

TIME RUNS SWIFTLY

Psalm 90:1-6, 12, 14

By: Pastor Tom Latterell

6.13.21

INTRODUCTION – Last April, Pastor dan asked me to prepare and deliver today’s message due to his absence today. Of course, as His messenger, I began asking the Lord for direction regarding what He wanted me to preach. In the meantime, I wrote about a half-dozen sermons, but none of them seemed right for this morning. So, I kept asking my Master.

Then during the week of May 24th, Sue and I received word that a young man (early-to-mid-30’s) which I pastored more than twenty years ago had a serious electrical accident. As he was trimming some trees around a highly charged power line, with which he came in contact. The voltage went through his body and exited out his face, blinding one eye and leaving sever burns. Of course, he was nearly killed by the trauma and his brain swelled. He is married and has one child.

Do you know who I thought of when I heard what had happened? The young couples and families within our church. I wondered whether we, as their church, are preparing them for the possibility of a sudden tragedy that takes a daddy, or a mommy, or a child. Psalm 90 and verse 12 is a prayer, which says, *“Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”* Are we ready should such a day come? Is your soul given over to Jesus? You know, having told His story to the ten bridesmaids who were caught unprepared when the wedding party should up, Jesus told His disciples, *“Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”* (Matt 25:13)

Oh, I know we don’t want to think about these things. We want to think that tragedy won’t happen to us, and that death is years away. But your loving Savior does not want you to be taken by surprise. Neither do we, the church family that loves you.

So, let’s look together at Psalm 90, verses 1-2. There Moses, the psalm writer, says, *“Lord, You have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or You brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”* Is the Lord your dwelling place? Will you teach your family to choose Him as their dwelling place? And then Moses adds in verse 4, *“A thousand years in Your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.”* Consider this depiction here of the differences between God and us. What do you see?

I. As Eternal God, He Sees Human Generations Constantly Pass Before Him (1-2, 4)

NOTES: I see three boundaries which God has set for us:

1. **There are many generations but there is just one Lord.** To assume we can determine when and for how long I will live is to deny His uniqueness. James

4:13-16, states: “Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.’ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’ As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil.” Why? Because the Lord will not share His glory.

2. **Only God is everlasting past to everlasting future.** In other words, He has designed that my life has a beginning. The righteous Job said to the Lord, “A person’s days are determined; You have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed.” (Job 14:5) And Jesus asked, in Matthew 6:27, “Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?” I know that it’s hard to believe by looking at me, but by the time I was born, eons of time had passed on earth.
3. **Time seems to pass slowly to us, but it’s swift for Him.** This relates to God’s divine nature. Theologians call this one of His noncommunicable or exclusive attributes, meaning that only God has this characteristic. As created beings, we do not. It is crucial that we understand that because we are not eternal, we each had a beginning, a conception. In Psalm 139:13, David says to God, “You created by inmost being.” There is an erroneous doctrine, long held by some religious sects, that suggests that our souls are eternal and only our bodies were created. Notice what David says...God created our souls, too.

So what? How are these things relevant to us?

PRINCIPLE: FOR EACH OFFSPRING OF ADAM, IT IS A FACT TO LIFE THAT THE THREAT AND EXPERIENCE OF DEATH CAN BE ANTICIPATED AT ANY HOUR OR ON ANY DAY.

Now, going back to Psalm 90, let’s check out verses 3, 5, and 6. Addressing our God, verse 3 says, “You turn people back to dust, saying, ‘Return to dust, you mortals.’” And then verses 5 and 6 say, “You sweep people away in the sleep of death – they are like the new grass of the morning.” Meditate on these statements. What do these passages say to you about people?

II. The Eternal God Assures Us That We All Face The Reality Of Certain Death (3, 5-6)

NOTES: Three things about our experience of death:

1. **Death is not merely a biological phenomenon; it is the judgement which God gave to our sinful ancestors, Adam and Eve, and to their offspring.** Thus, we cannot avoid it nor can we negotiate as to when it will be performed. Recall that He said to them, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must

not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.” (Gen 2:16-17). And He also said to them, “*Dust you are and to dust you will return.*” (Gen 3:19). The warning was given and the sentences was set.

