

An Order of Worship for the Home

November 15, 2020
What We've Lost – week 5



This service is written for two speakers. Ideally, family members can speak and declare God's grace to one another following this format. For those who live alone, this worship outline can be followed with a brother or sister in Christ over the phone. You may call on a friend to fill this role, or your elder or pastor can worship with you by phone.

There is an "offering prayer" included in this outline. As we shelter in place, please continue to worship through giving. You can mail offering envelopes and checks to Calvary or visit www.calvaryslz.org to give online.

Opening Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

¹ For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
² a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
³ a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
⁴ a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
⁵ a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
⁶ a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
⁷ a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
⁸ a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

Invocation

Reader 1: There is a time to remember what we've lost.
Reader 2: The people, the time, and even our sense of direction.
Reader 1: It is appropriate to grieve, but we do not grieve as this world.
Reader 2: We grieve, and we hope.
Reader 1: We gather in our grief with hope supplied by our God,

Reader 2: Who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Together: Amen

Psalm 90:10,12

From Pastor Matt:

When I moved here, I needed to find a new doctor, so I set an appointment for my regular physical. I showed up for my appointment and patiently sat in the waiting area. When my name was called, I was taken back to a room where I continued patiently waiting. As I sat in the exam room, I noticed the decorating. Along with pictures of C. S. Lewis (who wrote *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* and *Mere Christianity*) and J. R. R. Tolkien (who authored *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy), there was a framed set of words labeled as the "Prayer of Moses." It was a quotation from today's psalm – Psalm 90, verses 10 and 12:

*The years of our life are seventy,
or even by reason of strength eighty;
yet their span is but toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away...
So teach us to number our days
that we may get a heart of wisdom. (Psalm 90:10, 12)*

Those words are a fitting place for us to begin worship as we continue – and conclude – this series, "What We've Lost." We began by talking about friends we've lost. Last week we looked at the plans we've lost. I think it's safe to say, when our world is disrupted by those losses we tend to lose direction as well. That can be true as individuals. It can also be true of communities, like Calvary.

Today, we'll think about the direction we've lost, and how we find our way again. That task begins with prayer, and Psalm 90:10 & 12 is a good place to begin.

Pray those words now.

**The years of our life are seventy,
or even by reason of strength eighty;
yet their span is but toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away...
So teach us to number our days
that we may get a heart of wisdom. (Psalm 90:10, 12)**

Amen.

Confession & Absolution

Make sure each person present has opportunity to confess to a brother or sister in faith. Go through both parts as many times as needed to accommodate all who are gathered.

Christian Confessing: I place my hope in the wrong things far too often. I want government to provide help. I want schools to provide answers. I want medicine to provide safety. My hope gets side-tracked by all of these and more. I have placed hope in the wrong things, and I am sorry for that. Restore me, God, for the sake of Jesus. Restore my hope.

Christian Responding: Your God is the God of hope. Jesus is God who became man in order to bring hope to this world. By his death and resurrection hope has broken through. His promise to return is your ultimate hope. You are loved by God. You are forgiven by God. He is your hope and salvation!

Together: Amen.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers,^[a] you have no need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. ⁴But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵For you are all children^[b] of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. ⁶So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men* and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian** and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

[Matthew 25:14-30](#)

¹⁴ "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants^[c] and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents,^[d] to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶ He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷ So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸ But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' ²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.^[e] You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' ²² And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have

made two talents more.' ²³ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, ²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' ²⁶ But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed?' ²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Message

Remember What's True

Have you ever gone online to find something, and ten minutes later found yourself trying to remember what you had intended to do? Have you ever walked confidently into a room only to pause and attempt to recall what it was you were going to get from that room?

That's losing direction. Those are small things.

Have you ever driven to a new place and then wondered how in the world you would find your way home? Have you ever created a budget only to have an emergency arise which wiped out your bank account, and then wondered how you would ever pay your bills?

That's losing direction too. Those are bigger issues.

Have you ever lost someone close to you and sunk into an immobilizing period of grief? Have you ever lost a job or seen an opportunity end, and wondered how you would ever move forward again?

This is also losing direction.

Have questions and doubts waged war on your mind, and shaken your faith? Have you ever begun to wonder if God is really out there?

This is losing direction as well.

Big or small, we all lose direction in different seasons. Our shared experience with the coronavirus, related restrictions, and other changes makes it hard to hold onto a sense of direction right now, but I think Psalm 90 can help with that.

