

BE STILL

MATT SEARLES

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PSALM DEVOTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him (Ps 37:7)

Ours is a restless, rushed society. Life seems to move ever faster each year. We struggle to fit as much in as we can, and many of us rarely pause for reflection. Perhaps the same is true of our spiritual lives. We can so easily feel that our walk with the Lord is just one extra thing to squeeze in to our crowded days and weeks.

But rather than the Lord being just another clamouring voice making demands on our time and energy, in fact he is the one who gives rest. He came to carry our burdens, not lay burdens on us. Psalm 37 has the repeated instruction 'do not fret'. Fretting and restless activity are the hallmarks of those who have no loving heavenly father to provide for them. But David tells us to 'Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.'

These devotions are intended to help you do just that. Over the past year I've been more conscious of the need just to 'be still' before the Lord; to spend time meditating on just a verse or two of scripture, and to turn them back to him in prayer.

Thomas Brooks, a seventeenth-century church leader, described the importance of slowing down in this way:

"Remember that it is not hasty reading but serious meditation on holy and heavenly truths, that makes them prove sweet and profitable

PSALM 16 v 1 *Dependence*

Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. (Ps 16:1)

Psalm 16 is a beautiful example of what it means to have one's heart set on God. David pours out his heart to his Lord in prayer, and in so doing paints a portrait of the devoted life: dependence, delight, fellowship, turning from idols, contentment, security, hope and joy.

David is not doing this to shame or intimidate us, rather he is giving us an example to follow. These are words to grow into. David calls us to sing along with him, and allow the Lord to retune our hearts so that we grow more and more into these wonderful characteristics. You might want to skim the whole psalm now and think which aspect of David's devotion you find most appealing.

—*Selah*—

David begins the psalm by asking the Lord to preserve him — to keep him safe. These are words to cry out to God in times of deep distress, in affliction and trial. These are words we would do well to learn and store in our heart for times when we need to cry out to God.

But in this psalm these words aren't spoken in time of distress. Rather they find themselves in a warm, joyous psalm of devotion to God, sung by the worshipping congregation of Israel.