

Psalm 90:12

Part 1

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[00:00:01] I'd like to read a verse in Psalm 90.

Psalm 90, verse 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

And then over with me please to Proverbs chapter 8. And verse 34.

Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, [00:01:23] waiting at the posts of my doors.

For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.

But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul.

All they that hate me, love death.

And then in Genesis chapter 49.

[00:02:14] I beg your pardon, chapter 47.

Our verse 8, shall we start? And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou?

And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years.

[00:03:09] Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been. And have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

I want to speak this afternoon about our days.

Remember that in Deuteronomy 17, the king was told when he sat upon the throne of his kingdom, that he was to write a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests, the Levites.

[00:04:04] He was to secure the word of God for himself.

And then, we're told, he shall read therein, all the days of his life.

We need to read the word of God.

But not only so, we need to read the word of God every day.

All the days of our life.

And it's in order that we may fear the Lord our God. It's practical.

Because the word of God is practical. [00:05:02] It's not just a theory. It's not in the realm of the imagination or the head. It has to penetrate through the understanding. But it's designed that it might touch our hearts and consciences. It's not so that we can know it, or master it, or repeat it like some mathematical or scientific formula.

It's in order that it rebukes. That's what we had yesterday. It convicts.

It comes home in searching power. It touches our consciences. And there should be a response. Therefore, here it says, in regard to the king, that he was to keep, that he was to fulfill, that he was to observe, that he was to put into practice. The words of this law and these statutes. [00:06:01] And that he was to do them. And that his heart was not to be lifted up.

All the days of his life. And we read in the psalm. Teach us to number our days.

That we might apply our hearts onto wisdom. How many days have we got? We don't know.

We don't know the day of our death. It's good in some sense for a believer that one doesn't know. But how solemn for one who has not closed with Christ for salvation to be going about in this scene not knowing the day of his death. [00:07:01] The day of his death. In the psalm that we read. We're told about what's normal.

Or what may be.

The days of our years are three score years and ten. Score being 20.

Three score being 60. And ten being 70.

An old fashioned way of saying we have 70 years. Anyone here?

Got 70 years?

Well it says that's the days of our years that we might have. Many have much less.

[00:08:04] And if by reason of strength they be four score years. 80. Yet is their strength labor and sorrow for it is soon cut off and we fly away. Dear friend this afternoon. If you were to fly away. Where would you fly to? And we're not talking about Amsterdam. Or Belfast.

Or New Zealand or anywhere else. If you were to fly away. If you were to leave this scene. If you

were to quit this life. Which direction would you be going in? [00:09:04] Would it be up? Or down?

Would it be heaven? Or would it be hell?

Because there are only two destinations. When the journey of life comes to an end there are only two termini. Two roads before you lie and you.

I can't make the choice for you. You a choice must make. One upward.

Two the realms of bliss. Or downward.

Or downward.

To the lake.

And that's the lake of fire. Which burneth forever and ever. And so the journey of life. [00:10:02] Comes to an end.

And we go to our eternal destiny. 70 years. 80 years.

Perhaps longer.

But perhaps shorter.

How many have been taken away.

Young in life.

Through illness.

Or accident.

Or some unexpected circumstance.

Now there's another consideration. In Matthew 25 we're told about the ten virgins. [00:11:11] And the question raised was their readiness.

Their readiness to go in.

To meet the bridegroom. And we're told that five were wise.

And five were foolish. Those that were wise took oil in their lamps.

They made preparation.

[00:12:04] And those that were foolish. Had no oil in their lamps. The wick was burning. Their lamps were ready to go out. They had made no preparation. But the point is.

When the bridegroom came. They that were ready. Went in with him.

On to the marriage.

And the door was shut.

And then at the end of the parable it says. Watch.

Watch therefore.

For you know not the day nor the hour.

I think the verse stops there. In the Greek text.

Watch.

[00:13:04] For you know not the day or the hour.

We don't know when the Lord Jesus will return.

But we know that he that shall come.

Will come.

And not tarry.

