

Exodus 14:14

“The LORD will fight for you; you need only to **be still.**”

I remember a few years back touring a Amish cheese farm in Pennsylvania. After the mixing and straining the big vats of cow or goat milk, it is then formed into big round discs that look like small tractor tires. They are put into what they call, “waiting sheds” for months and months, sometimes years, until time does its magic and it transforms from milk—into cheese—from something rather bland in taste to something really delicious. The very thing that makes cheese, cheese, is the *sitting* in the cave, waiting, letting the stillness and quiet gently, slowly transform it. The longer it sits, the more mature it becomes; the more valuable it is.

And it made me think of other food and drink we have come to enjoy because of the same process of WAITING AND STILLNESS. Think of bread. The FIRST thing you have to do is mix the yeast in warm water -and then let it sit quietly for the magic to happen—without which, there is no bread.

Isn't wine the same way? Without the period of quiet and stillness it's just grape juice. Or bourbon? Have you been to a distillery? I toured one in Kentucky last year and the biggest part of the complex is the huge sheds filled with barrels of liquid waiting for the magic and transformation that can happen only through stillness. Not weeks or months, but years. And the longer these things sit and age, the more revered and expensive they become.

It turns out we're not so different.

Our scripture today tells us “BE STILL.” It says the way God can help us and fight for us is *only by sitting in the quiet*. And isn't that what Jesus did? We know from scripture he made and found that time throughout his life for the quiet, no matter how busy. By going to the mountain top or across the lake or out into the desert. Places of stillness and quiet that are essential for our relationship with God to mature and deepen—without which, we do not know Him.

Maybe today we can make the effort to put our phones down and remotes and give that time to stillness and quiet prayer with God. The weather here in Colorado is perfect for a walk in the woods, the promise of Fall is coming. Squirrels scrambling, gathering nuts, birds and crickets and frogs joyously singing. Just sit there among the trees for 30 minutes today-- let everything around you and within you be touched, and transformed by The breath and beauty of God.

Or better yet, get some of that good wine and cheese we've been talking about and make it a picnic. Just you and God, time alone enjoying each other in solitude.

(486 words)

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