

## ARE YOU QUIET INSIDE?

### Psalm 131

**Intro:** One of our family's favorite shows is a British Sci-Fi show called Dr. Who. It first aired in 1963 and they are now on their 14<sup>th</sup> actor playing the role of the Doctor. Dr. Who is a friendly alien from a now nearly extinct race of beings called Time Lords. He picks up humans on earth and they go whizzing around through time and space having adventures. His time machine is called the TARDIS. On the outside it looks like a blue British public phone booth. However, on the inside it is huge. In the 61 years the show has been on the air, the only room we've ever seen is the large control room by the entrance to the TARDIS. The Doctor and his companions speak of many other rooms but it always amazes people who go inside of it because it's much larger on the inside than on the outside, due to Time Lord science of bending time and space. It's one of the running jokes on the show.

You would think that the idea of something being bigger on the inside than the outside is an impossibility in our real world way of things. Yet, it turns out that there is at least one thing that has the possibility of being bigger on the inside than the outside and that is noise caused by trouble, anxiety, fear, doubt and concern. Think about it. One small thing may happen outwardly but due to the way it resonates in your mind, it may become very large to you. We often call this turning the mole hill into a mountain. The issue isn't the external noises of life - our lives can appear calm or they be as loud and busy as a NASCAR race - what the issue is whether or not in your heart and mind you are experiencing quiet or the bluster of the world. The problem is that some Christians never experience the peace God has given them and wants them to experience. Their lives are jacked up and torqued so tightly that they are never peaceful inwardly. On the other hand, there are believers who appear to have mastered possessing internal peace only to find out that it was blissful ignorance. When the blinders came off and they were enlightened on the truth of a matter, they lost their peace immediately. The truth of the Bible is that our

Lord Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He wants you to experience peace that surpasses understanding. This morning I want you to take inventory of your life today and ask yourself one question, "Am I quiet on the inside?" If not, the Lord has a path that leads to becoming quiet inwardly, where it counts.

**Text: Psalm 131** (*read it*)

**T.S.** - Before we read this Psalm, there are three points that need to be made about it. First, it was written by David who suffered more than just a few hardships and temptations in his life. Yet, through all of them, he is called as a man after God's own heart (I Sam . 13:14). He lived through a life of chaos and trouble but saw the Lord in all of it. The second thing about this Psalm is that what it isn't about. It has nothing to do with the life of stoic indifference, the life detached from reality, or about learning to have an easy-going personality. This quietness I'm talking about this morning, that the Scripture talks about, is not the quietness brought about by a glass of wine or by popping a Prozac. David was an ambitious kingdom builder, a type A personality. Somehow he learned how to foster this inner quiet or peace in the midst of actions, relationships and problems. Then lastly, this Psalm will teach us that composure and peace is something learned by the Christian. The truth is that this peace is learned in a relationship. It is something a believer consciously chooses by using an alert mind. This isn't something that spontaneously happens - ever. Our enemy won't give peace to us. His goal is to keep us wound up.

### **I. Deliverance from noise. [Read Psalm 131:1]**

A. It is faith that delivers you from your biggest problem, a proud self-will. David told the Lord here that he is NOT self-trusting, opinionated, or headstrong. He was not superior to others and he wasn't attempting the impossible. It's interesting that gives us the results of peace at the beginning of this psalm. Here's what you get when you get peace.

1. Despite his chaotic and trouble-filled life, David

was consciously distancing himself from everything that rattles inside of him.

2. Think of a pool of water in the stillness of dawn. It is highly sensitive to vibrations of any kind. The slightest breeze or bug skimming the surface sets off ripples on the surface.

a. The purpose of this psalm is to make you sensitive to the noise in your life - which truth be told - you are probably so accustomed to that you aren't aware of how it's impacting you. You think it is natural.

b. What makes us noisy on the inside? David gives us the answer in this verse.

1) being self-absorbed, pride, a heart fixed upon itself.

2) haughty eyes, an attitude of looking down on others.

3) chasing after things which are too difficult, impossible for me to do.

c. Take a look at each of these a bit closer.