He's left us a promise. He says if I go away. I will come again.

And to the believers he says. I will receive you unto myself. But we know from the parable. That when the Lord Jesus returns. The door of salvation will be shut.

And there will be those in the inside. With the bridegroom.

But there will be those. Who will be left.

Outside.

[00:14:06] If the Lord were to come today. If the Lord were to come tonight. Which side of the door. Would you be found on? It's an important question. Your soul's eternal destiny.

Your location in the never ending ages of eternity. Hinges on your readiness for the bridegroom. Should he choose to return.

We don't know when.

We don't know the day nor the hour. And because we don't know the day or the hour. We're told to watch.

We're told to be in a state of preparedness. We're told to be ready. Those that were ready went in. Those that were ready went in. I do trust. That all here this afternoon. [00:15:02] Young and old alike.

From the youngest to the oldest in the room. That you're ready.

In the sense that you've trusted Christ. That you've laid hold of Christ for salvation. That you've said before God. I'm a sinner. I can do nothing good of myself. There's no hope for me. I need a savior. And I look outside of myself. To Christ who died for me. On the cross of Calvary. Who has said him that comes to me. I will in no wise cast out.

So the word of God says.

Teach us to number our days.

That we might apply our hearts onto wisdom. How important it is.

To settle this primary question. Of the soul's eternal salvation.

But then.

We read about Jacob.

And we read.

That he could speak.

[00:16:01] Of the days.

Of his.

Pilgrimage.

The days.

Of the years. Of my.

Pilgrim.

Christian believer.

We as believers.

Are. Pilgrims.

We're on a journey.

From this world to that which is to come. And God.

Counts.

The days.

Of the years.

Of our life.

As of great.

Importance.

And Jacob had to say. That the days of the years of his life. [00:17:05] Had been few and evil. That he hadn't attained on to the days of the years of the life. Of his fathers.

In the days.

Of their pilgrimage.

So. The challenge.

I want to raise this afternoon. Is. How do we spend our days. Let's not just look.

Beyond.

Our daily.

Walk with the Lord.

Sufficient on to the day. Is the evil thereof.

And. The hymn that says.

Take my life and let it be. Unto thee.

Also says.

Take my moments.

And my days.

Let them flow.

In ceaseless praise.

The moments.

Of the days.

[00:18:02] Of our life.

How important it is.

That we should seek.

To live.

Our days.

With God.

The Lord.

Says. About.

Watching.

Daily.

At. Wisdom's gate.

And we know from.

That chapter of Proverbs. From the way in which wisdom. Is presented to us.

And the Lord possessing me. Speaking and says I was set up. From everlasting.

Verse twenty nine.

When he appointed the foundations. Of the earth.

Then I was by him.

As one brought up with him. And I was daily.

[00:19:02] His delight.

Rejoicing always.

Before him.

Rejoicing.

In the habitable part. Of his earth.

And my delights.

Were with the sons.

Of men.

It's very clear.

From the presentation of wisdom. In these verses.

That it's the Lord.

Jesus Christ.

That is in view.

Wisdom personified.

The one whose delights were with. The sons of men.

The delight of God who was there. At the creation.

Rejoicing before him. But whose delights were with. The sons of men.

Therefore in speaking. Of wisdom here.

The writer of Proverbs. Is speaking about Christ. [00:20:02] And it says.

Watching.

Daily.

At. My gates.

So this means.

Dear friends.

That our life.

Of each day.

Has to be lived.

In regard to Christ.

And in.

Relationship.

With Christ.

Are we watching daily at his gates. Are we seeking to get some. Thought of Christ.

To bring some truth of Christ. Which is appropriate to our circumstances. And apply it to the detail. Of our daily life.

We need food.

We need to be disciplined. [00:21:04] And the children of Israel. When they were in the wilderness. They gathered.

Manna.

Daily.

Save that they were not to gather on the Sabbath. And that they were to lay up the day before. And that there would be a sufficient supply. But. Broadly speaking.

