



What can keep us from fearing those who seem to have great or lasting influence in this world (or for becoming those who exult in their own)? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. Psalm 49 looks forward to the opening portion of morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these twenty verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that it is utter folly to think that wealth or influence in this world makes an enduring difference. But God exposes this folly by the need for and human impossibility of redemption. He alone can redeem, and those who have Him as Redeemer have nothing to fear.

Tuesday, May 3, 2022 ▫ Read Psalm 49

Questions from the Scripture text: To whom is the Psalm addressed? For (of) whom is it written? With what command does v1 begin? Who are to do this (v1-2)? Upon what are the Psalmist's mouth, heart, ear, and harp collaborating in v3-4? What does v5 ask about what situation? By what are we tempted to resist fear (v6)? But what should we most fear, and why does the approach in v6 fail? What sorts of people die (v10)? But what do fools think/do anyway (v11)? And what will happen to them (v12-13a)? And whom else (v13b)? Who come out on top (v14)? How (v15)? So, what shouldn't we do (v16)? Why not (v17)? What do they and others do (v18)? But what will happen to him anyway (v19-20)?

This Psalm moves from "why should I fear" in v5 to "do not be afraid" in v16. The primary reason for both is: death and eternity make all the difference.

Death and eternity come to all, v1-10. This is such an "inclusive" Psalm! It's for all of the peoples/inhabitants of the world (v1). It's for both the low and the high (v2a). It's for both the rich and the poor (v2b). It's for both the wise and the foolish (v10a-b).

Therefore, all need wisdom, v3-4. How foolish one will think himself if he lives this life as if it is an end in itself! And yet so many are no better off in death than beasts (v12b, 14a, 20b). They think little about what they leave behind for posterity (v12a), or what will come of them in eternity.

This is especially a danger to the rich, v6-13. They are prone to false security (v6a, they "trust in their wealth"), false satisfaction (v6b, they "boast in the multitude of their riches"; and v18 "he blesses himself" and others praise him too), and false feelings of ownership (v10, they "leave their wealth to others") and permanence (v11). Their "inner thought is that their houses will last forever." Their investment is in this world, as if some enemy will not come destroy all they leave behind, or some fool among their progeny dissipate it all once. They "call lands their own names." As if ten thousand years hence there won't be others who have laid higher claim—if anyone even remembers them and their name and their claim at all.

None of the wealthy's illusory advantages solve death; the grave will burst their bubble. That seems pretty obvious: all men die. But the problem is more than mortality; the problem is guilt and vengeance. God is the One who requires death (v7), which means that it is not just the body that is at stake but the soul (v8). Can the wealth of the wealthy be of any avail against God? Certainly, some wealthy feel their need/danger and lay out much earthly goods to atone for themselves. "Their redemption is costly... that he should continue to live eternally, and not see the pit." But even if they never run out of money, they eventually run out of time, and find that they still haven't done anything that can atone for them with God.

But what money has no power to do, Almighty God does by His mercy, v14-15. How is it that though all are laid down in the grave (v14a), the upright will rule over the wicked (even and especially the wealthy wicked) in the morning (v14c)? Because God has determined to take them for Himself (v15b), which means that the grave cannot ultimately hold them (v15a).

Therefore, believers ought to watch against acting like fools about the fools, v16-20. This Psalm has been reminding us that the wealthy are utterly foolish to be impressed with themselves. But, if we fear the wealthy and 'powerful' in this life, then aren't we participating in the same sort of folly as theirs? Doesn't fearing them give them the credit in our hearts that they give themselves in their own? Don't fear when one becomes rich and the glory of his house is increased (v16). His going to die, and he will have neither wealth nor glory then (v17). This portion of the Psalm covers much of the same ground as before, but this time the target is not the boastful wealthy but the fearing godly. Do not fear them!

To which of the dangers of the rich are you especially prone? What mere men are you tempted to fear or fret over? What has God done to solve "the death problem"? How do you know that it has solved your own death?

