

**WEEK THREE
YOUTH GROUP
CALM AND QUIET
LEADER GUIDE**

Instead I have calmed and quieted my soul.

THEME: This week we look at the first half of verse 2, “Instead I have calmed and quieted my soul.” Amid the chaos of life, we are given a choice. We can allow the chaos to control our lives and wreak havoc on our soul, or we can invite Jesus to calm our heart and quiet our soul.

ACTIVITY: Popular or Preferred?

Choose which of the options are popular (what everyone wants) or preferred (the right choice) or somewhere in the middle. Ask, what would be the preferred option. (What should you do instead)

- Throwing something off the catwalk (at Mo Ranch)
- Washing your hands after going to the bathroom
- Eating a Double Meat Whataburger
- Wearing a mask/face covering
- Buying stuff with a credit card
- Smiling
- Posting political comments on social media
- Sitting quietly by a creek
- Dancing the Macarena
- Watching Sesame Street
- Going to the zoo.

ICEBREAKER: *Each week the discussion begins with a question that allows the group to share from their own personal experiences.*

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

QUOTE: Charles Spurgeon

Psalm 131 “is one of the shortest Psalms to read, but one of the longest to learn.”

REVIEW:

Psalm 131: 1 Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don’t concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp.

SAY: Last week we talked about the concepts of pride, ambition, and arrogance. We tend to see ourselves as better than others, to work obsessively to prove ourselves, and ultimately think of ourselves as equal with God. These false perceptions taint our relationships with others and put us in opposition to God. If we can find a way to cultivate our hearts and let God work in us, it will lead to the next part of Psalm 131, a calm and quiet soul.

PRAYER: Psalm 131 (NLT)

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don’t concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother’s milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. Put your hope in the Lord— now and always. Amen.

INSTEAD:

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

ASK: What does “instead” mean?

DEFINITION: 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

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

DISCUSS

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

QUOTE: David Guzik

Instead of proud pursuits, [the Psalmist] is determined to find satisfaction and serenity of soul, content with God and His works.¹⁵

A CALM AND QUIET SOUL

READ: Psalm 131:2a “Instead I have calmed and quieted my soul”

DISCUSS:

- 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?

QUOTE: Charles Spurgeon

“It is no easy thing to quiet yourself... We are **clamorous, uneasy, petulant**; and nothing but grace can make us quiet under **afflictions, irritations, and disappointments.**”¹⁶

DISCUSS:

- Have you ever felt “clamorous, uneasy, petulant”? Are these good things?
- How do you typically respond to afflictions, irritations, and disappointments?
- Do afflictions, irritations, and disappointment make you feel calm and quiet? Why or why not?
- So how do we calm and quiet our soul if we are feeling **clamorous, uneasy, petulant and** under **afflictions, irritations, and disappointments? Is there anything that we can do to find calm?**

QUOTE: Charles Spurgeon

“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...”¹⁷

SAY: It seems impossible. There is no way that we can rule the wind or sea. Jesus was the only person to calm the sea and rule the wind, and he provides the ultimate example of living our calm, quiet, hope, and trust even during the most chaotic times.

¹⁵ *The Enduring Word Bible Commentary by David Guzik*

¹⁶ Surgeon, Charles

¹⁷ Spurgeon, Charles

READ MARK 4:35-41 (also found Matthew 8:23–27, and Luke 8:22–25)

35 As evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s cross to the other side of the lake.” 36 So they took Jesus in the boat and started out, leaving the crowds behind (although other boats followed). 37 But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water.

38 Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?”

39 When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. 40 Then he asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

41 The disciples were absolutely terrified. “Who is this man?” they asked each other. “Even the wind and waves obey him!”

DISCUSS:

- Why were the disciples feeling distraught? Did they have a right to feel that way?
- What does it say about Jesus that he could sleep in the midst of the storm?
- While the storm did not wake him, the panicked disciples did. What might that say about Jesus' love for his people in distress?
- What do you think the disciples expect Jesus to do when they wake him up? How is it different from what he actually did?
- Why does his response of calming the sea shock them? Why was Jesus' action so surprising to them?
- Why do the disciples ask, “Who then is this?” Why does Jesus’ control over nature and chaos break their paradigm of who they think Jesus is?
- If we were to genuinely believe this story, how does Jesus’ control over chaos reshape our understanding of who Jesus is?

MAKE IT PERSONAL:

- What storms are you facing in your life? How are you trying to bail yourself out on your own strength?
- Does it ever feel like Jesus is asleep during your life?
- What do you expect Jesus to do to your storms? How do you respond when he does not meet your expectations?

SAY: This week, during the times of chaos, do not place your hope in your own skills and abilities, place your hope in Jesus and experience calm, quiet, hope and trust.

READ: Psalm 131:1-2a

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.

ARTFUL PRAYER:

We are going to create a prayer picture of us inside the story. Connecting

STEP 1: Introduction

Close your eyes and open your mind and use your imagination to experience the story. Let it fill your heart and mind, seeing the story come alive. As you begin to picture the story in your mind, place yourself inside the boat. See the storms around you. See the wind and waves. Interact with disciples. Help wake up Jesus. Watch in awe and wonder as Jesus calms the sea.

STEP 2: Read Mark 4:35-41

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STEP 3: Create

Create an artistic representation of Jesus calming the storms in your life. Include illustrations, symbols, flourishes, verses, words, memories to make this personal.

STEP 4: Share

Share your picture with others.

CLOSING TIME:**QUOTE: Eugene Peterson**

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.¹⁸

PRAYER: Psalm 131 (NLT)

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¹⁸ Peterson, Eugene. *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*. Pg. 147-148