1) Pride is us imagining that we are independent and autonomous. We become engrossed in monstrous trivialities of our own devising. Old English had a great word for this: vain-glory.

a. Pride shows itself in wanting a little more for ourselves - more respect, more money, more stuff, more appreciation, more understanding.

b. What it boils down to is desire to control. We want to control our circumstances and life. We want the glory. We want to be God. We want to exercise God's power without any dependence upon Him.

c. We want to escape the corruption that is in the world by lust by ourselves, in our own power. So this restless disorientation makes us noisy on the inside because it's something brought on by pride. Anxiety, despondency, irritation all make sense to the prideful heart. It's part of the life independent of God and it's noisy.

2) Haughty eyes goes along with the territory of

being overly opinionated, routinely judging others, and belittling others. This is just another form of pride. Pride just isn't about making me bigger and better, it's also about making you smaller and weaker.

a. Have you ever noticed that people who feel inferior about themselves are incapable of treating others with mercy? They tend to envy, hate, grumble and criticize others.

b. I read once about a woman who had two lumped all her relationships into two groups: those she put on a pedestal and those she put in a pit. However, when a person disappointed her, she imagined pushing the other down an elevator shaft from the pedestal to the pit. She noted that inside, she was filled with the noises of fret, self-absorption, depression and competition. Until she learned who she was in Christ and grew in that truth, she had no inner peace and had no real friendships.

3) The last one is pursuing impossibilities. This is chasing those things beyond you. Let me give you an example.

a. What happens when you try to control another person's attitudes or choices or behavior? That is a total set-up for despair, rage, anxiety, and manipulation.

b. What happens when you try to ensure you will not get sick and die - obsessed with diet, exercise and healthy living? Fear crops up behind every pain and cough and in time you, like everyone else will die.

c. What happens when you try to get people to like you? you become artificial, flirtatious, a coward, a recluse or a deceiver. You become what you aren't to get people to like an illusion. But as with all false things you entertain in your life - they cause internal noise. They rob you of peace.

B. So the life of peace, the life God wants every Christian to experience comes from denying pride, haughtiness and impossible tasks. Yet, when you pursue the things the Lord has set out for you to pursue, you get a different result. Instead of noise, you get peace.

1. **II Timothy 2:22** - *“Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, with those who*

*call on the Lord from a pure heart.”*

2. While the things you are to pursue is the thrust of the message, there is a little stinger at the end of the verse. If you want peace, you need to do it with those who are also pursuing it from the Lord. While we live in the world and will have contact with both lost and saved, it is important to invest most strongly in the relationships with other believers. Why? Because they are calling upon the Lord and pursuing the same goals you are - righteousness, peace, faith and love. **I Corinthians 15:33** - *“Do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good morals.”*

## **II. The process of peace. [Read Psalm 131:2]**

A. David showed us the results and now he shows us the process. He shows us how to learn to gain composure. He shows us that it is a weaning process - a process that takes us from internal noises ruling and railing against us to one of peace from the Lord. There are two states of being David mentions here.

1. The weaned child. This is the young child who can rest on his mother’s chest and rest quietly without anxiety or busyness.

2. This also implies that, as all children, we were once nursing children. A nursing child when put on his mother’s chest starts rooting around looking for food. This child is nervous and anxious even thrashing and may even get angry until he finds what he’s looking for. He knows his mother’s milk is his life and he demands immediate satisfaction.

3. So how do you get from the nursing child to the weaned child? IT IS NOT AUTOMATIC. It is part of the life of faith in Christ.

a. “composed” - this word means to level a piece of land, in modern speech we’d say it means to bulldoze something to make it flat.

b. To quiet your soul means to silence the noise and turbulence in your heart. It is to say, “Shhhhhh” to your desires, fears, opinions, anxieties, agendas and irritabilities.

c. When these things enter your mind, you bulldoze them

immediately. You knock down those thoughts - not because they have no merit in your mind but because they are hindering you from experiencing God, hearing Him clearly and loving Him fully. You cannot do these things by sheer will. Like a drowning man needs someone to throw him a line, we need God to throw us help from outside ourselves.

d. Only what God promises to do for us through Jesus Christ is strong enough to bulldoze our opinions and anxieties. **[II Peter 1:3-4]** - *“seeing that His divine power has granted us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”* We often focus on this verse to teach us about our identity in Christ, the exchanged life. However, it also goes beyond that to God’s promises that grant us power to escape the dangers and pitfalls of this world through His promises to us. Only a life of faith in those promises of God will deliver you from a noisy life.