Sample prayer: Lord, You are from everlasting, to everlasting. But we are like the grass that is here today and gone tomorrow. Indeed, the wages of our sin is death, and there is nothing we can do to pay You off for it. But You have atoned for us, in order to receive us to Yourself. So we bless Your Name and ask that as we worship You, You would stir up our fear of You, so that we would have no fear of those who can kill only the body. By Your Spirit, make us to know Your glory and Your grace in Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP49A "Hear This, All Earth's Nations" or TPH49 "Hear This, All You Peoples"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Psalm 49. These are the words of God to the chief musician. The Psalm of the sons of Korah hear this old peoples give ear, Well, inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich, and poor together, My mouth shall speak wisdom. And the meditation of my heart shall give understanding.

I will incline my ear to a proverb. I will disclose my dark saying on the harp. Why should I fear in the days of evil? When the iniquity at my heels surrounds me, those who trust in their wealth? When both in the multitude of the riches, none of them can by any means redeem.

His brother nor give to God a ransom for him Further, redemption of their souls as costly and it shall sees forever that he should continue to live eternally and not see the pit. For he sees wise men die. Likewise the fool and the senseless person perish and leave their wealth to others.

Their're inner thought, is that their houses will last forever? They're dwelling places to all generations. They call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man, though in honor does not remain. He is like the beasts that perish. This is the way of those who are foolish and of their posterity, who approve their sayings.

Salah like sheep. They are laid in the grave death shall feed on them. The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning and their beauty shall be consumed in the grave far from their dwelling, but God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave. For he shall receive me.

So long Do not be afraid when one becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased for. When he dies, he shall carry nothing away. His glory shall not descend after him though while he lives. He blesses himself for men will praise you and you do well for yourself.

He shall go to the generation of his fathers. They shall never see the light a man who is on in honor yet. Does not understand is like the beasts that perish So far. The reading of God's inspired and inerrant word in which the Psalm is giving us death and resurrection, as the reason we should not be afraid.

In two significant circumstances, The first is in verse 5. Why should I fear in the days of evil? These are days of evil. Not only is their sin. So positive moral evil but there's also misery circumstantial evils that are the consequence of sin. And yet the days of evil are a limited time or for a limited time, period, not only do all evil men, have a limited length of their life and then they go to their graves and they are no more, which is one of the main themes of the Psalm.

But also the age of evil itself is limited and there is a morning coming when God redeems. The upright from even the grave resurrects them and gives them glorified bodies. So evil men are for a limited time and the evil age, the age of thin and misery the age in which the creation is bound to corruption and decay in hope of seeing the liberty.

The glorious freedom of the children of God. This whole age is a limited time and that is the great reason that we should not in verse 5 Fear in the days of evil or in verse 16 fear when wicked men seem to have wealth and power. So that they are, able, we think and are afraid to do more of their wickedness, and make it more effective.

But that effectiveness is an illusion both in their minds. When they think that they are establishing the works of their own hands and an our minds. When we are foolish enough to think that they are established and in control and then we start to fear them as if they were not just about to perish and whatever they did in this world would not be ultimately undone by the Lord.

So the first important consideration in order to bring death and resurrection to bear upon our fearing them is that death, and eternity, come to all the Psalm is very inclusive. Look at verse two low and high rich and poor together and second half of verse 2. The y's and the foolish in verse 10 wise men die and also the foolish.

And so death comes to all you doesn't matter how Hi you were verse 2A. How rich you were verse to me or even how wise you are chapter verse 10. A, you will die. And the great question is not so much what you leave behind. We all want to imitate, God, We all want to love him and do good.

We all want to be wise and make good use of what he is entrusted to us and we all desire that the effects of it would continue, But that belongs to the providence of God and that the way and the way that things go in this world is that the effectiveness does not ultimately continue.

God, may make it to bear benefit for some generations. And yet the man whose hope is in what effect he can have in this world. He has a fool as we'll hear later. He is just like the beast that perishes he has. Had no more effect in this world than a.

A lesser rodent that gets killed by a predator and dies and decomposes in in the woods. This, by the way, is one of the reasons why some of the Theodomic post-millennial reconstructionist focus is so disturbing because they think that they make a lasting difference in this world and that the value of what they do is not first and foremost honor given to God in the moment so that the glory of Christ is reflected in them.

But they place much emphasis and value upon what they build and and leave behind even if they were to be wise to some extent verse 10A, yet they die. And if they think that the society that they are reconstructing in their so-called post-millennial hope, which views the kingdom not as heavenly and eternal, but earthly and political and economical.