Moses is the author of this psalm, but we don't know exactly when he wrote it. It would be speculative to connect the words of the psalm with any particular event in Moses' life or leadership. Maybe that's helpful for us. It allows us to receive this bit of God's word as it speaks to our own lives and our current setting.

As we walk through the psalm together, Moses gives us words to speak to God. This is a prayer. However, as we take this prayer to heart, the words also call us to *remember*. Here's where we start:

Remember your home.

¹ *Lord, you have been our dwelling place
in all generations.*

² *Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (Psalm 90:1-2)*

We don't have to choose a specific event in Moses' life to recognize the significance of God as a "dwelling place." Moses lived with the Israelites for 40 years as a nomadic people wandering around the desert. Home was not marked by a location during his time. Home was recognized by the presence of God.

The same is true for you. If you feel like a stranger in this world, maybe that's OK. If you feel out-of-place in our country due to divisions and a loss of common moral ground, maybe that makes sense. Your home is not marked by a location, or a flag, or a street address. Your home is where your God is present. He is with you now, in this world, as foreign as this world may seem. Also, he's promised to re-create this world as your true home, where you live in his fully revealed presence.

Our prayer from Psalm 90 continues.

³ *You return man to dust
and say, "Return, O children of man!"*

⁴ *For a thousand years in your sight
are but as yesterday when it is past,
or as a watch in the night. (Psalm 90:3-4)*

In these verses and the two which follow, we hear the next call to remember:

Remember your size.

*⁵ You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning:*

*⁶ in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers. (Psalm 90:5-6)*

Remember your size is a call to humility before God. The God to whom we pray is the creator and sustainer of all life. He spoke, and the world came into being. Who are you by comparison? You came from the dust, and to the dust you will return. From the perspective of a God who sees all of eternity, your life goes by in the blink of an eye. Like grass that finds renewed life in the morning dew but droops in the heat of the day, human beings regularly come and go before the eternal and almighty God.

Don't hear this wrong. These verses are not about God being mean or capricious. Instead, these verses highlight the extreme difference between human beings and God. *Remember your size* calls us to humility. We are small before the all-powerful God. We are children. Like children, we too often cry out "It's not fair!" when we're faced with the difference between us and our heavenly Father.

Remember your home. That was comforting.

Remember your size. That was humbling.

The next part of the prayer gets more difficult.

Remember your guilt.

*⁷ For we are brought to an end by your anger;
by your wrath we are dismayed.*

*⁸ You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your presence. (Psalm 90:7-8)*

God's anger and his wrath are clearly connected to our sin. He sees our misdeeds. His light reveals even the hidden sins of our lives.

- Our greed drives us to want more, and bigger, and better, and newer. We hold back from generosity because we refuse to give up our own selfish desires.
- We critique others in order to make ourselves feel better. Is that gossip? Is it pride? Is it slander? I'm not sure it needs a label in order to count as sin.

- We see people as objects, and obstacles to our own goals, rather than recognizing them as fellow children of God.
- We ignore prayer and God's Word, and tell ourselves it doesn't matter because we're already saved. Sadly, our faith devolves from a loving relationship to a pragmatic get-out-of-jail-free card.

God sees all of these, and more. Our sins are laid bare before him.

But bear in mind, these themes are coming from our prayer to God. Psalm 90 is a prayer for us to speak. We need to remember these things if we're going to find direction again. We cannot do that on our own. So, let's work through one more of these challenging sections together.

Remember your frustration.

*⁹ For all our days pass away under your wrath;
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.*

*¹⁰ The years of our life are seventy,
or even by reason of strength eighty;
yet their span is but toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away.*

*¹¹ Who considers the power of your anger,
and your wrath according to the fear of you? (Psalm 90:9-11)*

The problems you and I face are not entirely the result of things we do. In other words, the problem is actually bigger than the sins we commit. The world in which we live is corrupted by sin as well. Death was not present in God's original creation. It is the result of sin in this world. The same can be said for sickness and natural disasters. There are problems with creation itself. (Personally, I think mosquitos deserve mention here.)

When we're faced with the problems of a broken world, we're disappointed. We might get upset. Our anger may be stirred. The world doesn't work like it should. *Remember your frustration.* Recognize that the world is broken.

Remember your home.

Remember your size.

Remember your guilt.

Remember your frustration.

But, more than all of these...

Remember your hope!

¹² *So teach us to number our days
that we may get a heart of wisdom.*

¹³ *Return, O Lord! How long?
Have pity on your servants!*

¹⁴ *Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*

¹⁵ *Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,
and for as many years as we have seen evil. (Psalm 90:12-15)*

If I were to take all the “remember” statements I’ve given you in this message and boil them down to one simple statement, it would be this:

Remember what’s true.

