

Everlasting to Everlasting

Psalm 90

Good morning! If you are new here, my name is Dan Burleson. I am one of the Associate Pastors here at Cornerstone. And we always tell our guests three things. **First**, we are really grateful that you are with us. You are God’s gift to us in this time we that we have together. So thank you again for worshipping with us. **Second**, you are in a place where the ground is level. Which means no one is any higher, better or more significant than anyone else. The ground at the foot of the cross is level ground and we are sinners who need a Savior and Jesus is that Savior. And while your salvation is a personal matter, God never designed for it to be a private matter. He wants us to live as brothers and sisters in the family of God. **Which leads to the Third, thing we need to tell you...** we love you enough to speak the truth to you. That’s truth with a capital “T”. The truth from God’s Word. The truth about Jesus. His Person. His Works. And His Words. How He can transform your life from the inside out. He is the Cornerstone of our faith.

Intro....This morning we are going to be looking at Psalm 90. This is a Psalm written by Moses. It is the oldest of all of the Psalms and the only one that Moses wrote. This Psalm is a prayer of Moses that was most likely written while Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years due to their disobedience and unbelief. The Lord had delivered His people from Egyptian bondage. They were supposed to take possession of the promised land, but they rebelled against the command of God.

Turn to Deuteronomy 1:26. **Deuteronomy 1:26–33 (NASB95)** says, **26** “Yet you were not willing to go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God; **27** and you grumbled in your tents and said, ‘Because the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us. **28** ‘Where can we go up? Our brethren have made our hearts melt, saying, “The people are bigger and taller than we; the

cities are large and fortified to heaven. And besides, we saw the sons of the Anakim there.” ’

29 “Then I [Moses] said to you, ‘Do not be shocked, nor fear them. **30** ‘The LORD your God who goes before you will Himself fight on your behalf, just as He did for you in Egypt before your eyes, **31** and in the wilderness where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, just as a man carries his son, in all the way which you have walked until you came to this place.’ **32** “But for all this, you did not trust the LORD your God, **33** who goes before you on your way, to seek out a place for you to encamp, in fire by night and cloud by day, to show you the way in which you should go.

Now jump over to Numbers 20:2-13. **Numbers 20:2–13 (NASB95)** says **2** There was no water for the congregation, and they assembled themselves against Moses and Aaron. **3** The people thus contended with Moses and spoke, saying, “If only we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD! **4** “Why then have you brought the LORD’s assembly into this wilderness, for us and our beasts to die here? **5** “Why have you made us come up from Egypt, to bring us in to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, nor is there water to drink.” **6** Then Moses and Aaron came in from the presence of the assembly to the doorway of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to them; **7** and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **8** “Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink.” **9** So Moses took the rod from before the LORD, just as He had commanded him; **10** and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, “Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?” **11** Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. **12** But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have

given them.” **13** Those were the waters of Meribah, because the sons of Israel contended with the LORD, and He proved Himself holy among them.”

Due to their lack of trust in God and His promises, God said, “Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land...” (Deuteronomy 1:35). Not even Moses would be allowed to enter the promised land (because of his sin in striking the rock in the wilderness (Numbers 20:2-13)).

During this time of wandering, Moses wrote a prayer. Let’s read that prayer together this morning.

Psalm 90 (NASB95) — A Prayer of Moses, the man of God. **1** Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. **2** Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. **3** You turn man back into dust And say, “Return, O children of men.” **4** For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night. **5** You have swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; In the morning they are like grass which sprouts anew. **6** In the morning it flourishes and sprouts anew; Toward evening it fades and withers away. **7** For we have been consumed by Your anger And by Your wrath we have been dismayed. **8** You have placed our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your presence. **9** For all our days have declined in Your fury; We have finished our years like a sigh. **10** As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away. **11** Who understands the power of Your anger And Your fury, according to the fear that is due You? **12** So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom. **13** Do return, O LORD; how long will it be? And be sorry for Your servants. **14** O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. **15** Make us glad according to the days You have afflicted us,

And the years we have seen evil. **16** Let Your work appear to Your servants And Your majesty to their children. **17** Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; And confirm for us the work of our hands; Yes, confirm the work of our hands.

