my trust in Him. Even though I was unable to be at work or even do things around the house to get ready for the upcoming holidays, I was confident God would work all things together for good (Rom. 8:28).

Sometimes, it is easy for us to put our eyes on the situation instead of the Savior. What matters in life is not whether the Christmas tree is decorated, the cards are mailed, and the gifts are wrapped. The most important thing in life is to fix our eyes on “Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2 KJV). When we keep our eyes on Him, then He will help us remain still, letting go of our worries.

Surely, the concept of letting go of our worries must sound somewhat preposterous, especially during the busy holiday season. Most of us likely have a to-do list that would rival that of any other time of year. On the surface, though, do all of those things really matter? Twenty years from now, will anyone remember whether you baked ten varieties or just three varieties of your favorite sprinkle-covered cookies? I highly doubt it would matter if you wrapped one less gift or ran one less errand either. Even if your Christmas tree did not make an appearance one holiday, the world would still just keep on spinning. Although the numerous holiday preparations and

celebrations are fun and festive, getting ourselves tied into knots over the everyday stresses will certainly not help the fanfare at all.

Philippians 4:6-7 says, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” God’s Word says we should not be anxious, but pray and thank God for all He has done. Then, we will have peace beyond all understanding (Phil. 4:6-7). When we put our trust in the only living God, we do not have any cause for worry, no matter how hopeless our situation may seem.

In the fall of 2018, I endured one of the most difficult trials of my life. A severe throbbing in my right leg escalated into a three-month long battle, which threatened my life. Many days, I would sit on our sofa at home with tears rolling down my cheeks because of the intensity of the pain. The symptoms caused critical side effects, including dangerously high blood pressure. Following multiple scans, tests, and appointments, the doctors at Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville presented some discouraging images on September 28, 2018. The screen showed what looked like a mass, which had grown to the entire width of my leg. As I heard the physicians saying words like “cancer,” “oncology,” and “amputation,” my mind raced with the implications of the possible diagnoses. I remember crying myself to sleep that night, wondering what the coming days would bring.

Even in the midst of these dismal circumstances, I had peace beyond all human understanding. My dad and I held on to the promise in God’s Word that says we can receive healing through the stripes Jesus bore on the cross (Is. 53:5). We knew God would walk beside us in the midst of this horrible trial. In October, I had surgery to repair damaged arteries in my leg. I thank God for the surgeon who operated on my leg for three hours, and I give all the glory, honor, and praise to the Great Physician who allowed me to avoid cancer and to keep my leg as well. Despite what the medical experts were telling me, I knew God would never fail. I had calm assurance that He would guide me through this dark valley.

In my situation, I had no choice but to literally sit still due to the severity of my physical condition. Although there are times when we physically cannot move, we also need to be mindful of the times

when we should be still in a different sense. Psalm 46:10 says, “Be still, and know that I am God.” God could have plainly said, “I am God.” Instead, He began this statement with the words, “Be still.” This command comes from the Hebrew word *raphah*, which means “to let go.” God said we should surrender our lives to Him, with complete knowledge that He is God. This means we must turn loose of our worry, fully relying on God.

If you are walking through a difficult season of life, ask God to help you let go of your anxieties. Turn loose of everything that weighs you down. First Peter 5:7 says, “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” God is always faithful. Even amid the vilest situations in life, He is the refuge you can depend upon. He will help you cross every raging river and ascend every massive mountain. Remember, though, before you race off, ready to forge rivers and climb mountains, you must be still. Psalm 37:7 says, “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.”

Amid all of the noise and chaos of this life, we must all slow down, listening carefully for the Lord’s still, small voice. No matter the season, let us not get carried away with the cares of this world. While there are things we like to do this time of year, we should never place our trust in Christmas. Instead, we should put our trust in Jesus. He is “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). Through Christ, we have hope beyond a holiday. Jesus is the “hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). Worldly traditions can never give such hope.

This Christmas, be still. Place your focus on Jesus Christ, the One who gave His life for you and me. He loves us more than we could ever imagine. Unlike the temporary trappings of this world, the love Jesus Christ has for all of us will never fade away. He is the “same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb. 13:8). In a world that is ever-changing, our Lord and Savior will never change. His love and faithfulness endure forever (Ps. 117:2). Instead of living in a state of stress, live your life with total confidence that God has everything under control. Be still, and know that He is God!

Every Christmas, I am striving more and more to keep my eyes on Jesus Christ. Even as I select special items to give to my family and friends, I want these items to remind them of my love for them, and in turn, the immeasurable love Jesus has for all of us. To me, the greatest joy in giving a gift is sharing my love with someone else. Nevertheless, our giving is small and the gift of God’s love and