

**THE LONG VIEW**  
**First Sunday of Advent – November 27, 2011 –Psalm 90: 1-10**  
**The Church of the Covenant**

Since we can only see the span of our own lives it is difficult, if not impossible, to see life from the perspective of the infinite God. We see the short view. God sees THE LONG VIEW. My hope today is that in some way we can see better as God sees; we can get out of our own perspective and more into God's perspective. We can get beyond however many years we have been given here on earth and get into the perspective that we live forever through what Jesus Christ has done for us...and so we may see life, all of life...with THE LONG VIEW...

Before time began there was a plan of God. It is a Sovereign plan of a Sovereign God. *"He chose us in Him...He chose us in Christ...before the foundation of the world...and He destined us in love to be His sons (and daughters) through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will..." (Ephesians 1: 4-5)* Before time itself began God had already chosen us in His Son, Jesus. That's the Long View, isn't it?

Before time began the Word, Jesus Christ, was preexistent with the Father. *"In the beginning was the Word..." (John 1: 1)* begins the gospel of John. *"all things were made through Him"* through the Word, through Jesus. And then at just the right moment in time, at the centerpoint of all creation, as the crown of all eternity, at just the right moment, according to a divine and Sovereign plan of God from before the beginning, from a point in time before time, from before the book of Genesis declares, *"In the beginning..." (Genesis 1: 1)*, at just the God-appointed time and day and year, *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth..." (John 1: 14)* At just the right moment, in the perfect plan of God, Jesus Christ, the Word became flesh, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. That's the Long View, isn't it?

A thousand years before the birth of Jesus the Old Testament prophets are prophesying about the coming Messiah. All the law and the prophets point toward this one singular event in all creation. They prophesy He will be born in *"Bethlehem"*, and so He is. Centuries before His birth the prophets predict He will be born of a *"virgin"*, and so He is. He will be called *"Emmanuel"* and so He is. He will be called *"Great, the Son of the Most High God"* and so He is. According to the prophets and long before His birth, he will be called *"Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace"* and so He is. He is the fulfillment of the prophets' dreams. The long hoped-for Messiah is a dream placed in people's hearts. They long for Him; they hope for Him; they pray for His advent' this desire of the nations, His coming is the hope and the dream placed in every person's heart. People hoped and dreamed and prayed for a thousand years before He actually came. At just the right time, in just the right way, perfectly, according to a perfect and divine plan, set into motion before the foundations of the earth, He came. Man, that's the Long View, isn't it?

In Advent we wait for God to send His Son again as Lord and as Savior, as King of Kings, as Messiah, as creator, redeemer and sustainer. He is Alpha and He is Omega –He is the beginning of all things –He is the Alpha point in time. And He is Omega –He is the ending of all things –He is the Omega point in time. Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet and Omega the last letter. He is B.C. and He is A.D. He is the centerpoint of all time. Time itself is calibrated as before He entered into the world, B.C., and after He entered into the world, A.D. The fulfillment of prophecy, His birth, His life, His death on a cross, His resurrection from the dead, this Christ event stands as the very center of all time itself. Time itself is measured between when it began, Alpha, and He is there and when it ceases, Omega, and He is there. Time itself is measured from a centerpoint, from before the Word was made flesh, B.C., and after the

Word was made flesh and came to dwell among us, born in a little town in Bethlehem, A.D. Man, that is BIG; that is HUGE; that is mind-blowing when you really think about it. That is the Long View, isn't it?

And the day is coming when all we know shall be no more. Christ shall come again. The trumpet shall sound and the dead will be raised imperishable. Advent for a second time, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords riding on the clouds from heaven, descending with a shout, come to judge the quick and the dead, coming to grant resurrection to all who have loved His appearing. Christ shall come. Time itself shall cease. The glory of the Lord will be our light. He will fully be our God and we will fully be His children. Death shall be no more; no more crying; and every tear shall be wiped away from our eyes. The perishable will put on the imperishable and the mortal will put on immortality. The same resurrection that raised Jesus from the dead shall raise us up to new life and for all eternity. And we will live forever. With all those we love we will live forever. We shall see Jesus "face-to-face" and we will understand why life has been how life has been; we will be understood even as we now understand. And the Sovereign plan of God will be completely fulfilled. *"The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand..." (Mark 1: 15)* His plan for you and His plan for me, it will all come to full completion in the Day of Jesus Christ. And every hope and every dream held within the human heart will be fulfilled. And every unanswerable question in life will be answered. And we shall see the glory of God in the face of Christ. It is a plan for you and it is a plan for me, from before the foundation of the earth, to when earth and time itself is no more, it is God's Sovereign plan. That is the Long View, isn't it?

