

August 23, 2026

Teach Us to Number Our Days

Psalm 90 & Romans 12:1–3

“So, teach us to number our days, that we may get a heart of wisdom.” Psalm 90:12

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Romans 12:2

Today, our focus is on Book IV of the Psalms (Psalms 90 through 106). Psalm 90 is a prayer by Moses—a man who witnessed an entire generation perish in the wilderness. He understood the significance of time and knew that life can be full of "toil and trouble" (Psalm 90:10) and very brief. Yet, he also saw from a distance that a better, promised land, a "heavenly country," awaited him (see Hebrews 11:13-16). In Psalm 90, he asks the Lord to "teach us to number our days," or as Eugene Peterson puts it in *The Message*, "Teach us to live wisely and well!"

Romans 12 is Paul's call to live wisely to enjoy the "heavenly country." When we put these two passages together, we arrive at one powerful truth: A numbered life must become a surrendered life. A surrendered life becomes a transformed life. A transformed life becomes a meaningful life. Psalm 90 tells us **how short life is**. Romans 12 tells us **what to do with the life we have**.

The psalmist begins by acknowledging that God is eternal, while we are not (Psalm 90:1–2). Moses emphasizes God's eternity, stating that before the mountains were formed, before the oceans were created, and before time itself began, God existed. He is the stable and unchanging One, the dwelling place for every generation. In contrast, Moses reminds us of our reality: we are made from dust, fragile, and temporary. True wisdom begins with recognizing who God is and who we are. We cannot live wisely if we forget the God who holds time in His hands. "For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past..." (Psalm 90:4).

Romans 12 echoes this truth: If God is eternal, holy, sovereign, and merciful—then the only reasonable response is to present your body as a living sacrifice. **Psalm 90 says: “Your life is short.” Romans 12 says: “So give your short life to God.”**

Second, life is brief, so we should live with intention (Psalm 90:3–12). Moses does not soften the truth. He compares our lives to grass—green in the morning but withered by evening. He describes our years as passing like a sigh and time sweeping us away like a flood. This message isn't meant to depress us; rather, it is intended to awaken us. Nothing is more dangerous than living as if we have unlimited time. We delay obedience, postpone repentance, and procrastinate our purpose, assuming that tomorrow is guaranteed. But Moses says, "Teach us to number our days." He doesn't just mean to count them—he means to number them. **We should treat our days as precious, limited, and purposeful.**

Romans 12 describes what our numbered days should look like: a body surrendered to God, a mind renewed by truth, and a life that rejects this world's patterns while focusing on our existence beyond this earthly life (John 14:1-3; Hebrews 11: 13-16). When we acknowledge that our days are limited, they can transform into intentional and sacred moments. You cannot live wisely without recognizing your limitations; you do not have unlimited days. However, you do have today, and today is sufficient for God to work in your life.

Third, a numbered life must become a surrendered life (Romans 12:1). Paul instructs us to “present your bodies as a living sacrifice.” A true sacrifice is not done halfway; it is neither casual nor convenient. It demands total commitment. (**The story of the pig’s ham and the chicken’s eggs**). Psalm 90 reminds us that life is short. Romans 12 outlines how we should live this short life: lay it on the altar and give it fully to God without holding anything back. **While you cannot control the length of your life, you can control its direction through sacrifice, surrender, devotion, and obedience.**

Fourth, a surrendered life leads to a transformed life (Romans 12:2–3).

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

Psalm 90 reminds us that life is fleeting, while Romans 12 assures us that our minds can be renewed. Psalm 90 points out that our days are numbered, but Romans 12 tells us that our lives can be transformed. Psalm 90 highlights the fading of human strength, whereas Romans 12 emphasizes that God’s mercy empowers us.

Transformation does not happen by chance; it is intentional, spiritual, and a daily process.

A life that acknowledges its limits becomes a surrendered life. A surrendered life transforms into a meaningful life. **When your mind is renewed, you will:**

- See time differently. See purpose differently. See holiness differently.
- See God differently. See yourself differently. You will stop drifting and conforming. You will cease to waste days. Instead, you will start living wisely, intentionally, and transformed.

Lastly, the psalmist concludes with good news that God can make our short lives meaningful. (Psalm 90:17): “Establish the work of our hands.” Moses is saying: “Lord, take my small life and make it count. Take my limited days and fill them with eternal meaning.”

Romans 12 shows us how God does that:

Through surrendered bodies. Through renewed minds.

Through transformed lives. Through holy obedience.

You may not live forever, but your legacy of love and generosity can outlive you.

A prayer whispered in faith can outlive you. A child you disciple can outlive you.

A ministry you build can outlive you. God takes fragile people and gives them lasting impact.

Psalm 90 tells us life is short. Romans 12 tells us life must be surrendered.

Psalm 90 tells us days are limited. Romans 12 tells us minds can be renewed.

Psalm 90 tells us we are dust. Romans 12 tells us we can be transformed.

So, pray with Moses: **“Teach me to number my days.”** And respond with Paul: **“I present my body as a living sacrifice.”** Because when God is your dwelling place, and surrender is your posture, and transformation is your pursuit— your days may be few, but they will be full.

Let us pray: Eternal God, teach us to number our days. Wake us up to what matters. Deliver us from distraction. Fill us with wisdom. Satisfy us with Your steadfast love. And establish the work of our hands, so that our lives bear fruit that lasts. In Jesus’ name, **amen.**