They gathered the manna. Manna speaks of Christ. The one who came down from heaven. Angels food.

What is it?

They didn't know what it was. It was in the Jew.

How much of Christ did we gather up today? Well perhaps.

You say.

[00:22:02] Well we had a nice time when we came together. In the assembly this morning. Some of us had.

But we are talking here. On the individual level. Where have our thoughts been today? What place has the things of God. And the things of Christ had. Have we been watching daily. At wisdoms gate.

Have we been reading. The scriptures daily. As the king of Israel. Was instructed to do. There is another thing. We could look at too. In Psalm 86.

Psalm 86.

[00:23:14] There is just one little phrase there. Psalm 86 verse 3 second part. I cry unto thee daily. What about our prayer life? The psalmist says.

I cry unto thee daily. I cry unto thee daily. [00:24:02] Psalms we also read.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning. And we read of one who spoke to God. Before he lay down to sleep. We have the example of Daniel. Being a Jew in exile. He was able to open the windows. Or

at least the windows of his chamber. Were open towards Jerusalem. And Daniel.

Was a man of prayer.

Daily he prayed three times. I wonder are the lines of communication open for us. Not the window towards Jerusalem. But the lines of communication to heaven. [00:25:06] That our prayers get further than the ceiling. It is what is called communion. While the link for salvation. Is a very firm link.

And the one who trusts in the Lord Jesus. Is secure.

Forever.

I give unto my sheep eternal life. And they shall never perish. We have life.

But the link of communion. Is a link that is very easily broken. By sin.

It says if we walk in the light. He is faithful and just. To forgive us our sin. And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [00:26:02] It says if we confess our sins. Just read the verse in 1 John 1. Verse 7.

If we walk in the light. As he is in the light. We have fellowship one with another. He cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin. We deceive ourselves. And the truth.

Is not.

In us.

If we confess our sins. He is faithful and just. To forgive us our sins. And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Important verses.

On this subject.

Of the link of communion with the Lord. Which we need to keep open. In order to live in his presence. And in order to be able. To reach God.

In prayer.

In a meaningful way.

It is not just a matter. [00:27:02] Of saying our prayers. And rushing through.

And repeating the same thing. We need to have a reality. And a frankness.

And a freshness.

And an openness.

We need to watch and pray. And we need to pray and watch. Because if we pray.

Sometimes we pray.

Because it is the right thing. For a Christian to do. And well we do it and that is it. But we should expect. God to hear us.

When we pray.

If we are in a right spiritual condition. And we should expect. Answers to our prayers. And that is why it says. Watch and pray.

And that is why it says. Praying and watching their answer. To see how God will answer. And to see.

When God will answer. And he can answer in different ways. He can say.

[00:28:02] Yes. Or he can say.

No. Or he can say.

Wait. But he that comes to God. Must believe that he is. That he exists.

And that he is the rewarder. Of those that earnestly. Seek him.

So we have a lot to learn. Beloved.

About prayer.

In our personal lives. And we see Daniel.

They passed a decree. Forbidding him to pray. Didn't shake him.

He still prayed.

And they put him in the lions den. He still prayed.

Our Lord Jesus Christ. [00:29:02] As a man here.

Spent all night.

In prayer to God.

Hebrews were told that he prayed. With strong crying and tears. Unto him that was able to save him out of death. And he was heard on account of his piety. Strong crying and tears. Earnestness.

Being in an agony.

He prayed more earnestly. We heard yesterday.

About the importance of prayer. In connection with the ministry of the word of God. And how the

apostles. Gave themselves to prayer. And to the word.

And how necessary it is. [00:30:02] With all the distractions. That we find around us. We find a quiet place. That we go into our closet. Be it a room in the house. Or a place in solitude. In a park or a forest. Or wherever it may be. But somewhere.

Where we can get alone with God. And where he can speak to us. And where he.

Can speak to him.

Daily.

Prayer.

I cry unto thee.

Daily.

You know there are many of these. Things.

In the word of God that are daily. We've spoken about.