Our scripture from Psalm 90 puts it this way –*"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past..." (Psalm 90: 4)* God's view of time is bigger than ours is because God's view of time is eternal and infinite, without beginning or ending. We see time from the perspective of our own short span of life; we do not see time from the infinite perspective of the infinite God. The Psalm says, *"all our days pass away...our years come to an end like a sigh...The years of our life are threescore and ten...perhaps 70 years...or even by reason of strength four score...perhaps 80 years..." (Psalm 90: 9-10)* From dust we come and to dust we shall return. Our spirit is eternal even as God's spirit is eternal. We are like grass, the span of our life is short by comparison to eternity –*"the grass withers, the flowers fade, but the Word of the Lord endureth forever..."* For us the time between when we pray and when that prayer is answered seems forever, but for God it is but a heartbeat. For us the time when we are young seems long, and as time speeds up and as we age our life seems shorter and shorter and shorter. But for God the entire span of our entire life no matter how long or how short we live it is infinitesimal, minute, tiny, by comparison with the span of eternity. Whether we live 20 years or 40 years or 60 years or 80 years or even 100 years what is that in comparison with the span of eternity held within the Sovereign plan of God? If we thought of God's view of time as a vast continuum, from Alpha Point to Omega point, from before time itself began until time itself is no more, if we saw time as God sees time as one unbroken line stretching beyond eternity, our time here on earth is but the tiniest of specks on the eternal continuum of God's time. Do we see life from our own speck? Or from the vast limitless infinite continuum of eternal life???????

O Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of Him? O Lord, why do You, the eternal God, know me by name? O Word of God incarnate in Jesus, why do you know me so well and so personally that even the hairs on my head are numbered and that not even a sparrow falls in my life that You do not know it and care? Why did you send Your Son, Jesus Christ to be born into the world and into my life? Why did You send the Spirit to lead and guide me? Why in that day when I shall die do You send Your Son to take me by the hand and gently lead me into eternity? Why do you grant me eternal life and a resurrection body just like Jesus'? Why do you assemble all my loved ones there to meet me? And why do I get to love

and enjoy You forever, in the perfect light of a perfect eternity as part of an unfolding perfect Sovereign plan of a perfectly loving God???????

I am just a human, Lord. My view is short, not long. I see my life as only that of the brief and fleeting span of days that You give me. I worry about things when I should trust in the Long View plan for my life. I fear death, my own and that of dear friends and family, when I should enjoy whatever life I receive and relish the thought of living forever. I waste my life, as short as it is, on things which do not matter in light of eternity. And I spend too little time, as short as it is, on YOU, Lord, and the things which are eternal and get me to heaven. Help me, Father, to see as You see. Help me, this Advent, to see a larger perspective. Help me to see this Christmas a longer view and a bigger picture. Help me to live my life today filled with the hope of the resurrection and a coming Messiah and an eternal life which never ends. Have my short view become just a bit longer today, that no matter how long my life may be, I may live every moment of it, filled with a life that never dies.

One of my hardest personal struggles with the cancer of my friend and colleague and brother, Randy Boyer, is what could be the shortness of his time. I keep thinking and praying to God, "Lord, I cannot believe You would bring him all this way, through seminary and to ordination, to serve You and the church, I cannot believe You would place all the ideas and thoughts of things to do, and classes to teach, and sermons to preach, within his heart, and then somehow take it all away and so prematurely". I have trouble, Lord, seeing Your Sovereign plan and Your loving hand at work in all this. But then I think of the difference my friend has made in so many people's lives. I think of the impact of His life and ministry on so many people. I think of the hope he has given to so many people themselves struggling with disease or facing death. I think of all the fruit born for the Kingdom of God through him. I remember my Lord's ministry was just three short years and at the age of 33 He was nailed to a cross that many might live and have eternal life in Him. And I see just a glimmer of eternity in it all. I do not presumptuously suggest I understand it. However long a time we have with those we love we always want more. That is just to be a human being. But God's view is a bigger view. God's view is the long view. Our view is the short view. Because we are frail dust and all too very human.

Father, I want him to have more time...to do more of what You have placed in his heart to do.

Father, give me just a glimpse of eternity today; stretch my view just a bit; elongate my short view into a longer view, that I may see more as You see the world, that I may await Your advent with a hope and an expectancy that speaks of eternity; that I may walk by faith and not by sight...

For a thousand years in THY sight are but as yesterday when it is past...and the years of our life are but three score and ten...and they are soon gone... and we fly away...into eternity and into the waiting arms of a loving God...

Father...this ADVENT...grant me The Long View...today. Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA  
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*