

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in a time of trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gives way, and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her; she will not fall; God will help her at the break of day. For the Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Therefore, be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations.*

Of the 24 hours God has saw fit to give you in your day, how many of those hours are consumed with noise, noise, nothing but noise in some form or fashion? Of the 1440 minutes God has entrusted to you in your day, how many of those minutes do you spend performing tasks that not only leave you worse for the wear, but also weary because you know that much of tomorrow's 1440 minutes will be spent doing the exact same thing? Out of the 86,400 seconds God has assigned you to spend wisely in your day, how many of those seconds do you spend turning down the volume on your noise dial and pressing pause on the busy button just so you can experience that God is your refuge and strength and an ever-present help in a time of trouble? In short, how many hours, minutes or seconds in your day do you make the concentrated effort to be still and know that God is God? If the answer to the last question is anything like "Derrick, I don't take as much time to be still and know that God is God as I could or should," then this message is for you today. Here's why: Nearly every hour in every day of our lives seems to be driven by noise in some form or fashion. We wake up to noise. We eat breakfast to noise. We work with noise. We unwind with noise. We eat dinner with noise. And we sleep with noise. Every single day. And with the noise comes the busyness. We wake up making a list. And we go to bed with three more lists from other people in addition to our own. And the lists are so palpable in our minds that we wake up at night thinking about them. As a result, every second of our day gets so occupied by noise and things to do that we cut out the one thing that we really need to do but can't find the time for. It is this: to spend time in stillness before the Lord God Almighty; to find refuge in the shelter of His wings.

Jesus' life was noisy and busy also. In fact, that's one of the key themes of the Gospel of Mark. On one of his first days on the job as Messiah, he started the morning by preaching a sermon with a heckler in the audience. And he ended his morning casting a demon out of him after the service. Then, after lunch, he healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law from a disease. But the day was only halfway over. After dinner, the people of Capernaum thought it best to bring every person in the town that was either sick or possessed to his doorstep while supper was on the table. And Jesus, consequently, obliged; taking the time to heal those who needed it and cast out the devil from those who needed spiritual intervention before desert was even served and 60 Minutes came on television. And that was only one day at the office for the One who spoke the heavens and the earth into existence. There would be many more like it for our Lord Jesus. More days of noise, noise, and more noise. More days of lists, lists, and more lists. Days that could have made him weary and worse for the wear. But they didn't. You see church, in the passage before us today, you are going to notice one verse sandwiched between all the noise and all the lists of Jesus' day. It isn't a verse describing another healing, or another exorcism. Nor is it a verse chronicling another disciple's calling or another baptism. Instead, it is verse Mark specifically includes for those of us who get so occupied by noise and lists that we cut out the one thing we really need to do but can't find the time for. It is a verse where Jesus makes time to be still before his heavenly father. It is one where he retreats to commune with the God who was his refuge and strength and a very present help in a time of trouble and weariness. Here is why you need to be still and listen this morning: if Jesus couldn't face the day's noises and lists without being still before His Heavenly Father, neither can you. Without being still before the Lord, the noises will leave us weary, and the toil of our lists will leave us worse for the wear. But the reverse is also true. Being still before the Lord will give us sufficient strength to face the noises and accomplish the tasks God has for us before the sun sets. So today church, I want to give you 4 reasons why Jesus took the time to be still before His Father who art in heaven. As you hear the Word of the Lord today, I'm sure Jesus' reasons for eschewing noises and lists for stillness before His Heavenly Father will find fertile soil for application in your heart today. Turn with me to Mark 1:29-39. The volume of noises and lists you will see in the passage will help you understand Jesus' need for stillness before God Almighty.

*<sup>29</sup> As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. <sup>30</sup> Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. <sup>31</sup> So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. <sup>32</sup> That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon possessed. <sup>33</sup> The whole town gathered at the door, <sup>34</sup> and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was. <sup>35</sup> Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. <sup>36</sup> Simon and his companions went to look for him, <sup>37</sup> and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" <sup>38</sup> Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." <sup>39</sup> So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.*

#### 4 Reasons Jesus Took Time to Be Still:

##### 1. The Noise of Misunderstanding People

- **The Most Misunderstood Kitchen Item of All Time:** (1) Isn't the microwave or food processor; (2) It's the bottom drawer of your oven; (3) It took me 47 years of my life to learn this just a month ago. "Derrick, would you get the food out of the warming drawer of the oven?" (4) "Ah, excuse me, warming drawer? No comprehende senior. And I couldn't find any food in the oven." (5) "No, the warming drawer underneath

the oven to keep food warm.” (6) “Oh, I thought it was for cupcake pans.” (7) So, in case you didn’t know, the warming drawer under the oven isn’t meant for cupcake pans. Food goes in that bad boy so it will stay warm. Poor warming drawer.

- **Main Idea of the Point:** Jesus took the time to be still before His Heavenly Father because people didn’t understand His mission. The masses came for His healing touch, not the salvation of their souls. They wanted to be healed by the “magical” healing, not the Son of God. Noise. Noise. And More Noise. Lists. Lists. And More Lists.
- **Textual Emphasis: Noise on the Sabbath and After the Sabbath:** (1) 1:22-28 (i.e., last week’s passage) and 1:29-39 all focus on Jesus’ ministry on the Sabbath or just after the Sabbath; (2) On the Sabbath – (1) Taught in the synagogue; which includes answering questions; (2) Exorcised a demon possessed man in the synagogue; (3) And healed Peter’s mother-in-law; (3) After the Sabbath – When the sunset (their way of telling time), people came in droves to be healed and exorcised; (4) The one who created a Sabbath to be still before the Lord had no time to be still before His Heavenly Father is the idea; (5) Add in the fact that people demanded healing (including disciple’s family), not to know the Son of God and you have a recipe for weariness.
- **App:** The noise of people who don’t know, or really care to know, who you are and what you are about – they only want something from you – creates weariness. The only antidote is stillness before the God who knows exactly who you are.

