

A Great Cloud of Witnesses

- *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, Heb 12:1-2*
- Consider: all these witnesses are among the dead. They were born, lived their lives and died long ago. Yet everyone of them is like Abel:
- *By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. Heb. 11:4*

God's Testimony = Memorial

- Only God's testimony allows them to speak. God remembered them ... so they live on into eternity.
- Some God remembered for good. Heb 11
- Some God remembered for evil 1Cor 10:1-12
- He uses both of them to warn and exhort us.
- I will remember you when all others forget.
- *Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." Rev. 14:13*
- How do we want God to remember us?

Learning from Testimony of the Dead

- *Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, For that is the end of all men; And the living will take it to heart. 3 Sorrow is better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. 4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. Eccl. 7:2-4*
- The most important thing we can learn is that this is the end of all men. If we, the living, can learn from those who have lived their lives, we have been given a great advantage.
- I read this at every funeral ... what will I say about you ... when you lie where this one is now

A Sober Beginning to 2024

- *LORD, make me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am. 5 Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing before You; **certainly every man at his best state is but vapor.** Ps 39:4-7*
- We are always a handbreadth from death.
- We are frail
- At our best state we are but a vapor.
- Revealed to:
- Make us know our end.
- What is the measure of my days.
- This man has died. Did he heed his advice? Do we?

Two Choices: Two Outcomes

- *LORD, make me to know my end, and what is the measure of my days, that I may know how frail I am. 5 Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, and my age is as nothing before You; certainly every man at his best state is but vapor.*
- *....6 Surely every man walks about like a shadow; surely they busy themselves in vain; he heaps up riches, and does not know who will gather them. 7 And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You. Ps 39:4-7*

The Dead: Teach Us to Number Our Days

We finish our years like a sigh. The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. 11 Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath. 12 So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Ps 90:10-12

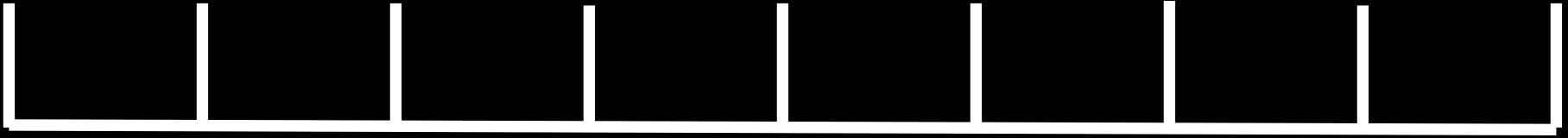
All the days of our life – no more than a sigh to God.

70-80 years, but soon cut off and we fly away.

Teach us to number our days.

Gain a heart of wisdom.

The Days of Our Lives



10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

Make me to know my end and my frailty

Help me learn to measure my days

We finish our years like a sigh.

it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

teach us to number our days,

that we may gain a heart of wisdom

Are We Numbering Them?



of Our Lives



50 60 70 80

and my frailty

are my days

a sigh.

they fly away.

days,

art of wisdom

Counting Them?

Numbering Days: A State of Mind

- Everything should remind us.
 - Each New Year
 - Our Birthday
 - Ages of our Children
 - Wedding Anniversary
 - Renew license (another 4 years gone)
- All Say the same thing! Time is moving and our days are fleeting toward the end
- How Will our God Remember us?

The Life Goal of Nehemiah

- *Remember me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people. Neh 5:19*
- *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for its services! Neh 13:14*
- *Remember me, O my God, for good! Neh 13:31*
- What about us?
- How will God remember us for good?
- What are my good deeds?

The Race Set Before Us

- *Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain. 1 Cor 9:24-25*
- *Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*
- What are our weights? How hard do we seek to remove them?
- What are the sin that so easily besets us?
- Are we cutting off and plucking out? Repenting?

Are We Asleep or Awake?

- And do this, **knowing the time**, that now **it is high time to awake out of sleep**; for **now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.** Rom 13:11
- **12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand.** Therefore let us **cast off the works of darkness**, and let us **put on the armor of light.** **13 Let us walk properly, as in the day**, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. **14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ**, and **make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.** Rom 13:11-14
- Do we know the time?
- Are we aware of time as it passes?

Making Plans: A List from Last Year

- Put off old man and put on New Eph 4:17ff Col 3:1-15
- Relationships with our brethren. Mt 25:31-46;
- Hospitality. Rom 12:13; I Pet 4:7-10
- Evangelism. I Pet 3:15; Col 4:5-6;
- Becoming a teacher. Heb 5:12-14
- Reading and Learning Scriptures. II Tim 3:14-17
- Pray without Ceasing. I Th 5:17; Eph 6:18; Col 4:2-3
- In everything give thanks. I Th 5:18; Eph 5:20; Col 3:15
- Putting on the armor of God. Eph 6:10-18
- Adding to your faith II Pet 1:3-11
- Removing the works of the flesh. Rom 7-8; Gal 5:16-25
- Equip ourselves for the work of ministry. Eph 4:11-16

We Must Always Be Awake

- You are all **sons of light and sons of the day**. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore **let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober**. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But **let us who are of the day be sober**, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For **God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 1 Thess 5:5-10

The Rest of Our Time

- *no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ³ For we have spent enough of our past lifetime* in doing the will of the Gentiles — 1 Peter 4:1-11*
- *But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. ⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another,*
- *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ,*

An Example to Follow

- **I press on**, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.
- **one thing I do**, forgetting the behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,
- **I press toward** the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- Therefore **let us, as many as are mature**, have this mind;
- Brethren, **join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.**

Pressing on

- *Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 2Pet. 3:11-13*

God Will Remember us for Good... If:

*if you do not **believe** that I am He, you will die in your sins." Jn. 8:24*

*unless you **repent** you will all likewise perish. Lk. 13:5*

*if you **confess** with your mouth the Lord Jesus and **believe** in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. Rom. 10:9-10*

*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who **believes** and **is baptized** will be saved; Mk. 16:15-16*

***Repent**, and let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins Ats 2:38*

*If we **confess our sins**, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*