

Pastor Steve Lee
April 29, 2020



“Deeper Living”





FEAR
IS THE REAL
VIRUS

THIS "CURE"
IS DEADLIER
THAN COVID!

REOPEN
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NOW

Anti
Lock
Down
Bad Ass
Freedom!

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**Tim
Challies**

I'll be transparent. I find that we are all battling varying degrees of irritability and discouragement, and sometimes succumbing to them. The best I figure, I think this partly owes to being close together with nowhere to go and little to do, and also partly to the sheer uncertainty of the present and future. In the abstract, you'd think a time like this would lead to great opportunities to do fun things as a family, to explore new ideas, to take on



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new projects, and so on. But now that we're into it, we all seem to be a bit listless and unmotivated. It can seem like a lot of work to organize a game of Clue or Taboo. As the dad, I'm feeling quite a lot of guilt over not spending more time doing quality things. But then it seems like no one else really wants to do those things either. It's like we all want something to do through the long afternoons and evenings, but often can't actually make it



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happen. We are trying to embrace these days, and still are in many ways—we really are having some good and meaningful times together. But it's not as simple as I might have thought. I'm kind of disappointed in me.

... I do miss the church dreadfully. Online services are a blessing, but they sure aren't even close to the real thing! I've put a lot of thought into what the Lord might be doing through all of this—what he might be doing in

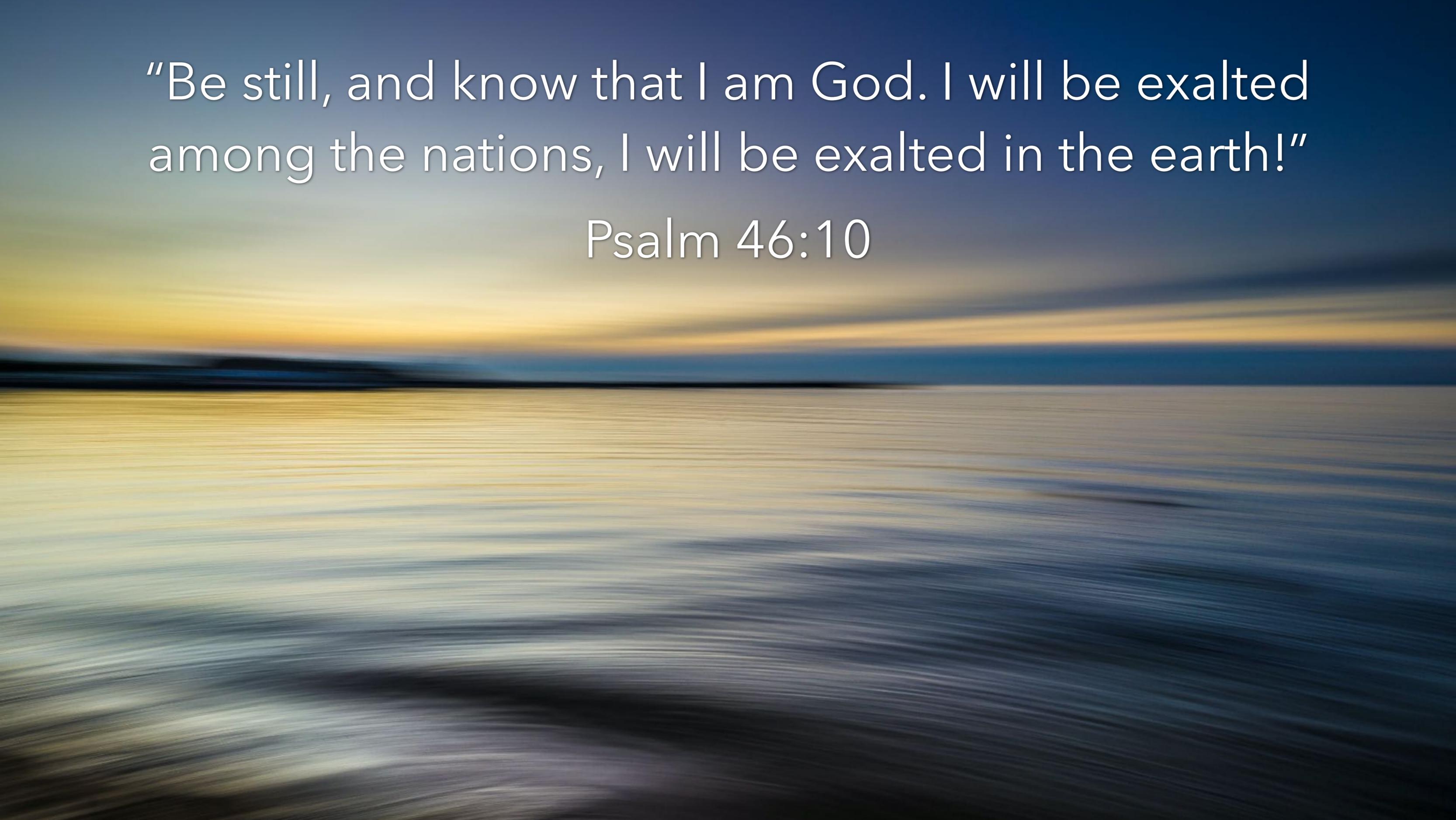


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me, in my family, in my church, in my country, and in this world. I've seen all kinds of people offer their thoughts, but for now I think it's far too soon to determine this with any kind of confidence. Where I do have confidence is that he's up to something significant, something that will ultimately be for the good of his people, the strengthening of his church, and the glory of his name.