The title of Psalm 90 is... “A Prayer of Moses, the man of God”. Moses penned this prayer during a very difficult time. Over a period of 40 years, Moses and the Israelites went through so many trials and challenges. Again, Moses himself would not enter the promised land because of his lack of trust and obedience in God. Even though Moses lacked trust and obedience in God, this Psalm calls Moses “the man of God.” Generally the Old Testament used the title “man of God” for a prophet. Charles Spurgeon described Moses this way...”Moses was peculiarly a man of God and God’s man; chosen of God, inspired by God, honoured of God, and faithful to God in all his house, he well deserved the name which is here given him.” Moses was most likely near the end of his life when he offered up this prayer.

This morning we are going to see that man is fragile and sinful and needs the everlasting God as his only possible hope and home. First, we are going to look at the eternity of God. Second, the mortality of man. Third, the severity of God, and finally, the necessity of man. My prayer is that you will see the incredible grandeur and eternity of God compared to your finiteness and frailty, and you will love God and live for a greater agenda..

1. The Eternality of God v 1-2

First, let’s look at the Eternality of God in verses 1-2. In these verses, Moses emphasizes the eternal nature of God.

Psalm 90:1–2 (NASB95) — 1 Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. **2** Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

Please note three things about the eternal nature of God....

- A. First, God has been and always will be Lord (v 1).** Moses begins his prayer with “Lord”.... The Lord is the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. He is sovereign. He is in absolute control over all things. He alone is God.
- B. Second, God has been and always will be the dwelling place for His people (v 1).** What is a dwelling place? It is where you live. God is, their home, their refuge. **Psalm 91:1 (NASB95)** says, “He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.” The Israelites have been wandering for years without a place to call home. God is their dwelling place. He is the oasis of refreshment and encampment for His people for all generations. God is the protector of His people. During each season of their lives, they recognized that God is their dwelling place. And because God is their dwelling place, they can have hope in the midst of very difficult times.
- C. Third, God has been and always will be God (v 2).** God is the only God. Isaiah 44:6 says, “Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: “I am the first and the last, And there is no God beside Me.” He is the only God before the mountains were born. He is the only God before the earth was created. **Hebrews 1:10-12** says, “And, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands; They will perish, but You will remain; and they all will become old like a garment, And like a mantle You will roll them up; like a garment they will also be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end.” He has not changed and will not change. He is the only God throughout eternity past. His is the only God throughout eternity future. From everlasting to everlasting, You ARE God. Charles Spurgeon writes, “God was, when nothing else was.” The eternal God exists far above history. Generations come and go, but God is still the same. Man needs the everlasting God in order to have hope. The person who is anchored in Him is eternally secure. From everlasting to everlasting...God truly is a great God.

Next, we see a contrast of the Greatness of God with Man's frailty. Let's look at the mortality of man starting in verse 3.

2. The Mortality of man v 3-6

In the next 4 verses, Moses speaks of the fragile nature of man. He says,

3 You turn man back into dust And say, "Return, O children of men." **4** For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night. **5** You have swept them away like a flood, they fall asleep; In the morning they are like grass which sprouts anew. **6** In the morning it flourishes and sprouts anew; Toward evening it fades and withers away.

Notice the comparison between man and God.

- A. **In comparison with God, man is nothing but "dust" (v 3).** God in His sovereignty creates man out of the dust (Genesis 2:7) and back to the dust he goes at the word of his Creator (Genesis 3:19). God spoke man into existence in Genesis. God is in control of the day of our death. He alone sets the limit to life.

Several years ago, on a Thursday afternoon, a friend of mine came to see me in my office at the church I was serving in. He used to serve at that church with me, but decided he was going to start an outreach ministry in Carpinteria, California. We were talking about an event he was planning for that weekend. He was getting ready to go pick up some sound equipment for the event. We said our goodbyes. He went on his way and I finished my day at work. Two nights later, on Saturday evening, I got a phone call from a coworker asking if I had seen my friend. I told her that I hadn't spoken with him since Thursday. She said, if you hear from him, please call me or his wife. He hasn't come home. Early the next day, a Sunday morning, I was at church and got a phone call

telling me that my friend had died in a horrible car accident. That wasn't expected. It was a surprise to all of us. But you know what, it was not a surprise to God. God is in control of the day of our death. He alone sets the limit to life.

