

# Sermon Notes: The Power of Words

## Week #5

### Introduction

We conclude our post-Easter sermon series exploring “The Power of Words.” This week, we will discuss the power of words as institutional authority. Our denomination just finished its work at General Conference in Charlotte, NC. Important matters were addressed by this United Methodist international decision-making body. The theme of General Conference was based on Psalm 46, entitled “...and know I am God.”

The General Conference successfully completed three tasks:

1. [Regionalization](#) of the denomination,
2. [Removal of restrictive language](#) from our Book of Discipline, and
3. [Revision of our Social Principles](#).

### Illustration Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uj-F7kdUx6s>

Take a look at this short General Conference Wrap-Up

### Psalm 46:1-5, 9-10 (NRSVue)

<sup>1</sup>God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.

<sup>2</sup>Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,

<sup>3</sup>though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult. Selah

<sup>4</sup>There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.

<sup>5</sup>God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.

<sup>9</sup>He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;  
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields with fire.

<sup>10</sup>“Be still, and know that I am God!  
I am exalted among the nations;  
I am exalted in the earth.”

## Scripture Discussion Questions

1. This year's General Conference resulted in big changes for our denomination. In the midst of anxiety and uncertainty, our delegates were often reminded to "be still... and know that I am God." When have you experienced drastic change, anxiety, or uncertainty? How did God show up in your life during that time?
2. I love the phrase "Holy Habitation" in Psalm 46. What imagery does this phrase bring to your mind? What does a "Holy Habitation" look like? Where is it located? What is happening? Who is present?
3. What does it mean to you to "be still" in your body, mind, and spirit? What must you do to create stillness in your life and your relationship with God?
4. What does it mean to you to "know that I am God"? Does this phrase bring you comfort? Fear? Joy? What other words might you use to define your relationship with God?

## Weekly Action

This song has always reminded me of Psalm 46. This week I encourage you to meditate on these lyrics and ask yourself: What do you need to give up? What do you need to let go? What were you never meant to shoulder?

Song video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrrvLwJfcRo&t=6s>

## Prayer

I am still. You are God. Amen.