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”

Psalm 46:10





1 Kings 19:8-9



So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the LORD came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

1 Kings 19:11-13

The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.



1 Kings 19:11-13

After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"





Dallas Willard

(Hearing God)

Hearing God? A daring idea, some would say—presumptuous and even dangerous. But what if we are made for it? What if the human system simply will not function properly without it? There are good reasons to think it will not. The fine texture as well as the grand movements of life show the need. Is it not, in fact, more presumptuous and dangerous to undertake human existence without hearing God? ...



Dallas Willard

(Hearing God)

Today I continue to believe that people are meant to live in an ongoing conversation with God, speaking and being spoken to. Rightly understood I believe that this can be abundantly verified in experience. God's visits to Adam and Eve in the Garden, Enoch's walk with God and the face-to-face conversations between Moses and Jehovah are all commonly regarded as highly exceptional moments in the religious history



Dallas Willard

(Hearing God)

of humankind. Aside from their obviously unique historical role, however, they are not meant to be exceptional at all. Rather they are examples of the normal human life God intended for us: God's indwelling his people through personal presence and fellowship. Given who we are by basic nature, we live—really live—only through God's regular speaking in our souls and thus "by every word that comes from the mouth of God."



Dave Goetz

*(Death by
Suburb)*

My family and I live in a county that recently was ranked in the ninety-ninth percentile in the United States for quality of life. On most days, my biggest decision is lunch: the Atomic Turkey or the Veggie Panini? ... A bloated little soul—that's what I fear for my life, as I fill my early fall evenings with six-year-old soccer practices. ... Suburbia is a flat world, in which the edges are clearly defined and the mysterious ocean is rarely explored. Every decision gets planned out, like the practice of



Dave Goetz

*(Death by
Suburb)*

registering at retail stores for one's wedding gifts. Only tragedy truly surprises. In the 'burb I inhabit, many are the opportunities for Bible study, innovative worship services, helping the homeless, children's programs, small groups, and much more. Yet I can't shake the image of the inverse cripple with a bloated, tiny soul. Perhaps that's one of the effects of comfortable suburban living. Too much of the good life ends up being toxic, deforming us spiritually.



Dave Goetz

*(Death by
Suburb)*

The drive to succeed, and to make one's children succeed, overpowers the best of intentions to live more reflectively, no matter the piety. Should it be any surprise that the true life in Christ never germinates? ... I think my suburb, as safe and religiously coated as it is, keeps me from Jesus. Or at least, my suburb (and the religion of the suburbs) obscures the real Jesus. The living patterns of the good life affect me more than I know.



FOR SALE

Matt
5:3-5

“Blessed are **the poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are **those who mourn**, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are **the meek**, for they will inherit the earth.”

Matt
19:23-24

And Jesus said to his disciples,
“Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty
will **a rich person** enter the kingdom
of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier
for a camel to go through the eye of
a needle than for **a rich person** to
enter the kingdom of God.”

Luke
12:15

Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

Romans
12:2

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

John
10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

**John
6:35**

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."



**Tim
Challies**

It seems to me that as we ponder when and how we will emerge from our COVID-19 quarantines and lockdowns, we will have a rare chance at a kind of do-over. It is extremely unlikely that one day we will receive a society-wide all-clear signal and emerge back into life as it was. More likely is an incremental approach where over time we can begin to restore some of the functions we have had to cease for a time. We will then



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have to decide when and if we return to each of these activities. And there is no better time than now to be reflective about what we want our lives to be. There is no better time than now to be prayerful about how we will keep our lives from going from too empty to too full.

One day the gym will send an email to say it has re-opened and you can go in again to work out. Today is the ideal time for you to



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assess whether you are actually using that gym membership and to decide whether it is serving you well. What else could you do with that time? What else could you do with that money? Don't go back just because the doors have opened! Go back because you've thoughtfully evaluated it and determined that it is important or necessary to your well-being. One day that co-working space will open its doors again, one day that



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organization will have its first post-lockdown meeting, one day that club will begin to gather once more. Will you go, as you did two months ago? Before you go back to what was normal, decide whether this is the normal you want. Take the do-over! Take the opportunity to assess, to evaluate, to carefully and prayerfully ponder the kind of life you want, the kind of life you believe the Lord is calling you to live.

SUMMARY

This coronavirus crisis is a rare opportunity for us enter into silence and solitude, reflecting on the changes we need to make in our "normal lives" if we want to experience the deeper life in Christ.