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# Sermon Notes

January 19, 2020

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Before the Beginning Psalm 90

### A Psalm of Moses

- ❖ Psalm 90 wakes us up to eternity
  - somber but not pessimistic
  - realistic but not bitter
- ❖ Our lives are briefer and more fragile than we care to admit
  - life never stands still
  - *they fly forgotten as a dream dies at the opening day* (Isaac Watts' paraphrase of Psalm 90)
- ❖ God stands in contrast to all this: ***from everlasting to everlasting you are God.***
- ❖ Understanding and meditating on the eternal nature of God has implications for the way we live and what we live for

### Eternity

- ❖ Our finite human minds cannot fully grasp eternity
  - the reason Psalm 90 calls attention to the brevity of life on earth is to help us get a little “whiff” of eternity

- our lives are marked by time (months, seasons, years, stages of life)
- we live in time and are limited by time
- ❖ God lives outside of time: imagine if you can....
- ❖ Moses helps us get a little taste of eternity by describing the opposite of eternity
  - our lives are like grass.... here today, gone tomorrow
  - quoting Psalm 90, Peter writes: ***with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*** (2 Peter 3:8)
- ❖ As Moses points out the brevity and frailty of life, he wants to be sure we keep God's eternity in front of us
  - ***from everlasting to everlasting***
  - our unchanging God exists forever
- ❖ Helpful illustrations
  - Tozer: “Because God lives in an everlasting now, He has no past and no future. When time-words occur in the Scriptures they refer to our time, not to His... God has already lived all our tomorrows as He has lived all our yesterdays.”
  - Lewis: line on a paper
  - Charnock: “Eternity and time differ as the sea and rivers; the sea never changes place, and is always one water, but the rivers glide along, and are swallowed up in the sea; so is time by eternity.”
- ❖ In creating everything that exists, God adds nothing to His nature

## So What?

- ❖ Why does any of this matter?
- ❖ A prayer request which we should make our own: ***teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.***
  - keeping the shortness of life in view helps us learn to live for Christ with every passing breath
  - “Only one life ‘twill soon be past...”
- ❖ Keeping God’s eternity in view helps us live with an appropriate humility (Isaiah 57:15)
  - the humility of our condition increases our appreciation of God’s grace
  - when Job gets “the big picture” of God and sees how “small he is” in comparison (Job 42:5-6) it leads to his humble response: ***I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes***
- ❖ Our greatest problem is not the brevity or frailty of life, it is the fact that our sin makes us subject to God’s wrath (vv. 7-9, 11)
  - death is God’s judgment on sin
  - apart from God’s grace we have no hope against this judgment
- ❖ Moses’ psalm points out that we need God’s grace and favor in order to live with wisdom and make every day count for God
- ❖ A growing awareness that God has no beginning and no end is a great source of comfort

- even though life is constantly changing, God will always be what God has always been
- looking at things and circumstances in the light of eternity protects us from needless fear and anxiety
- reminding ourselves that God has had His hand on us since before He even created the world (Ephesians 1:3-6, 2 Timothy 1:9) feeds our assurance of the eternal destiny that is ours in Christ
  - for the believer, the everlasting life of joy and blessing that God purchased in Christ has already begun
  - believers will be with the God who has no beginning or end forever
- ❖ An additional prayer request: ***Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.***

## Personal Reflection

1. In what ways might a growing awareness that you belong to a God who has no beginning or end have a positive impact on how you go through your day?
2. Read Psalm 90 again. How do the reminders Moses gives you about the brevity and frailty of life impact your desire to make each day count for God?
3. Psalm 90 leads us to humble ourselves before the Lord, but it also brings us comfort as it reminds us of God’s grace, forgiveness and the hope of heaven. Which of these themes are most important to you at this season of life? Why is that so?