If they think that what they leave behind and have been reconstructing is of lasting value, Then they are like the beasts that perish a man who is in honor verse 20. It does not understand is like the beasts that perish God has intentionally set before us. That death is an equal opportunity killer.

And that eternity is an equal opportunity value. Shaper. It establishes the worth of what we do and that which has its home, hope, and time is rendered worth less by eternity. So God sets us before sets before us. Those things here in Psalm 49 to save us from such folly.

So since we have death and eternity set before us and although we hope to serve God in this life and to enjoy God in this life, our hope does not in this life. And in order to make that distinction, you need wisdom because you can hear how similar those things sound, We hope to serve God in this life.

Oh well then this life is what matters? No. God is what matters and you are in this life. So you hope to serve God in this life and you hope to enjoy God in this life. Oh, so the stuff in this world really matters Well, to the extent that God is working in this world and is what you in this world and gives you things because God matters.

And because you matter, but even the stuff of this world that you build and enjoy does not have in itself inherent value because God will destroy it to resurrect and recreate it new. So in order to make that distinction, we need wisdom, you know, the theonomic Post Millennial reconstructionism that I was talking about for it's not just wrong because it's got theological problems, it's harmful because it's foolish.

It is the inability to make the distinctions that this psalm makes, but the ability to make good distinctions is part of what we call wisdom. And so, that's why verses 3 and 4. Say my mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall give understanding. I will incline my ear to a proverb.

I will disclose my dark saying on the harp and so this dark saying, in other words, something that isn't obvious to men, but for which we need light from God in order to see and understand. So dark saying proverb meditation, wisdom understanding. So you have this, this fivefold language of how we really need help from God, light from God, for our hearts to understand His word, in order for us to make these distinctions.

Well So you suddenly say oh Well it's no surprise that that thing that is just a little bit off and that in its being a little bit off is so foolish that it leads people to live for and hope in and place value upon really almost the opposite thing that they should.

It's really not surprising that even otherwise good and believing men would fall into that error because God has just given us. This five wisdom words, Avalanche in verses 3 and 4 telling us how badly we need light from the Holy Spirit to understand these words of wisdom that he is giving us about death and eternity coming to all and it's especially a danger to the rich.

He shows us in verses 6 through 13 those who trust in their wealth and boast in the multitude of their riches who think that you know simply by the wisdom and diligence and fragility and generosity that Scripture commands. And that in the ordinary course of life, God does blast with the ability, not only to maintain yourself, but to be able to help your children as well.

But that somehow those things will be permanent and perpetual. And if you can just do it and manage it. Well enough that stuff will always be there. People who are wealthy are prone to the danger of thinking that they are really establishing stuff in this world. They trust in their wealth and boast in the multitude of their riches.

And so, you know, late 20th century and early 21st century but probably not. By the time we get to the mid 21st century America and westernism, but especially America is the only place that as far as a theology within the church. This idea of reconstructing an earthly kingdom could ever be thought of as what the Bible calls us to do and to enjoy, because it's those who to whom God in his providence has given an extra measure of things in this world and influence in this world who are most susceptible to the illusion that they are really going to make a lasting difference in this world.

So they both they trust in their wealth. They boast in the multitude of their riches. And God says, don't you see how the the eternal redemption of a soul should make you say? Oh, that's right. Earthly riches are worthless earthly influence and work is worthless. So can well our wealth and riches useful for serving God and many ways, absolutely.

Are they youth useful in being generous and taking care of our brothers and sisters and the church in the circumstances temporarily that God has placed us. Absolutely, they're useful. Within the providence of God, in the place that he has put us. But he shows us their uselessness by the fact of our sinfulness and our needing to be redeemed.

And so he goes immediately from the falsely placed trust in wealth and riches in verse 6 to their uselessness in verses 7 through 9. None of them can by any means redeem, his brother nor give a ransom for him. We know in our hearts that God is and that God requires righteousness and that those who reject God's glory or fail to worship God's glory and break God's law deserve God's wrath.

That's what the second half of Romans 1 says, We know, everyone even unbelievers, know those things in their hearts. And so even a wealthy person understands, to some extent. Unless until God, gives him over entirely to his wickedness, even a wealthy person has a troubled conscience and is always trying to commend himself and to make up for his sinfulness and some of the quote unquote.

