

October 13, 2024, “Teach Us To Number Our Days...for Wisdom” Psalm 90:12-17

As I meditate on this psalm, I recall the joy and anticipation that counting my days at college and seminary brought as I looked forward to a better life after my education. The same excitement filled me as I counted the days before my wedding day, and especially the days leading up to the birth of our first child. These moments were not just about counting days but about the hope and excitement they brought. I believe many of you have experienced similar moments of joy and anticipation. Let's pause here to reflect on those moments. **Does anyone feel inspired to share?**

Secondly, the act of counting days is often associated with feelings of desperation. For instance, prisoners count the days until they regain their freedom, while the sick count the days until they recover and regain good health. However, perhaps the most challenging aspect of counting days is when individuals are placed in hospice care and given a projected time of death. This brings to mind the question: "O death, where is your sting?"

Psalm 90 is believed to have been written by Moses in his later years as he reflected on the hardships that the people of Israel faced. It is likely that he wrote this psalm after the events described in **Numbers 20**, where Moses and Aaron's actions led to Moses being denied permission to enter the promised land of Canaan.

Yet, in this psalm, Moses reveals his unwavering trust in God. He acknowledges God's greatness and the frailty of life, which will inevitably end (vs. 10-11). The psalm reminds us that our time on this earth is limited, even if we live a full life. Therefore, we should live each day as if it were our last, guided by our trust in God, a trust that is our source of strength and reassurance.

In this text, we desire God to show us how to live and teach us to count our days. How does God teach us? First and foremost, through His word (Psalm 119:104), through teachers of His word, and through life itself—**life is a great teacher.**

In Psalm 39:4-5, David makes a similar request to the Lord, "*Lord, make me know my end, And what is the measure of my days, That I may know how frail I am. Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my age is as nothing before You.*"

Live with the understanding that death can happen" (Hebrews 9:27). Life can pass by quickly; it is frail and can end at any moment (James 4:14) – our life is like a vapor (Job 14:1-2). Like a shadow, it flees and does not continue. **The older we get, the more we appreciate the sentiment behind this saying. Days, weeks, and even years pass by so quickly that it feels like we blinked, and they're gone.**

Therefore, we need to learn to live for the moment, realizing how frail it is. Many people live as if they have all the time in the world and will live forever. Live each day as if it were your last, so we need always to be ready. As Moses noted, it is likely you will live a full life (Psalms 90:10), but there is certainly no guarantee of this, as we have experienced untimely tragic deaths!

The second part of the text emphasizes that we can gain wisdom by living our lives properly and being mindful of our limited time. It reminds us that this world is not our permanent home and encourages us to make the most of our time and opportunities. The passage urges us to reflect on our past, both our failures and successes, to gain insight and wisdom. It encourages us to appreciate the blessings in our lives and to learn from our past experiences.

Wisdom can teach us what is most important in life and help us make the right choices. In Philippians 3:7-11, Paul gave up everything in this world to gain Christ, and in verses 13-14, he focuses on reaching that goal. In Psalm 27:4, David declares his one desire to dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple. This shows his desire to be in God's presence, potentially within the church. Is this your heart's desire, too?

Wisdom teaches us not to let less important things crowd out what is most important, like the effect of the thorny soil in Matthew 13:22. 1 John 2:15-17 challenges us not to love the world or the things in the world because the world is passing away with its lust. 1 Timothy 6:6-7 notes that we brought nothing into this world, and we can carry nothing out. **See Matthew 6:19-21.**

Let's make a commitment to keep track of our days to gain perspective on our lives and goals. Let's engage in activities that promote positive relationships and avoid hurtful actions. Let's aim to leave behind a positive legacy! Are you living each day with wisdom in your heart? It's worth considering!