

A Simple and Peaceful Life

This teaching by Pastor John Dubler
is based on the following scriptures:

Psalm 131

Matthew 18:1-4

II Corinthians 10:5

I Thessalonians 4:11-12

I. Introduction: Understanding “Songs of Ascent.”

A. Psalm 131 is one of the Songs of Ascent.

1. Psalm 120-134, fifteen psalms, all designated as “Songs of Ascents.”
2. There were fifteen steps from the Court of Women to the Temple outer court or Court of Men. The Levites sang these songs as they ascended up to the Temple sacrifice area.

3. These songs were also sung by the pilgrims as they ascended the road from Jericho to Jerusalem for the three great annual festival processions.

- a. Passover
- b. Pentecost
- c. Tabernacles.

4. It is also supposed by some that these Psalms were also sung by those returning from the Babylonian captivity (in a low country) to Jerusalem (the higher ground.)

5. Some have even suggested that “Song of Ascents” simply refers to singing each successive song in a higher key.

6. I think it is most likely these songs were sung by both priests and pilgrims. The priests probably sang as they went to work, ascending the stairs as they reported for their sacerdotal duties—a several day shift. Thus, in the last of the songs of “degrees” as they are sometimes called, the new shift greets the departing priests as they end the night watch.

B. As we “ascend” along our journey, it is wise to learn the lessons contained in these 15 Psalms. Search all 15 for what life lessons the Holy Spirit will teach you in each one.

II. Verse by verse commentary on Psalm 131

A. Verse 1. Pride: More than anything else, man’s pride pits him against God.

1. “My heart is not proud”

1. Satan’s downfall was pride.
2. Pride creates great anxiety.
3. This psalm is a cure for pride and anxiety.
4. Must memorize and meditate on it if you desire full benefit.

2. “Nor my eyes haughty.”

1. Haughty, scornful eyes the opposite of humble

2. The proud person looks and compares.
3. Not comparing ourselves with ourselves.
3. “Nor do I involve myself in great matters,
or things too difficult for me.”
 1. Not preoccupied with becoming the best and greatest.
 2. Things too difficult—can accept a mystery of God as a mystery
 3. Some too proud to believe that God does miracles today.
4. Verse one Recalls David’s beginning. (This is a psalm of David)
 1. A simple shepherd boy.
 2. Trusting in God he defeated, lion, bear, and wolf. And Goliath.
 3. **Ps 18:35** David’s comment on success granted to him:
“Thy gentleness makes me great.”
- B. Verse 2. Speaking to your soul.
 1. Surely I have composed and quieted my soul.
 1. Our responsibility is to take thoughts captive. **II Cor 10:5**
 2. We do this by the power and Grace of God.
 3. The bird should not be building a nest in your hair.
 4. Be anxious for nothing. Phil 4:6
 5. **Ps 94:19** “When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Thy consolations delight my soul.”
 2. Like a weaned child.
 1. Some think of this as a young child at mother’s breast.
 2. However it says a “weaned” child. Age 2-4
 3. The weaned child has given up on selfish tantrums.
- C. Verse 3. “O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time forth and forever.”
 - a. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness.

III. Illustration: Elizabeth Elliot’s Father and his message from I Thessalonians 4:11—a summary of which is presented here for purposes of illustrating the message of Psalm 131.

Mr. Elliot delivered this message delivered to High School boys on Long Island, New York in the 1940’s

NIV= **“Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands.”**

- A. It is difficult to lead a quiet life.
 1. **Psalm 16:5** “Lord, You have assigned me my portion and my cup.”
 2. What is your ambition—your highest aim in life?
 3. If it is holiness, then Paul says the best way to reach it is quietness
 4. Frantic rushing here and there
 - a. for entertainment
 - b. to learn another new thing
 - c. no quiet time with God
 5. Result: You will not grow as stout or as tall (spiritually) as God wants and intends you to. You will short circuit God’s design for your life.

B. Mind your own business

1. There are a great number of things that are not our business.
 - a. What your mother-in-law does is not your business
 - b. correcting your married children is no longer your business
You had plenty of time to do that
 - c. Your husband's duties are really not your business
 - d. It's not your job to check up on him, to point out his faults.
2. **Psalm 131** speaks of not getting involved in great matters

C. Why this quiet life? NO mad rushing around?

“So that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.”

E. How can we be spiritually attentive to God?

1. All the noise and pressing problems.
2. meanwhile God says, “Be still and know that I am God” **Ps 46:10**
3. God says, “In quietness and trust is your strength.” **Isaiah 30:15**
4. We don't always hear God because of the
 - a. rush
 - b. noise
 - c. distractions
 - d. the number of commitments we've made for each day

F. It is important to hear God because we have problems.

1. Before we rush off to the counselor . . .
 - a. Let's try getting quiet.
 - b. Remember, the counselor, though important, is not a substitute for the Holy Spirit speaking to a quiet heart.
2. If we are quiet, we will hear him speak to us.
3. He will help us.

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