Best wealthy people will try to establish great charitable works and give great amounts of money to others. They offer their body to be burned and give all that. They have to the poor as first Corinthians 13 says, And yet first Corinthians 13, says even someone who does that might not have love and in.

So far, as people try to do works to attend for themselves before. God They cannot by any means redeem. His brother nor give to God a ransom for him. They still find that it never works. It never it never finally makes them feel like they are like they never is able to clear their conscience.

That's the word phrase. We're looking for, for the redemption. Verse 8 of their souls is costly and it shall cease forever. Oh, I forgot when I was talking about charitable works in our culture presently. That's what the woke movement is. All about that. If you feel bad about and follow the, the woke commandments, which is pretty much accusing anyone who, who is in a position of wealth or power of being evil, because of what good God has given them.

That that's how you atone for yourself. And so you got a bunch of wealthy powerful people running around thinking that they can atone for what they consider to be a sin. Having having wealth or influence by hating people who have wealth and influence and it's this crazy religion that has and incorrect view of what righteousness is with an incorrect view of what attainment is.

But even what they try to do that never, it can never ultimately atone. So whether you have, you know, the the more, you know, somewhat rational view of like trying to make up for with good works and actual charitable deeds or the utterly irrational attempt of self-attainment. In our current local culture.

Neither of them can clear. The conscience, only the blood of Jesus Christ, the propitiation the suffering of Christ, under the wrath of God, on the cross, and the righteousness and obedience of Jesus Christ, standing in your place, Those are the only things that can ever clear your conscience before.

God. If you feel guilty before God, you must cling only to Jesus Only to what he has done. On the cross, only to his perfect obedience on your behalf, clinging to making a decision clinging to being part of this family, clinging to paying attention, and family worship clinging to having right theology, clinging to doing right things.

None of those things will ever be able to take away your guilty conscience because none of those things are able to take away your guilt before God. And the person who tries he will eventually run out of money. The redemption of their souls is costly. But supposing he is so wealthy that he wouldn't run out of money and he has continually trying to offer something in order to make up for himself.

He will run out of time for the redemption of their souls as costly and it shall cease forever. If he tries to make up for himself to God, He will run out of time to do

so and he will come into that eternal state in, which he is unable to continue trying to make up for himself to God because he has died.

So God that he should continue to live eternally and not see the pit verse 9. So God gives us death and the eternal state, it being either eternally blessed through the atonement of Christ, but or eternally cursed on account of our sin and not having the redemption of Christ, and not having been able to produce any other sort of redemption, which we cannot And God has given us that reality to show us.

The foolishness of trusting in wealth. So what money has no power to do and what our works? Have no power to do yet verse 14 and 15. God does for those who are His, by His mercy, and whom he brings to himself by giving them faith. So verse 14, it's talking about the foolish or trusting in themselves and they think that they are reconstructing things verse 11, that their household will last forever and they're dwelling place to all generations.

They call lands after their own names. Nevertheless man, though in honor does not remain his like the beasts that perish it would be like in in some 15 years or less when, when our dog dies that we try to rename the area from Kalida Kaleoka to Nattyville, and we expect that 10,000 years.

Hence people who live here will refer to it as Nattyville because Nati, the dog was here. It's ridiculous, right? You don't expect succeeding generations to be so impressed with the dog that served us. Well, and that we enjoyed and etc for some 15 years. In the early 21st century, You don't expect them to recognize her lasting contribution.

Well, eventually in this world time, wipes out all the contributions of men and God mocks here. Those who call places by their own names and expect that their households will have a perpetual earthly continuance. And and impressiveness by saying they even though if they were, they were in honor for a time.

He they do not remain in there like the Beast of Paris. Well, if our inability to redeem ourselves or give ourselves eternal, life Meridian ourselves from sin or redeem ourselves from the grave. If God has given us that to show our foolishness, does that mean we cannot be redeemed from our sin or redeemed from the grave?

And the answer is by no means because although those foolish ones are laid down in the grave, and at that point, their lasting influence of the on the world is no greater than a sheep's. If you think of it, the sheep's lasting the sheep's current influence in the world is already at the bottom of the curve, right?