Reading the word of God daily. We've spoken about prayer daily. About the manna.

[00:31:02] About.

Watching at wisdom's gates. But there's a reference in Jeremiah. I think.

We'll bring it in here. In connection with our prayer life. Because it might be appropriate. Jeremiah 2 verse 32.

Can a maid.

Forget her ornaments. [00:32:06] Or a bride her attire. Probably not.

I don't suppose bride forgets. What they wear on their wedding day. And God brings this in. To bring out the contrast. It's a little word picture. Jeremiah goes on to say. Speaking as the voice of God. Yet my people.

Have forgotten me.

Days without number.

Days without number.

How many empty days.

[00:33:02] On the calendar.

As we look back over the last year. Or the last month.

If we put the wall planner up on the wall. We put a red line through the days. Or the weeks.

Or the months that have been barren. Standing for God.

Yes we're Christians. We're going to heaven. We're on a pilgrimage. But we've fallen asleep. We're in Bypass Meadow. Or we're in the Slough of Despond. Or we're somewhere else. Days without number.

Just starts very gradually you know. Just like a big avalanche. In the mountains you know. Just a little folding of the arms. [00:34:02] A little sleep.

A little slumber.

And so your poverty comes. And impoverished Christians. Dwarfs.

Stunted in growth.

They should be having strong meat. They need fed with milk. Is that you?

Is that me?

I'm not talking about externals. Or what we go on with outwardly. Or what others might think about us. We're seeking to think about the reality in our hearts. And what God sees.

Here it says.

My people have forgotten me. Days without number.

Teach us to number our days. [00:35:02] That we might apply our hearts on to wisdom. And when we get to the book of Joel. It's worse again.

Because it talks about the years. That the locusts have eaten. The locust and the canker worm. And all these other things. That will come in.

Divitiate the spiritual life. Eat away at our spirituality. So many things.

But the encouragement is. God says.

I will restore the years. That the locust has eaten. And if we recognize today. That we've wasted days. That we've wasted days. And days without number. And that the days have become years. There's restoration possible. [00:36:04] It's not hopeless.

It's like the Nazirite. That we were reading about yesterday. We may have to start over again. But we can start over again. In that chapter.

I think it's chapter 5 of Genesis. Yes. All through Genesis 5. We read about the generations of Adam.

And we read about the years. [00:37:04] Interesting again.

It brings in the days. The days of Adam.

He lived.

And then he died.

Different ones.

There was longevity in those days. We don't have that today. We don't know the measure of our life. We don't know how long we're here. But there's a certain number of years. But God notices the days. The book of Revelation. When we read about the tribulation. Half of Daniel's 70th week. It's referred to as half a week. It's referred to as a time, times and half a time. A time being a year.

Times being two years. Half a time being half a year. Three and a half years. But when these saints are being persecuted by Satan. [00:38:02] And they're going through the difficulties. God numbers the days. He refers to it as 1260 days. It's a wonderful encouragement that the Lord has said to us. Lo, I am with you all the days. Even on to the end of the age. He's available to us. He's offering to be with us all the days. Right through to the end of the age. Right through to the claws as it were. The good days.

The bad days.

The indifferent days. We can have Christ with us. And so here in Genesis 5. It's the years and it's the days. And then it says they died. But right in the middle of the chapter. We find Enoch referred to. [00:39:06] But it doesn't say he died. It says Enoch walked with God. Verse 24.

And he was not.

For God took him.

In the book of Hebrews it said that he was translated. So that he should not see death. It's a type of the believer being raptured. And taken to be with the Lord. In glory.

When he comes to the earth. But. It says all the days of Enoch. Were so many.

He didn't die.

It says he just wasn't there anymore. God took him.

What a wonderful thing it would be in our walk with God. [00:40:04] If we would walk with him every day. And then that he should come. And we should be walking with God still. And he would take us. To be with himself.

And we wouldn't be here anymore. That's how it was with Enoch. It's held out to us today. But it says of Enoch that he lived. Sixty and five years. After he begat Methuselah. And then it says.

