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Title: Crazy Busy: Too Busy fo God

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Text: [Psalm 46](#)

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God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

Be still and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10

Two of the most beloved truths from the Psalms. Two of the most quoted

verses of scripture that both come from Psalm 46.

Yet, by and large, we live as though these verses offer us no wisdom for today's living.

We begin a new sermon series today that is inspired in part by a typical conversation we have with someone today. You run into someone somewhere, let's say here at church.

"How are you doing?" "I'm busy, oh yes, I am *crazy busy*." Busy has become our new standard answer to the questions how are you doing? We have moved on from fine, to busy. *I'm crazy busy*."

William Powers tells the story of a friend from a non-English-speaking background who had migrated to the United States. Whenever he asked her how she was, she would inevitably reply "busy, very busy". Powers thought this was strange, particularly given his friend Maria often applied a very upbeat time. He soon learned why. Maria was simply copying what Americans sent to each other when asked how they were doing. She thought it was the way you replied politely to inquiries about how you are doing.

More things than ever compete for our attention and our time in this day and age. The faster we go to lighten our load, the more we take on. We are, on average, working more. Did you know that when email first came out, some predicted that email would be so efficient that the average office worker would only have to work 8 hours per week to get their work done? But now, as we have moved from the Palm Pilot to the Blackberry to the iPhone and iPad and the Apple Watch our devices are keeping us constantly attached to work, and to what is going on in the world. They have made us available 24 hours per day.

Most of us have more computing power in our pocket than the entire Apollo 11 spacecraft had.

Edward Hollowell is a researcher around these issues, a doctor and an author. He tells about the time he and his family went to a lakeside cottage, no cell service, no internet, and the only telephone in the entire cabin was a rotary dial phone. He wanted to make a phone call to a friend also vacationing in the area to see if their family wanted to go with his family to a minor league baseball game that evening. It was in the morning, no urgency to the call, no need to hurry, yet as he started dialing the rotary phone, anger and impatience flamed up in him as he waited for the rotor to wind back to its starting point after each number. It was so slow. He was thinking about how fast it would have been on his iPhone and he got even more upset. By the time he got the entire number cranked out, he was in a bad mood. After the call, he caught himself. I thought, how silly it was to be so upset, to be so worked up over this ancient phone. So he redialed his friend's number and timed how long it took. 11 seconds He said that he had become a man in a hurry even when he did not need to be in a hurry. He went on to make this observation:

"Without intending for it to happen or knowing how it got started, many people no find they live in a rush they didn't want and didn't create or at the very least, didn't mean to create." Edward Hollowell

Many years ago, a poet, a person of wisdom wrote the prescription for what ails us today. Be Still. Be Still and Know that I am God. A quick reading of Psalm 46 suggests these words were written during a time of war. You see images, and we believe they are images, not actual events taking place in the moment, of global and personal despair. On the political front, the Psalmist says the nations are in an uproar, kingdoms are falling.

And while it may be a bit of an exaggeration to claim that we are at war with busyness, it's safe to say it is an epidemic. In this difficult time, the people need to be reminded who God is and what God is like. That whatever we believe has control over our life, whatever we give our life to- that is not our God. As much as we might believe that our security comes from our iPhone or Apple Watch, it does not. As much as we might worship our iPhone or Apple Watch, those do not give us life.

We also believe that we are good at multi-tasking. Many of us have probably been in a job interview and claimed that we are great multi-taskers. We can do 4 things at once. I have a friend who on his desk has three computer screens hooked up to three different computers.

Hollowell uses this image of a tennis player. Imagine you are playing tennis and you hit the ball and you get ready to take your next shot. You focus single-mindedly on the ball and where your opponent might hit it. You are putting all of your energy, thought, and instinct into each shot and also what your opponent might do. It's a bit of a mental exercise as well as a physical one. Now imagine playing with two balls instead of one. You have to keep track of both, running each down, watching your opponent do the same.

There is no way your game is as good with two tennis balls as it is with one ball.

Our lives often force us to do more than one thing at once. But the reality is that it is a myth that we can perform two tasks at once as well as we can perform one. We all have a limit. One of the best jugglers in the world confessed that he was only able to keep 6 balls in the air at once and be successful. Any more than that and he could no longer juggle.

Richard Rohr speaks of 5 truths in life. As you hear these 5 truths you may recognize that our busyness, that our lives that have become marked by being overstretched and overbooked, if we aren't filling our lives with busyness so that we may escape these truths. Hollowell makes the point that we get busy so that we may avoid or cheat the certainty of death someday.

1. Life is hard.
2. You are not that important.
3. Your life is not about you.
4. You are not in control.
5. You are going to die.

God is our refuge and strength. It's on God that we can depend

Be Still and Know That I am God

The Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels is a spiritual haven that sits in the midst of a noisy city. The Cathedral belongs to the Catholic Diocese of Los Angeles, is a remarkable structure, and has long been a meaningful place for many people. Before entering the worship space, one must walk through the cathedral's large doors and journey down a long hallway. Upon entering the

nave, most people immediately notice the large, handmade tapestries that hang on the walls. They represent the communion of saints, all those who have confessed Jesus Christ as Lord.

At the front of the worship space, behind the Table of the Lord, is a large tapestry with the image of a city map of Los Angeles. On that tapestry are inscribed words from Revelation 21:3. "God's dwelling is among mortals. God will dwell with them. They will be God's people. And God will be with them." The juxtaposition of these words with the map of Los Angeles is particularly striking.

I love this image because it reminds us that in the midst of a busy, bustling city, in the midst of a busy, bustling life, there is no such thing as being too busy for God. God dwells among us, among us mortals. We don't need to escape to experience God. In fact, the Hebrew translation of be still and know is best stated in English as surrender so that we might know that God is in control, that it is God holding our lives.

We find a certain peace in a dependence on God. We find peace when we realize God is in our midst, right here with us.

"It's not hard to decide what you want your life to be about. What's hard, is figuring out what you're willing to give up in order to do the things you really care about."*Shauna Niequist*

When we do that, we experience the peace that passes all understanding.

Will you pray with me?