What is true? You have a home which is not connected to a place on a map or a political boundary. You have a home with your God. He is your dwelling.

Remember what’s true.

You are not God. You are his creation, and he is the Creator. You are his child, and he is your Heavenly Father.

Remember what’s true.

You are a sinner. You have a need which cannot be denied; a need neither you nor I can fill.

Remember what’s true.

This world is broken because of sin. Creation itself has a need which cannot be denied; a need neither you nor I can fill.

Remember what’s true.

You have hope! You have hope because your God loves you. You have hope because he sent his only Son, Jesus, to live as a human being in this world. Jesus never lost sight of his home. Although he was true God, he humbly lived as a man. He took our place as a child of God and lived obediently in that role. He had no guilt, but he took our guilt on himself. He was perfect, yet he subjected himself to this flawed creation.

You have hope because of Jesus. You have hope because he died and rose again. You have hope because he has dealt with your guilt and declared you forgiven. You have hope because he proved himself powerful enough to correct all the wrongs of this world. He is even more powerful than death itself.

When you remember what's true, you remember all this. You realize your place, and your need, and your God's work on your behalf. You see your place in this world. You see what is real now, and you also know that your God is changing reality.

We started this morning by talking about what it's like to lose direction. In my experience, we lose direction when we lose sight of what's true. Psalm 90 helps us return to what's true. God's word helps us find our footing again. When we spend time in this prayer we remember what's true.

And, what about finding direction? That always comes from your God.

Remember what's true, and you'll be ready for what's next.

*¹⁶ Let your work be shown to your servants,
and your glorious power to their children.*

*¹⁷ Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us,
and establish the work of our hands upon us;
yes, establish the work of our hands! (Psalm 90:12-17)*

Remember what's true, and you'll be ready for what's next.

Look for God at work. I love the line "Let your work be shown to your servants." That's a prayer for God to open our eyes. Pray that your eyes would be open to the work God is doing right now. Pray that as a church we would see God's Spirit at work around us. Ask to recognize his movements, and seek out his presence.

Where do you look for God to be at work? Start by going where he's promised to show up. Spend time in the places where God has promised you'll find him. Spend time in his word and know that he's speaking there. Spend time with his people, and expect him to be present there. Your God is here – in the bread and wine of communion; in the brothers and sisters you know at Calvary. Recognize his presence here, and you'll be better equipped to recognize his presence in this world.

Remember what's true, and you'll be ready for what's next. Look for God at work, and ask to join him in his work. We don't invite God along on our adventures. We're invited

along as he moves in this world. Pray that he would give us work to do. "Establish the work of our hands!" Use me, Lord! Use us, Lord! Connect us to your work in this world.

Remember what's true, and you'll be ready for what's next. You'll be ready to see God and work and join in his work. You'll be ready for a role in the work he's doing in your family, and among your friends, and in the lives of your neighbors. As a church we'll be ready to take part in what he's doing in Alpha, and at Lea's Christian School, and in LINC, and in the San Lorenzo Food Bank. I don't know what's next, but I know how to be ready when God gives us direction.

Remember what's true, and you'll be ready for what's next.

Amen.

Offering Prayer

If you have an offering present as you worship, you may place your hands over it during the offering prayer.

Reader 1: With thankful hearts we receive from you, O Lord.

Reader 2: With thankful hearts we respond.

Reader 1: Receive our thanks and praise.

Reader 2: Receive our offerings.

Together: Receive us as your own.

Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

Share prayer requests with one another. Pray over the requests shared, then pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing

Reader 1: We grieve for what we've lost.

Reader 2: Our God was grieved when he lost us.

Reader 1: We take comfort because our grief is known to our God.

Reader 2: We find hope because our God has made his plans known to us.

Reader 1: Go as one who is known by God!
Reader 2: Go in the hope God provides!
Reader 1: Go, and know that your God goes with you,
Reader 2: The God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Together: Amen.

For This Week

Each day this week, do the following:

- Read and pray Psalm 90 (If you're short on time, focus on verses 16-17.) Then ask yourself: *What truth do I need to remember today?*
- Write down your answer and place it in your pocket, purse, or wallet; or post it on a mirror or computer screen. Place it somewhere you'll see it during the day. Allow Psalm 90 to help you remember what's true each day this week.

As applicable, please share this resource with others who would benefit. An electronic version is available at www.calvaryslz.org. We can also add friends to our mailing list if that is preferred.

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