4. We can live as the weaned child by understanding that God loves us deeply and will take care of us. He reigns and is sovereign over this world. The situations He allows in our lives, good and bad, are for our good and to learn to trust Him and that His control over our lives is for our eternal benefit. The sooner we learn we cannot satisfy ourselves and that others can’t do it either, the sooner we turn to God and become the weaned child. Envision yourself sitting in your Heavenly Father’s lap quietly, enjoying His smiling at you. That’s your life in Christ.

## **III. The reason for peace. [Read Psalm 131:3]**

A. The reason we can have peace despite our circumstances and all the noise this world hurls at us is because we know God, His promises and our identity in Him.

1. Do you know who you are? Do you know who God created you to be? Just as important is do you know who God re-created you in Christ to be? When you know who God is and

who the new life He has given you in Christ, peace is not only possible, it can become the natural, regular way of existing.

2. David called those he was addressing Israel.

Israel was the name of God's people in the Old Testament. He was calling them by name here. They weren't just a band of insignificant nomads. They were children of God. They were to be the blessing for the whole world as through them the promise of the Messiah, the Savior, would come.

3. The church is now the recipient of those promises by faith in Christ. We are now the children of God. Listen to Paul (Romans 2:29) - "*But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.*" Because of this New Covenant through the grace of God we are also commonly called:

- a. Beloved
- b. Chosen
- c. Saints - holy ones
- d. Sons and daughters of God
- e. brothers and sisters
- f. Servants of the Lord
- g. those called out
- h. forgiven

These are who you are in Christ. When you consider these things and believe them by faith to be true (because they are) you are able to squelch those noises in your heart causing you trouble. Think of the noises that would cease if you believed that you were totally accepted by God because of Jesus' sacrifice of Himself on the cross? Think of the peace you gain by realizing you were forgiven of all your sins - past, present and future by a decisive act of the Great Judge of the Universe. Instead of listening to the voices that lead you to strive pointlessly to gain God's approval, just rest that you already have it and then use the gratitude from that truth to lead you to a life of righteousness.

4. Another reason for peace in the life of a Christian is because we know God. Our hope is in Him.

a. Imagine a very tall wall with hundreds of ladders along it. You cannot see the top but know that some of those ladders are worth climbing because of the reward at the top. So you take off climbing and after climbing a dozen or so you find trinkets at the top but nothing you'd consider a real reward.

b. Then imagine that Jesus comes along before you start climbing your next ladder and begins knocking all of them down. He is violently pushing them all over. You're in shock at first. Why would the Lord keep you from climbing to get a reward? Then He tells you. It's because there is no reward at the top of any of them. You were lied to by the world, who set the ladder up. None of what is offered is eternal or even worthwhile of your time to seek. Then Jesus asks you to follow Him and He'll take you to the reward that will satisfy.

c. God, in the Bible, tells us the truth. He is the One who will lead us to a real eternal reward and a satisfying life right now. It can be yours if you surrender to Him and choose to follow Him instead of the noises telling you set the ladders back up and start climbing again.

d. The key is to allow Jesus to do the leading. This is where peace is found. Listen to how Paul put it to the Philippian church (Philippians 4:6-8) - "*Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*" It doesn't matter how much noise is begin generated external to you by trouble, by yielding to Christ and following Him, you will know blessed peace. That's what God wants you to experience so that you can relate to Him. This morning, are you quiet on the inside? If not, start the process for peace and set your mind on the reason for peace. When you pursue it correctly, you'll find it.