And Enoch walked with God. After he begat Methuselah. Three hundred years.

It seems as if a circumstance came in. In his life.

Which caused him.

To start.

To walk with God.

And perhaps God has brought a circumstance. Into your life.

In the family.

Or. [00:41:02] In our surroundings.

Or perhaps he will bring certain circumstances upon us. Which may not be very pleasant at the time. And it may be a wake up call. So that we should start to walk with God. Now. There are just two other. Three other things perhaps. That I'd like to refer to. And the first one.

Might lead us into the collective aspect. Of the believer's life. We've been dealing with our individual walk. But we're members.

But we're members one of another. We need each other.

[00:42:04] We need support.

And in Hebrews.

Chapter three.

Verse twelve.

There's a warning.

About the danger of departing. From the living God.

Take heed brethren.

Lest there be in any of you. An evil heart of unbelief. In departing from the living God. There's always that danger. That we get away from the Lord. The evil heart of unbelief. Kicks in.

And we go on a.

Wider path.

And in contrast to that. In verse thirteen it says. [00:43:02] Exhort one another daily. Exhort.

Can be translated in courage. One another daily.

While it is called today. Lest any of you be hardened. Through the deceitfulness of sin. Sin is very deceitful. Deceives us.

It trips us up.

Fools us.

Catches us off guard. It takes us unawares. But then.

We get hardened.

Deceives us first of all. Gets an inroad.

To the influences of God. So it says that we have to encourage one another. It says we have to encourage one another. Daily.

[00:44:02] That's a good thing to do. Supposes that we see the brethren. Our brothers and sisters in Christ. Supposes that we have fellowship. Fellowship is very important. It's all central heating now. But when there used to be hearths with coal fires. The coal burned very nicely in the hearth. But if you took a lump of coal out. Of the fire.

And set it on the fireplace. By itself.

You'd get a whole lot of smoke. Then you'd get wee spurts. And bursts of flame.

Then the flame would go out. And it would get colder. Colder.

Colder.

So we don't want to isolate ourselves. From God's people.

We need to have regular contact. Not talking about so much in the meetings here. I'm talking about.

In an impersonal way. [00:45:02] Friendships.

In the home or in the street. Or in the workplace.

You see God.

Believers.

You see God.

Believers.

Those who are of like mind. And. We are to encourage them. And they are to encourage us.

Encourage one another daily. A husband can encourage a wife. Vice versa.

Or a friend.

Which raises a question. For the young people. What sort of friends have you got? Who have you gone about with? What sort of company? Are you keeping company with those that are helping you spiritually? [00:46:04] Or are you keeping company with those that are dragging you down? We're not going to stand still. No man's an island.

We're not going to stand still. I think it was Walter Scott in a little tract.

He gave some advice for young people. And he said.

Always.

Seek. The company of someone who is more spiritual than yourself. If you want to grow in the Christian life. Look out for someone who is spiritually more mature than you. And you'll be helped. They'll bring you up to their level. [00:47:02] It's very easy to get pulled down. If I asked one of you to pull and said I'm going to pull somebody up. I guarantee you they'd pull me down before I'd pull them up. So we need to keep a right perspective. If we're thinking of a partner for life. If we're thinking of a relationship. That will endure.

We need to think of the spiritual dimension. And we want to get someone that's more advanced than ourselves. We're always looking for someone that can help us up that little bit higher. While there may be a little bit of interchange and give and take sometimes. Not saying that it will always be the case. But if we're looking out for that. That's the way to make progress. And that's the way to grow. And we're told to grow. We're told to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We're told to encourage one another. [00:48:04] I hope that we might be able to do so. One and all.

Each and every one of us. With our friends.

Wherever we're found. All these daily things. And there's another reference to it doesn't actually mention the word daily. But you need scarcely turn to it. In 1st Timothy chapter 5 verse 4.

We have the only mention of the word piety. In the authorized version in Timothy. We have the word godliness about ten times. I think it's the same word. The idea of godliness or piety.