## 2. The Noise of Misplaced Priorities

- **The Heinz Company and Ketchup Bottles:** (1) The Heinz Company makes a lot of condiments. They make mustard and mayonnaise, even apple cider vinegar. But the number one seller of all time for Heinz will always be ketchup. (2) And if they want to continue to prioritize their ketchup, they need to do away glass bottled ketchup or make sure they attach an instruction manual to it? (3) If you don’t believe me, go to Ruby Tuesdays at peak times. You’ll see at least 10 people in that restaurant using all their power to try to get that ketchup out of the bottle. (4) Keep it in the plastic; or include an instruction manual. Not everyone knows you must tap the practically invisible 57 at the top to make it come out.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** Jesus took the time to be still before His Heavenly Father because His disciples hadn’t yet prioritized the Kingdom of God that Jesus called them to leave their homes, nets and boats to proclaim. Just a few verses ago Simon and Andrew left their nets to follow Jesus. Now Jesus is in their home because they want Him to do something for him. Noise. Noise. And More Noise. Lists. Lists. And More Lists.
- **Textual Emphasis: I Thought the Disciple’s Left Their Nets?** (1) Thirteen verses ago Simon Peter and Andrew left their nets in their boat and left the shores of Galilee to follow Jesus; (2) Ten verses ago James and John left their father in the boat to follow Jesus; (3) Now they are all here in Simon and Andrew’s home and wanting Jesus to do something there; (4) The text mildly implies that they weren’t quite yet all in with their Kingdom Priorities. They wanted to follow. But they didn’t want to follow with reckless abandon (they would later).
- **App:** When you have a passion for something – something that burns inside – and people, though they may be with you – don’t share the same priorities, then the result is weariness. The only antidote is stillness before God who knows exactly what you are about.

## 3. The Noise of Imminent Problems

- **When Lowes and Home Depot Have the Forklift Out:** (1) Have you ever noticed when Home Depot or Lowes have the forklift out on the prowl, they shut half the store down? (2) The block off half the aisles with caution tape and warning blinkers. (3) People will wait for about 10 minutes. But if it takes any longer than that, people in the store start weighing the odds: Do I risk it and pass over the caution tape and warning blinkers straight toward imminent danger? Or do I hope beyond all hope they will finish what they are doing with the forklift and open the aisle sometime before Christmas?
- **Main Idea of the Point:** Jesus took the time to be still before His Heavenly Father because He was aware of the precedent, he was setting on the Sabbath to heal and to touch (people with sickness were not touched; most especially women). He knew the imminent problems that would arise from similar acts in the future. Noise. Noise. And More Noise. Lists. Lists. And More Lists.
- **Textual Emphasis: Trouble on the Sabbath and for Breaking Cultural Norms is on the Horizon for Jesus:** (1) 1:29-30 details two events that would have shocked Mark’s first readers. (1) Jesus heals on the Sabbath – Jesus’ ministry had not yet drawn the attention of the Pharisees and religious leaders, but it would. And they will later confront Jesus for his ministry on the Sabbath. Even in modern times, Pharisees don’t even push elevator buttons on the Sabbath, much less heal someone. (2) Jesus touches a sick woman – In those days, touching a sick person would make you unclean. They had no knowledge of communicable vs incommunicable diseases. Add in the fact that Jesus touched the hand of a diseased woman, and you have major problems when that news spreads. And it would.
- **App:** When it comes to religion, there are usually two types of people that are deeply religious: (a) Those that care about being viewed in a certain way; (b) Those that care more about loving God and loving people. When you love God and love people and others care more about being thought of as loving God and people than they actually do, the result is weariness. The only antidote for that is stillness before the Lord.

## 4. The Noise of Manipulating Power

- **The Harry Potter Wand at Universal Studios:** (1) If you go to Universal Studios in Orlando, you’ll notice a lot of people – young and old – dressed like Harry Potter – and waving a Harry Potter Wand around. (2) I didn’t know what they were doing. But I did when my kids asked me

to one for them. (3) And for 3 easy payments of \$200 they now have their very own Harry Potter Wands that they can wave around Universal at wield the power of the Great Harry Potter.

- **Main Idea of the Point:** Jesus took the time to be still before His Heavenly Father because the disciple's had already started planning how they could manipulate and wield His power for their personal benefit. Noise. Noise. And More Noise. Lists. Lists. And More Lists.
- **Textual Emphasis: When Those Not In Authority Think They Are:** (1) In verse 35, Jesus finally retreats to stillness; (2) But while he is in communion with his Heavenly Father, it gets interrupted by the disciples (particularly Peter); (3) And Peter gives Jesus a subtle rebuke: "Everyone is looking for you;" (4) As if to say, Jesus you don't have time to pray. You are wasting it by praying when there are others that need to be healed and exorcised. So, let's go. (5) And Jesus' stillness is interrupted by the disciples who had no authority, but demanded it be wielded to their liking and benefit.
- **App:** When you are in a position of influence, you will always notice people who insist you wield that influence to their advantage. If you don't, you can expect rebuke. When you feel surrounded by that at times — no matter the setting — the only antidote is stillness before the Lord. For all authority belongs to Him. So, take time to be still before the Lord, starting today.