

## Teach Us to Count

**Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90:12**

Peas rolled recklessly around the toddler's plate as she counted, "Ten, eleven-teen, twelve-teen...."

Preschoolers love to count, but they don't always do it perfectly. Thankfully, not a whole lot is riding on a four-year-old's numerical skill with a plate of peas.

Grown-ups like to count, too. Monday's alarm blares and we start a count-down until Friday. A new mom's belly balloons as she counts down to her due-date. A not-so-new mom counts her first grey hairs. We count down to Christmas, birthdays, and retirement. But if we're only numbering earthly milestones, our counting doesn't add up to much more than a plate of peas.

**"Teach us to number our days."** That's what Moses asked of God in Psalm 90. Moses was an old man assigned to wander through the sand dunes and heat of the Sinai Peninsula—for four decades—in the company of two million or more of mulish Israelites. God had decreed that for their sin a great number of those Israelites would be **"(swept) away in the sleep of death"** (Psalm 90:5)—scattered across the desert sand. **"Teach us to number our days,"** Moses prayed, **"that we may gain a heart of wisdom."**

Just like those Israelites, I have the sand of sin between my toes. Everywhere I go, I trail that sin, stirring up God's righteous anger. I treat my daily "manna" with arrogance—as if my children, my job, my home, my health, are blessings that will last forever. My days roll by as I flit after fancies, with little thought of what happens when I come to the end of my pile of peas. What if I did a better job of measuring my mortality? I'd be more inclined to pray like Moses: pleading for wisdom as I use my days, for forgiveness when I misuse them.

Even as Moses suffered under God's justice, he refused to let go of God's grace. He boldly prayed, **"Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days."** (Psalm 90:14) This is not the prayer of a prisoner scratching off his dwindling days on a cell wall. This is the prayer of a child who knows he will wake each morning to the warm embrace of a father who delights in filling his needs.

Marvel again at that love: So that sinners could know joy, the eternal God put a number on his days. He began his earthly life in a womb and ended it on a cross, where he suffered hell in our place. So that sinners could be glad, Christ stepped from the grave on Easter morning, dusting death from his hands. The light of his resurrection shines in every corner of our lives. Though we misuse our time and misplace our priorities and obsess over our piles of peas, every morning brings fresh forgiveness. Though our days on earth are darkened by disappointment

and sorrow, heaven awaits. Though death rises like a tide to cover us, it cannot claim us. Christ already has.

**“Satisfy us in the morning,”** Moses prayed. And isn't that a better way to count our days? Not milestone by milestone, but morning by morning. When our real satisfaction is found in God's love and favor, we can sing for joy all our days.

Even on Mondays.

Even when it's peas for dinner.

**Prayer:**

Lord, let your unfailing love fill me with daily joy and purpose until you call me home. Amen.

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