The next comparison we see is in verse 4

- B. In comparison with God's eternity, man's life is brief (v 4-6).** Verse 4 says, "For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes by..." The apostle Peter picks up on verse 4 in 2 Peter 3:8, writing, "But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day." The point that Moses and Peter are making is that God's perspective on time is much different from man's. What may seem like a long time to man, like a thousand years, is actually short, like one day, in God's sight. In comparison with eternity, the longest reaches of time are mere points, there is no possible comparison between them. Moses and the Israelites are spending 40 years in the wilderness. That is nothing compared to eternity. I was thinking about the amount of time that we have spent living in this COVID-19 season. It has been about 1 year. Moses was in the wilderness for 40 years. From God's perspective, a thousand years is like "a watch in the night". A watch in the night was about 3 hours in length. In Psalm 39:4, the Psalmist says, "Lord, make me to know my end And what is the extent of my days; Let me know how transient I am." Do you understand how temporal man's days are? If you don't yet understand, Moses tells us in verse 5 that men's lives are swept away by God in death like a flood. And finally, Moses says that our lives are like grass sprouts in the morning, but by evening have faded away. All of these illustrations are metaphors for the brevity of life. I love the passage that Adrian read earlier from **Ecclesiastes 3:11-14. 11**"He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has

done from the beginning even to the end. **12** I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one's lifetime; **13** moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor—it is the gift of God. **14** I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him”

Compared to eternity, we are not on this earth very long.

We have seen the Eternality of God and the Mortality of Man. Verse 7-11 shows us that man's greatest problem is not just his mortality or frailty—that he exists for a short time and then is no more. It is that he is also a sinner and is subject to the severity of God...

3. The Severity of God v 7-11

Moses emphasizes man's sinful nature before a perfect God. He says,

7 For we have been consumed by Your anger And by Your wrath we have been dismayed. **8** You have placed our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your presence. **9** For all our days have declined in Your fury; We have finished our years like a sigh. **10** As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away. **11** Who understands the power of Your anger And Your fury, according to the fear that is due You?

Verse 7 - 9 of this prayer reminds us that man's greatest problem is not just his mortality or brevity. God judges Man's sin. Man is a sinner and is subject to the just wrath of God. In fact, it is sin that is the cause of his death and misery. We are consumed by God's anger and confounded by His fury. What is the wrath of God? It is an expression of divine displeasure with human sin. In the Sinai wilderness, Israel's sin provoked God's divine anger leading to their death. Their lives were cut short by justice on account of their waywardness; they failed,

not by a natural decline, but through the blast of the well-deserved judgments of God. The cause of God's wrath is always sin. God exposes man's sin. He has set our sins before him and has set our sin in the light. God knows even our secret sins—our sinful thoughts, actions, words and attitudes. In verse 9 we see that all of man's days pass away under divine wrath. Human life on this earth is short lived because it is spent under God's judgment on man's sin. For those who put their trust in Christ alone for salvation, think about the song "All I have is Christ" where it says, "But as I ran my hell-bound race indifferent to the cost, You looked upon my helpless state and led me to the cross. And I beheld God's love displayed. You suffered in my place. You bore the wrath reserved for me. Now all I know is grace." Jesus Christ bore the wrath reserved for me. I am so thankful for God's grace.

Looking back at our text....Verse 10 reminds us that everybody dies. A friend recently posted a picture of a series of circles forming a box. Each row contains 36 circles. On the box there is a marker for birth, 30th birthday, 60th birthday and turning 90. Compared to eternity, the box shown is just a tiny dot on a timeline. We have limited time on this earth. We most likely will live into our 70s or even 80s. **"10** As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, Or if due to strength, eighty years, Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; For soon it is gone and we fly away." Life is filled with trouble. It will have times of hard work, sorrow, and disappointment. And soon, we all will die. Life is short compared to eternity.