2. **Our death will be completed by God Himself, the sovereign Judge of heaven.** You see, like our human judges, God sets the day and the hour when death will come. Does David not say to God, “*All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be*” (Ps 139:6)? God knows the day when I will die, the hour of my leaving this life.
3. **God allows some lives to be cut short.** In the words of our Psalm 90, verses 5 and 6, Moses creates a word picture of a very short growing season. There he imagines new grass that shows itself at dawn’s light; it is then withered in the hot, drying sun; and at day’s end, it is fully dead. Sometimes lives are cut very short. Sue and I had twin boys born to us in 1979; they died moments after birth. It seemed unfair, but for us it opened opportunities for us to minister to other grieving parents. You see, we’d once been where they were at their times of loss. Some people die in childhood, others in their teens and twenties.

So, how are these things pertinent to you and me now?

PRINCIPLE: GOD, THE IMPARTIAL JUDGE, ALLOWS DEATH TO HAPPEN TO EACH AND EVERY DESCENDANT OF ADAM.

Skip down further to Moses’ text found in Psalm 90. Look at verse 12 and 14 please. Verse 12 – “*Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*” The idea here is to teach us to use our days, however few or many, wisely. And verse 14 adds a wonderful appropriate prayer, “*Satisfy us in the morning...*[STOP! Remember that, in verses 5 and 6, the morning is the best time of life!] “*Satisfy us in the morning with Your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days [or, “*the rest of our days*” Guys, that’s our entire life.]” Ponder these verses for a moment. What was God leading Moses to tell His people? Let me tell you what the Spirit is prompting us to do. He wants us to urge our young singles (teens and collegians) and our your couples to...*

III. Very Early In Life, You Must Choose The Eternal God To Be Your Refuge (12, 14)

NOTES: Remember, Moses seemed to gratefully call the Lord “*our dwelling place throughout all generations*” back in verse 1. I asked you whether you have made that choice, remember? Are you leading your family to make that choice to trust the Lord to be their dwelling place? Lord, I pray that You will convince our hearts to seek refuge in the Lord right now, through the words of two statements made by Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes: First...

Ecclesiastes 12:1 – *“Remember your Creator in the days of your youth [that’s this morning, right?], before the days of trouble come [that’s the afternoon heat, huh?] and the years approach when you will say, ‘I find no pleasure in them.’”* Will you remember Him each and every day? Spend time with Him; listen to Him; talk to Him; learn to enjoy Him, won’t you? Parents, plan for your family a devotion time together with these goals in mind. **REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR.** And then...

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 – *“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. [to “fear God” means to put Him first; to let His Spirit lead you.] For [because] God will bring every deed into judgment [to be assessed], including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.”* You know, when death comes, there will be no time to prepare for these things. **PUT GOD FIRST NOW.** Start now.

Speaking of the Lord, the writer of Psalm 95 wrote, *“He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, the flock under His care. Today, if only you would hear His voice, ‘Do not harden your hearts...”* (vs 7-8) You can trust Him; don’t delay.

Dear friends, we urge you to get every member of your family into these soul-saving habits. Teach them that there are two simple – yet crucially important – habits to develop. Will you take these steps? Make it a summer family venture. Okay?

PRINCIPLE: SINCE DEATH COMES SUDDENLY, THERE IS NO BETTER TIME TO TRUST IN THE SAVING BLOOD OF JESUS THAN TODAY.

At the end of the sermon notes, you will see an incomplete statement, which says, “In light of God’s compassion and death’s coming, today I choose to...” Do you see it there? Would you please take time to complete the statement before the end of the day?

Let’s Pray:

“O Father in heaven, who sent His Son for us undeserving sinners convince us of the peril of our souls, show us the way of escape from the clutches of sin and death, and give us faith to trust in what Jesus has done for each of us – men and women, boys and girls. Save us, so that when the hour of death comes, we will be taken to Your house to live forever and ever. Thank you, in our Savior Jesus’ name. Amen”

In light of God’s compassion and death’s coming, today I choose to...