

“Listening For the Still, Small Voice”

Scripture: Psalm 62: 1-8

Kimmy Laumann

Things I'd like to remember from today's sermon:

Meditation Moments for Monday, Aug 11- Read Psalms 46. One of my favorite passages about being at peace with God is the phrase, “Be still and know that I am God.” I like to break it down like this:

Be still and know that I am God- Don't worry about anything because God is God, he is who he says he is and will provide.

Be still and know that I am- God is the great I Am. You can inset many metaphors to describe God and he will always be there for every situation.

Be still and know- know that no matter the situation, you can trust God

Be still- rest in God and he will give you peace

Try breaking the statement down in chunks like this going up and then down. I find it peaceful and a great reminder that no matter what happens, God is always the solution.

Pray: Father God, I pray that I find peace in who you are. You have every situation in your hands and I know I have been told that before, but help me trust it and surrender it to you. Be still and know that I am God. Be still and know that I am. Be still and know. Be still. Be still. Be still and know. Be still and know that I am. Be still and know that I am God. Amen

Tuesday, Aug 12- Read psalm 62. What does the first verse instruct us to do? Rest in The Lord. The very first thing, before we think about surrendering or trusting, we are instructed to rest. When we are resting we are working on trusting and surrendering, but our focus is not in those, sometimes, overwhelming tasks. To rest in God is peaceful and reviving. And we are asked to do it first thing. The first thing in our day should involve some form of rest- readings scripture, praying, or just being in his presence. When we do that, everything else in our day will fall into place since we have started focusing on the right thing.

Pray: Loving God, thank you for waking me up today. I pray for the reminder that I have to rest in you every day. The world will go on without me running it, because you have it in your hands. Please help me to find more rest in you and to help me focus on you throughout the day. Amen

Wednesday, Aug 13-The song we listened to in service, "Spirit Flow" by the Jordan Howerton band, reminds us of the spirit that flows through us. Some of the lyrics are: "God come alive in me, so I can clearly see how to be more like you." These speak to me about becoming more sanctified, becoming more Holy and like Christ. It invites the spirit into our souls to be more like Jesus Christ to the world. The chorus is "Spirit flow inside my soul. I'm letting go of everything I've known. So take control, Spirit Flow." This reminds me that when we let the still, small voice get inside of us, we are able to surrender and give God control of our lives.

Pray: God, I pray that as I listen to more Christian songs, I listen to the lyrics more to reflect what they mean. I pray that I allow your still, small voice to invade my life so that I can surrender my life more fully to you. Amen

Thursday, Aug 14-Read 1 King 19:9-13. In verse 11, the Lord asks Elijah to be in the "presence of the Lord". This is important because Elijah is instructed to open his heart and thoughts to the Lord. He is being prepared for The Lord to appear to him. And how does God appear to Elijah? In a gentle whisper. He was not in the obvious wind, earthquake, or fire. The Lord decided to have Elijah wait patiently before him and appeared in a peaceful way that was unexpected. Is there a way that you are not expecting God to appear in your life? Are you open to it happening?

Pray: God, I pray that you are preparing my heart for where I will hear your still, small voice next. I ask that I be open to many possibilities and be searching for you always. Amen

Friday, Aug 15-Read Exodus 3:1-6. Moses first saw the bush that was on fire, but not burning up. He went to it and then God decided to speak to him through it. God used the situation that Moses was in to communicate with him. The way God appeared to Moses was impactful and wasn't necessarily still and small. The peace it brings to our souls, makes it still. God can appear to us in unimaginable ways.

Pray: Loving God, thank you for appearing to people differently. I pray that however you choose to send your still, small voice next, I will receive it. Amen

Saturday, Aug 16-Resting in the Lord every day in some way is super important. There are so many different ways to do that. You can start a bible reading plan and read scripture every morning or take a walk every night and praise God for everything in your life. You can quiet yourself before God and focus your mind on him in a way that you only let your mind wonder when you get a divine nudge. You can do a hobby and glorify God through it. Knit hats for orphans, garden and give the produce to people in need, take pictures to be in awe of God's beauty, or write a song for God. The ideas are limitless of everything you can do to find rest in God. The key is to do it every day and to have it better focus us on God.

Pray: God, I pray that I can find at least one new way that I can glorify you and spend more time with you. I pray that the rest I find in you is sufficient and fills me up enough for the day. Amen

