

Monday, April 20, 2020

What is it you plan to do?

- Pastor Hank French

*He knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.
As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
But the steadfast love of the LORD
is from everlasting to everlasting... (Psalms 103:14-17).*

I love the Psalms. They truly are the “Prayer Book of the Bible.” There is no “fake news” in the Psalms; they are honest and real to a fault. The grandeur and the smallness of human life, the joys and the sorrows of human life, the ecstasy and the suffering, vision and reality, faith and doubt, praise and lament, longing and fulfillment—all there. All helping us to understand the wonder and the mystery of human existence

Psalm 103 is honest and real. We are mortal; we flourish like a flower of the field for a while and then, inevitably, we are gone. And that’s OK because, from everlasting to everlasting, we are safe in the steadfast love of the Lord.

We have much in common with the flowers of the field, but the Psalms insist that we are not insignificant creatures. We are loved and infinitely valued by the creator of heaven and earth and all therein. Psalm 8 says it well:

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honor (Psalms 8:3-5).*

All of which tells me that what we do with our lives matters—it matters to ourselves, it matters to others, it matters to the natural world, it matters to God. In light of our mortality, what should we be doing; how should we be living?

In the last three lines of her lovely poem—The Summer Day—Mary Oliver asks a simple but profound question:

*Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?*

Read one Psalm a day for the next 150 days. It has helped me answer her question.

Prayer: Holy creator God. What am I that you are mindful of me? Nothing less than your beloved child. Amen

To read The Summer Day, follow this link. <https://www.loc.gov/poetry/180/133.html>