

**WEEK THREE
ADULT SMALL GROUP
CALM AND QUIET
PARTICIPANT GUIDE**

Instead I have calmed and quieted my soul.

ICEBREAKER: Where do you like to go to find calm and quiet? (either past or present)

Psalm 131 “is one of the shortest Psalms to read, but one of the longest to learn. It speaks of a young child, but it contains the experience of a man in Christ. Lowliness and humility are here seen in connection with a sanctified heart, a will subdued to the mind of God, and a hope looking to the Lord alone. Happy is the man who can, without falsehood, use these words as his own; for he wears about him the likeness of his Lord, who said, “I am meek and lowly in heart.”⁶ Charles Spurgeon

PRAYER: Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I do not get involved with things too great or too wondrous for me. Instead, I have calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like a weaned child. Put your hope in the Lord, both now and forever. Amen. (Psalm 131 CSB)

INSTEAD: “*Instead* I have calmed and quieted my soul” (Psalm 131:2a)

Instead: A preferred alternative or a replacement in place of something else. Suggests that of the choices available, one is favored. Asks us to choose the preferred over the popular.

POPULAR vs. PREFERRED: In Psalm 131 we see that the popular choice might be pride and arrogance, but the preferred is to calm and quiet.

- Why is pride and arrogance the popular option?
- Why is a calm and quiet soul preferred?
- Which do you tend to lean toward?

Instead of proud pursuits, [the Psalmist] is determined to find satisfaction and serenity of soul, content with God and His works.⁷ David Guzik

A CALM AND QUIET SOUL: “Instead I have calmed and quieted my soul”

- What is a calm and quiet soul and how does one acquire it?
- Would you say that your soul is calm and quiet? Why or why not?
- What do you do to try and calm and quiet yourself? Does it work?
- What keeps you from fully reaching a state of calm and quiet?
- How do you think the psalmist is able to claim that in their life?

“It is no easy thing to quiet yourself: sooner may a man calm the sea, or rule the wind, or tame a tiger, then quiet himself. We are **clamorous, uneasy, petulant**; and nothing but grace can make us quiet under **afflictions, irritations, and disappointments.**”⁸ Charles Spurgeon

- Have you ever felt “clamorous, uneasy, petulant” during difficult times?
- How do you typically respond to afflictions, irritations, and disappointments?

⁶ Spurgeon, Charles

⁷ *The Enduring Word Bible Commentary by David Guzik*

⁸ Spurgeon, Charles

There are so many things that keep us from quiet. There are the internal voices; our thoughts and emotions that make us *clamorous, uneasy, petulant*. There are also those things outside of us, our external *afflictions, irritations, and disappointments* that fuel our chaotic lives.

- What are some external elements that keep from quieting our soul?
- What are some of the internal conflicts that keep us from quieting our soul?

FIX OUR EYES: HEBREWS 12: 1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.

- How do our internal thoughts and emotions keep us from finding calm? What role does sin play?
- How do our external situations fuel our chaotic lives? What things in our lives hinder us from calm?

We are clamorous, uneasy, petulant; and **nothing but grace** can make us quiet under afflictions, irritations, and disappointments.⁹ - Charles Spurgeon

- How can grace from God and grace for ourselves help lead us to quiet?
- How can God's grace help us quiet our souls during afflictions, irritations, and disappointments?

READ HEBREWS 12: 2 (NIV)

And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

- How does "fixing our eyes on Jesus" help us calm and quiet our soul?
- How can keeping our eyes on Jesus keep us from being clamorous, uneasy, and petulant?
- What is keeping you from fixing your eyes on Jesus?

READ MATTHEW 14: 25-33: Peter Walks on Water.

25 Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. 27 But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." 28 "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." 29 "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water, and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" 32 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

- When did Peter experience a calm and quiet soul?
- What happened when he took his eyes off Jesus?
- How does keeping our eyes on Jesus during storms of life help us experience calm and quiet?

The waves of the world will try and distract and drown us. It is easy to feel alone and afraid. It is then that we often take our eyes off Jesus and start to sink.

Being a Christian means accepting God as our maker and redeemer, and growing day by day into increasingly glorious creatures in Christ, developing joy, experiencing love, maturing in peace. By the grace of Christ, we experience the marvel of being made in the image of God... The soul, clamoring for attention and arrogantly parading its importance, is calmed and quieted so that it can be itself, truly.¹⁰ - **Eugene Peterson**

⁹ Spurgeon, Charles

¹⁰ Peterson, Eugene. *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*. Pg. 147-148