Moses saw many men and women dying all around him during those 40 years of wandering. During his 120 years of life, he lived among funerals, and was overwhelmed with the terrible results of the divine displeasure. In verse 11 he asks, "Who understands the power of Your anger and Your fury, according to the fear that is due You?" Moses felt that none could measure the might of the Lord's wrath. Steve Lawson says, "Who takes to heart the full intensity of God's holy anger against sin? The truth is, no one gives God the fear that is rightly due Him. No one understands God's fierce wrath nor responds in fitting reverence due the Lord."

Focusing on the eternality of God, the brevity of man, and the severity of God, leads into a prayer for wisdom as the only proper, legitimate and wise response to the human condition.

4. The Necessity of Man v 12-17

Moses prays for what Israel needs...

12 So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom. **13** Do return, O LORD; how long will it be? And be sorry for Your servants. **14** O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, That we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. **15** Make us glad according to the days You have afflicted us, And the years we have seen evil. **16** Let Your work appear to Your servants And Your majesty to their children. **17** Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; And confirm for us the work of our hands; Yes, confirm the work of our hands.

We find three petitions in these final verses. This is what man needs. Moses prays....

A. Teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom. (v 12-13). That is, man must be taught by God to number his days here on earth because they are few. We don't know how many days we have on this earth. We know that life is short in light of eternity. God wants us to live our lives in a way that would count for God. During our short stay on earth, we need God to give us a heart of wisdom. We must walk by the Spirit so that we will not carry out the desires of the flesh. We must not live for ourselves and for our own pleasures. The choices we make here on earth have eternal consequences. We must have an eternal perspective recognizing how fragile and sinful we are. We must live our lives recognizing our need for the everlasting God who is our only possible hope. This world is not our eternal home.

In verse 13 we see Moses asking for God's mercy and compassion. Israel has gone a long time under God's discipline without His blessing. How much longer must they endure this chastening. Israel knew that God is a God of grace, love and forgiveness,

even when confronted by the sins of His people. Israel also knew that God punishes sin. They prayed for God’s grace and mercy. They cry out that God would have pity on them.

- B. Satisfy us in the morning with your lovingkindness, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days (v 14-16).** Israel knows that nothing will satisfy the human heart ultimately except God and His lovingkindness. **Psalm 36:7** says, “How precious is your lovingkindness, O God.” **Psalm 63:3–5** says, “ **3** Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You. **4** So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. **5** My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth offers praises with joyful lips.” Psalm 103:17 says, “But the lovingkindness of the Lord is everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him...” As Moses prays, he knows that God’s lovingkindness will satisfy the Israelites every day no matter how difficult. And in the midst of their difficulties, they can sing for joy and gladness. God can make one’s heart glad when one has a right relationship with God. Israel had only known sadness for a long time because of the painful correction caused by turning their backs on God. Moses prays that they would sing for joy and be glad “all” of their remaining days.
- C. Confirm for us the work of our hands (v 17).** Moses knew that he and his people would not see the promised land. But he prayed that whatever days they had left, they would live for His glory. Frail, limited, and sinful as man is, the love of God can transform what is weak to His own glory. Moses concludes that God would bestow His undeserved favor upon His people, rather than consume them with His wrath. Moses prayed that the Lord would establish the work of our hands. What does this mean? That God would make their labor and work meaningful, effective and enduring. The commentary in my MacArthur study Bible says, By God’s mercy and grace, one’s life can have value,

significance and meaning. Thank God for His mercy and grace. We need God's mercy and grace. We need the everlasting God.

Conclusion:

Man is fragile and sinful and needs the everlasting God as his only hope and home. Do you see the incredible grandeur and eternity of God compared to your finiteness and frailty? Will you will love God and live for a greater agenda?

Let's pray.

Benediction:

Hebrews 13:20–21 (NASB95) — 20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, **21** equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.