Listening For the Still, Small Voice

Sermon Series: I will Give You Rest

Preached by: Kimmy Laumann

August 9 and 10, 2014

Hi! My name is Kimmy Laumann and I am honored to be your guest speaker today. I have been interning this summer and it has been the best and most fulfilling summer of my life. I have learned so much because of the internship, thus I have grown more in my faith than I could have imagined. I am so grateful for this blessing and this church. Thank you so much. A lot of people stop and ask me what I do for the internship, so let me answer all the questions at once. Over the summer, Sarah Leavitt and I have been working 20 hours a week at the church in all the ministry areas. We are both interested in becoming pastors so we focused on the pastoral track. I learned the structure of the Methodist church by attending meetings and learning about the budget. I went on a visit with Pastor Roger to visit homebound folks and worked with the children's ministry as a tribe leader at VBS. I went on youth trips for middle school and high school and I organized a Love Out Loud event for the youth. I worked in the office, attended dinner with the pastors, ran slides, and was the gofer for any staff member. I worked with the music ministry and participated in the choir, picked out the hymns for a week, and will be singing in the praise band next week. Sarah and I wrote a 40 day devotional for Rooted, helped lead a women's bible study, and went on a backpacking trip with some other girls. Some of the most fulfilling things I have had the privilege of being a part is being mentored to rest in the Lord. I met weekly with Cherie and we would talk along the river about life and ministry and God. I learned how to love people before politics in the church. The staff is such a community and I am blessed to be a part of it. I learned through Pastor Jeff how to bring a community together to work towards one goal: Loving the Lord first, and then loving others.

I was reminded that if we are not filling ourselves up, we will burn out. And I did burn out at times this summer. I was not filling myself up first. This internship has taught me to find rest so that I can continue to love others. I have struggled with this my whole life.

I grew up in Aurora, Colorado. When someone would ask me how I was, my response was always “busy.” And I said it with such pride and joy. I wasn’t unhappy, but I was always going from place to place. In high school, I sang in three choirs, one of which I was the student director of, I was in marching band, symphonic band, theatre, drama club and thespian society president. I was the student council senior class vice president. I was the president of the Christian club, a member of the National Honors Society and Tri-M Music Honors Society. I participated in stage crew club, improve club, fellowship of Christian athletes and things I cannot even remember. I literally had to quit clubs because I could not fit them into my schedule. On top of all that, I tap danced for 13 years, sang in a community choir for 14 years, took piano lessons for 8 years and was fully involved in church. I sang in choir, played in two bell choirs, started the youth praise band, went to Sunday school and youth group and have been on nine mission trips. I didn’t know what the word rest meant. Though, God has some wise words about it

Today’s scripture is about reminding us to find rest in the Lord.

Our scripture is Psalm 62:1-8

SLIDE:

**¹I wait quietly before God,
for my victory comes from him.
²He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress where I will never be shaken.
³So many enemies against one man—
all of them trying to kill me.**

**To them I'm just a broken-down wall
or a tottering fence.**
⁴ They plan to topple me from my high position.
They delight in telling lies about me.
They praise me to my face
but curse me in their hearts.
⁵ Let all that I am wait quietly before God,
for my hope is in him.
⁶ He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress where I will not be shaken.
⁷ My victory and honor come from God alone.
He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me.
⁸ O my people, trust in him at all times.
Pour out your heart to him,
for God is our refuge. (NLT)

Another version says: "Truly my soul finds rest in God" for verse one. Our lives are all about our soul finding rest in God. The scripture talks about evil things that happen to us: people talking behind our backs, people being against us, people spreading rumors and plots to ruin our lives. I put my trust and hope in God though, because he has my life in his hands. I will rest my soul and life in him because he is my salvation, my eternity and nothing matters as long as I have him.

A few weeks ago, I was sitting at dinner with my grandparents and some of their friends and I got to talking with one of them. She asked me what "spirituality" means to our generation. I responded by saying, "That's a very good question. Let me get back to you on that" I posted a question on Facebook asking "When I say 'spirituality,' what do you think of? (Definition, insights, thoughts) I got responses from all ages!

SLIDE: **Spirituality is the very essence of who a person is...it's what fills up the carcass that is the body....it is the glow, the respect and love that you feel for other people and the world that we are blessed with. It is a living part of who you are and must be nurtured in order to keep it alive and growing.**

SLIDE: **How one acts and interacts with the world based on the relationship they have with God. I suppose in the case they didn't believe in God, it would be the relationship with whatever higher power they believe in.**

SLIDE: **That which feeds the spirit is spirituality or the pursuit of same**

SLIDE: **Spirituality: an inner feeling of peace. A meaningful life enhanced by meditation (prayer), study, and acts of compassion and love. (1Cor 13:13)**

SLIDE: **Listening with the intent to understand a very deep feeling of faith**

To me, being spiritual doesn't mean you are religious. It just has to do with a spirit and something more than your body. One definition I found said that it is:

SLIDE: **Spirituality is a re-formation which aims to recover the original shape of man, to the image of God. To accomplish this, the re-formation is oriented by a mold, which represents the original shape: in Judaism-the Torah, in Christianity-Christ, in Buddhism-Buddha, and in Islam-Muhammad.**

This says that we are working our way to be more like Christ, sanctification. And how do we do that? Through the Holy Spirit, That is the still, small voice that we find rest in as Christians. It is part of Christ and it what flows through us every day of our life.