They were tasty. They provided some wool with some care that garment may be useful for a couple hundred years. So maybe I should give them a little bit higher on the curve of a good sheep, is better than a bad man, but even a good man, his way up on the curve.

As time proceeds, the continued lasting effect of both their curves are going to zero. They are not as able to establish perpetually in this world. Something that will not be destroyed by foolish and wicked men or even by entropy and chaos. Suppose. God permitted. This world to last perpetually until the sunburned out.

Well, so much for your reconstructed society then. Okay. So he says like sheep there late in the grave death, shall feed upon them. All right, so you know whom whom have they provided for well maybe their children a little bit but also death that uses maggots to eat them.

The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning, right? So whether it's, you know, the the upright maybe foolish and have their hope in this world and yet once God has destroyed their works in the in this world and Providence has, you know, has brought all things to to rubble over time.

As inevitably happens in this life. If they had Christ in his righteousness, they will still be saved forever. And will come to reign in the true and lasting way at the resurrection. The knight is coming and and then the morning of resurrection, the wicked wealthy. In this world who do not have Christ, who do not have redemption from God, they will be ruled over the upright, shall have dominion over them in the morning, their beauty.

That is the wicked. So, be consumed in the grave far from their dwelling. In other words, everything that they labored to build will be at up in the grave and they will not carry any of it into eternity. But verse 15. God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave.

For he shall receive me. God is forever. God is my portion Fellowship with God is my good. If he shall receive me, is your hope that having him and enjoying him and being with him, is your great hope. Then you have a hope that the grave can't stop. Because if he had shall receive me, is your home verse 15b.

Then verse is your hope verse 15b. Then God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave. Is your certainty. The assurance of that hope verse 15, A Therefore Do not be a fool who places your hope or your pleasure, or the value of your labor, upon the effect that it has in this world And finally verses 16 through 20.

Don't be a fool. That is afraid of people who are doing that because even the believer, who has an eternal hope because we live in time, and we suffer under many miseries in this life in this world and our hearts can start to quake and we may have anxieties and start to to anticipate and borrow trouble and think for ourselves.

Oh no, this person is gaining political power or influence in this area. People even do this in the church. Oh no. That person really seems like he's swaying things in the church and God says, don't be afraid. Don't be afraid if someone becomes rich, don't be afraid. If the glory of someone's house, the weightiness and influence of someone's house, starts to be increased.

And they may be mal-intentioned, Don't worry about others. Don't don't be afraid of others. If you do that, you're in essence, making the same mistake as they do, when they think that they can accomplish much by their wealth or by their influence, what they're doing. Will not last having God being redeemed from the grave by God.

That will last have that as your hope and do not fear. Temporary earthly, power or wealth in others. And then, let's pray our Father in heaven. Give us that eternal. Hope make us those who even now consider that our life is hidden with Christ and God. And that he has reserved there for us and inheritance that cannot perish cannot diminish.

Cannot be taken away, so that we will live in this world as those with this sure. Hope and serve you in this world and do good to others and hope that you will use it to do. Good to others and perhaps many others and perhaps for many generations. But Lord, as you make us to serve you and enjoy your goodness.

Even in earthly things, we pray that our service and enjoyment would not be an earthly service. And in earthly enjoyment make it a heavenly service on earth. We pray make it a heavenly enjoyment on earth. We pray. Give us. We pray that wisdom that this Psalm presses home is needed in order to make such distinctions.

So that we will be able to think, rightly and live rightly before you and place. All of our emphasis on you and your salvation in Christ, and the power by which you

make all things to work together for your eternal glory. And for our eternal good. So that perhaps one day we will love our lives, even not unto death and overcome by the blood of the Lamb.

And by the word of his testimony perhaps leaving nothing behind except the memory of the glory of Christ and the life of some Christians. Please. Lord give us wisdom so that not only will we not live in the wrong way but so that we may be spared in these few days that you have given us from fearing.

Those who seem like they could do some damage. Remembering that they cannot do ultimately lasting damage anymore than a man can do ultimately lasting good. In this world help us O God for. We are fools and we need the light of your spirit to shine upon your word that it might enter our hearts and that we might have the light of the knowledge of your glory to sign in our hearts in the face of Jesus Christ through whom even we ask this, Amen.