

Timeless

Reconnect – Thanksgiving 2011

Text: Hebrews 13:8-16; Psalm 39:4-7

Key Thought: We can find purpose and hope for our all-too-short lives in Christ alone.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever... this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come. Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name. And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God. Hebrews 13:8-16, NLT

Pre-intro: Funny turkey video

Intro: The thankful game (discussion)

- So... what is everyone thankful for?
- **<discussion>**
- Thanksgiving is a day when we all are supposed to pause and reflect – on the good things in our lives, on the things we have to be thankful for – and we surround ourselves with the evidence of those things – lots of food, family and close friends, and time (a long weekend, if we can get it)

What if you're not thankful?

- Suicide forest in Japan – “Aokigahara”, at the foot of Mount Fuji – for many people, the weight of their lives is crushing them, and the day after day of it doesn't seem that it will ever get any better
- We have the most of anyone in history – access to food, security, choices about job and family and where we will live and how we will live – technology that lets us know more about anything in a moment or two than the experts just a hundred years ago
- But the pace is too much – we need to take a **breath**

Just a breath

- So let's do that – in fact, why don't we see how long we can go with taking a great big one?
- **<have everyone hold their breath as long as they can, put their hand down when they have to breathe again>**
- We breathe about 20,000 times a day, but most of the time we don't notice it – unless we're out of breath, or holding it, or pausing to take a deep one
- In fact, being aware of breathing is like being aware your tongue is in your mouth – freaky!
- Remarkably, we are always one or two breaths away from... well, you know – sobering, isn't it?
- Now, another breathing exercise – take a deep breath, and then let it out, at whatever pace you want – but please don't breathe on anyone else!

God's perspective – a breath is our life

- The Bible says that just one breath – out of 20,000 on the day, 140,000 on the week – over half a billion in your lifetime – just one breath is a picture of my life and yours, when it comes to the way he sees it
- In the course of time, He is outside of time – and when we look at Him, suddenly our time here is disturbingly short

Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be.

**Remind me that my days are numbered—
how fleeting my life is.**

You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand.

**My entire lifetime is just a moment to you;
at best, each of us is but a breath.”**

Interlude

**We are merely moving shadows,
and all our busy rushing ends in nothing.**

**We heap up wealth,
not knowing who will spend it.**

And so, Lord, where do I put my hope?

My only hope is in you.

Psalm 39:4-7, NLT

“No Time”

- One of my best friends’ favourite sayings in college was “no time”
- He had been feeling pretty stressed at one point during the semester, and had started rushing around, from meal to meal, thing to thing, and exiting conversations and gatherings with “no time” – the self-talk he needed to try to manage his time better
- So, of course, we all started mocking his efforts – imitating him, reminding him, yeah, that was the kind of friends we were
- There are times in our lives when it feels like we have all kinds of time – and other times when it feels like we don’t – like my 20’s and 30’s, for example
- And then, when we take a moment to get perspective, it seems that things have gone all too quickly – the milestone moments – graduations, birthdays, holidays – remind us that things move very fast
- It was in school that I first heard the idea that for our age, time was more important than money – that people would rather spend money than time – and as a student, I could hardly believe it – eating 59 cent bags of fries with a dented can of Pepsi that I would get for a quarter from the grocery store next to the beer store next to where we lived in the basement of a duplex
- But since that time, I certainly believe it – and our words reflect it as well
- We talk about “spending” our time, for example – “giving” of our time, “taking” the time to do something – all money words, applied to time, the currency of our lives
- But what will you and I do with our time – what will we do with our one breath?

What will you do with your breath?

Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.

Ferris Bueller

- There aren't that many things to hold on to in our lives
- I heard a lady this week speak about her business – she was a design consultant, who specialized in downsizing
- And as she said, she worked with two different situations: “voluntary” or “forced”
- That's a sobering thought – that we spend the first part of our breath accumulating stuff – and then the second part of our breath trying to hold on to it – and then the final part of our breath seeing it go, when we we've learned that most of it doesn't matter anyway
- On Thanksgiving we're trained from an early age not to really be grateful for our stuff (even though we should be, we have tons of it, much more than whole nations of people) – but to focus on our relationships, on the things that “really matter”
- But then again, those relationships fade with time, too
- The person you told “you're my brother!” in a drunken haze in a dorm room, well, they moved away and are living somewhere else, and you're Facebook friends once a year
- Even family will eventually pass on – our children will grow and move out, those older than us will pass away (kind of a grim Thanksgiving message, isn't it?)
- So what can we be thankful for that will endure?

A never-changing God – outside time, patient and loving and true

- Love that will not let us go – the Bible is clear – Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever – the one constant in our world of change
- We have so much to be thankful for – but what holds it all together? What gives it all purpose and meaning? What gives us hope for a future, especially a future outside time?

Key Thought:

We can find purpose and hope for our all-too-short lives in Christ alone.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever... this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come. Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name. And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God.

Hebrews 13:8-16, NLT

Conclusion: Steve Jobs RIP (commencement address)

This is a prepared text of the commencement address delivered by [Steve Jobs](#), CEO of [Apple](#) Computer and of Pixar Animation Studios, on 12 June, 2005.

My third story is about death.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, some day you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "no" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything – all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure – these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

Response