The most meaningful time I felt God's still small voice was during my call into ministry, and the impact was not still or small. I was at a youth conference the summer between my junior and senior year of high school. It was a massive conference with thousands of youth from all over the US. This was the first time I had raised my hands in worship and God was working in my heart. I decided to go to a workshop by myself called "Praying with Your Imagination." When I got there, the facilitator invited us to lay our heads on the desk and imagine what he was describing through a different kind of prayer. He referred to Matthew 5:14, saying that "You are the light of the world" He asked us to imagine that we were in a field and that we saw a cabin and to go inside the cabin. I had been to this cabin and I felt at home at this cabin that I was imagining. He then said that we saw a light. (You know in Harry Potter when they say a spell to make the end of their wands light up to lead them in the dark? Well that's how I imagined the light.) The ball of light was floating up and I could feel myself floating up with it. And then I heard a voice. I had never heard this voice before. It was firm, but gentle, not soft but not harsh. It said "Kimmy, you are going to go into ministry. You are going to be a pastor. You are going to do great things. Kimmy you are going into ministry. Kimmy you are going into ministry." I started to float back down to the floor and the ball of light, who I have concluded was the Holy Spirit, started to float up and I was protesting back saying "What no, I want to go into space. I want to be an engineer. No God, No." But it was gone, and then the cabin had disappeared and I was there in the meadow and I then came back to reality.

I didn't tell anyone what happened until the last day of that trip. I didn't know if it was real or what had happened. I told my youth pastor and she started to cry because she was so happy for me. My dad, who was a chaperone on the trip, saw, and I told him. My family is the biggest supporter of me going into ministry.

Now some of you may not believe my story and that is totally fine. I know it was real and I felt God. I have never felt him in the same way or heard a voice like that since. But never the less, it was God's still, small voice.

At this point, I thought I wanted to be a youth pastor because it would be fun and easy. (Youth ministry is fun, but it has its challenges like everything in life.) This past November, I went to another conference for young people who were discerning ministry and that was where God laid it on my heart to become an ordained elder. Elders are called to order the life of the church. That is a big responsibility. Many of them are the senior pastors of churches and preach every week. This freaks me out to this day and this is how I know it is God. They said at the weekend that

SLIDE: God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called.

It was God's still, small voice talking to my heart, just laying what he wanted onto it. A few months after that, I had a friend text me this:

SLIDE: I was reading this morning and came across this quote "Our fears don't change God's plans for us but understanding God's plans can change our fears. God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the call." Love you and praying over you this morning!

It was so uplifting, encouraging, and was totally a God moment. Not a coincidence, but all totally God. He was reminding me that I am called to do his work.

I hear God's still small voice in many different ways as long as I am open to it. One way that I mentioned that is huge to me since I am a people person is through people. I was on a middle school mission trip with my home church a few weeks ago and the youth pastor prayed

before every meal or snack or any food we ate. It was such a reminder how great God is to bless us with all the food we are given and we are to give thanks to him for it. Through the youth pastor's reminder, I witnessed God's still, small voice as a reminder to thank him for everything he has given us.

I also find God's still, small voice in little ways when I pray. This summer, I also worked as a lifeguard at the rec center and one day I couldn't find my guard swim suit. I had searched my room everywhere I could think of and was out of ideas. I asked God to please help me find it, and like magic, it was in the dirty clothes hamper. How it ended up there, I have no clue, but I was thankful that I heard his voice through finding my suit.

That is just one way that I hear God's still, small voice. There is no right or wrong way to hear it. It will be different for each and every person. God knows how to talk to everyone, but it is part of our journey to find out how he best talks to us. And it can be in many different forms.

God talked to people in the bible in a variety of ways.

- God talked to Job in the wind
- God was an earth quake to Moses at the giving of the 10 commandments
- God was the fire at the burning bush to Moses
- God talked to Elijah as a sheer whisper.

God can be blunt or work in mysterious ways. There is an article in the magazine *Guidepost* called "His mysterious ways" which is a place that people can submit God stories. The stories reveal crazy ways that God has worked in their lives. His voice is present to the writers and the readers.

As I started to spend more and more quiet time with God, I thought that the only way that I could find rest in God and hear his voice was to sit, pray, and read my bible for two hours a day. I do not like to do that. I am an extreme extrovert and love to move around and experience God. I love to try new things and not have a set routine. I read a book called *Spirituality For Extroverts* and learned different ways that I can experience God.

- Meditating in ways that lets your mind wonder but focus on God
- Singing and dancing/moving in worship
- Talking through things with friends
- Going for a prayer walk or a pilgrimage- whether it's a day long hike or over seas
- Journaling
- Gardening
- Photography

As I prayed about the different way I was with God, I learned that I heard God's voice in lots of them. Sometimes I liked to just be by myself and listen to what The Lord has to say to me in silence. Other times I will journal my thoughts of scripture and feelings and I can do it for an hour. Some days I prefer to take a walk and verbally talk to God or sing worship songs. I would walk my dog every morning last summer and I called them worship walks as I would listen to worship music as we walked around the neighborhood. I like to try different things to hear God's voice. As long as I am resting in The Lord and am open to what he has to say to me, I know my day is going in the right direction.