And it's a little bit special. It says if any widow have children or nephews or children or grandchildren let them learn first to show piety at home. To their own house or in their own house. Now [00:49:02] we're all at home every day. Wherever home may be for us.

So this is something daily. We need to learn godliness at home. And it's probably the most difficult place to learn it. It's easy to go off in a summer campaign. It's easy to be spiritual for a week or two.

And read the scriptures every day and have a nice spiritual conversation and do nice things together with other believers and have some outreach. It's easy to be godly [00:50:02] in a foreign land.

But when you're at home in your own house with your own family surrounding you it's a little bit more difficult. When you've got parents who think things and say things and you just cannot arrive to understand how they reach a certain conclusion. Maybe they're not able to explain it very clearly to you. They're not able to articulate it. You've problems there. And you've problems with the routine.

Getting up and going to school or going to the office or rushing out in the morning.

Sleeping in.

Or some business to attend to or the telephone rings and things of God [00:51:02] get pushed out.

And yet it says here that it's in the home circle.

It's in the home circle. That's the training ground. That's where God has placed us and that's where godliness is to be developed in our lives. And it's a hard lesson. It's a hard training school sometimes. But nevertheless it's there.

So we've looked at the individual in his relationship to the Lord on a daily basis.

And we've looked at the individual in his relationship to the Lord in the domestic setting. In the home.

And we've looked at the individual in connection with friendships. And there's just one other thought I want to bring in in closing. And that's the thought [00:52:02] of the assembly.

And it's not quite something that's daily but it does say in Acts 2 that they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship and in the breaking of bread and prayers.

It is something that's to be continued and it's something which needs to be done regularly.

On the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread. And we show forth the Lord's death until he comes.

And so we go on in a cycle from week to week and from day to day and in Hebrews chapter 10 verse [00:53:04] 24 Again it says that we're to consider one another but we're to provoke but not in a bad way we're to provoke unto love and to good works not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

We should be present at the meetings of the assembly because after all Christ is present and he has asked us to be there. He said where two or three are gathered together [00:54:02] unto my name there am I in the midst of them. And it's not just the meeting for the breaking of bread or the Lord's supper and it's not just the meeting on the Lord's day. We had a brother come to visit us once from another land and someone said to him how many are in your assembly? How many are in your meeting? And he said do you mean at the breaking of bread or at the prayer meeting? Because there was a discrepancy in the numbers the figures didn't balance out. The Lord's there he's in the midst [00:55:02] and it's his desire that we should gather with his children with his people not just on the Lord's day not just at the breaking of bread It seems to be becoming very prevalent people just go to meeting on a Sunday morning that's sufficient and off they go and live the rest of the day and the rest of the week

for themselves. It's not how it should be. It's not how it is in business. If I had a boss and he said on Monday I want you to come and see me at such and such a time and on Tuesday at such and such a time and then again on Thursday and then we'll see each other again as usual on Saturday What would he think if I turned up the next Saturday and said oh hello I'm here again as usual. [00:56:04] He'd be asking a few questions, he'd be wondering where we were and those other days when we should have had that appointment. And that's how it is. Surely the Lord means more to us than an earthly boss the one who died for us who lives for us who wants us to gather together with his saints and who tells us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. It's something which we may not do on a daily basis but it's certainly something that we should continue in on a regular basis and continue steadfastly. There are legitimate occasions when circumstances of the family the home, the workplace that it's not possible to be there but [00:57:02] but to the greatest extent possible we should seek to be found with the Lord's people even in regard to matters of where we live we should seek to adjust our circumstances so that we can be found with the Lord's people. Who knows the Lord might come in in a special way in blessing it'd be a revival presence of the Lord would be felt and those gathered together greatly blessed I think if that were to happen and you were absent you'd be very sorrow sorry, it would be a great loss so we want to think about the days of the years of our pilgrimage. We want to make sure we're on [00:58:02] that journey heavenward we want to make sure that we're ready to go if the Lord should come and we don't want to waste days without number. May God help us in regard to these things