



Peace in the Middle of a Pandemic **A Global Perspective of COVID-19**

If you have a Bible—or you can pull up one on a device near you—let me invite you to open with me to Psalm 117. Each Sunday from now, Lord willing, until the end of May, we will be looking at a Psalm from our Bible Reading Plan as a church. I love the Psalms so much, especially the way they are speaking to us so clearly in these days. So if you have not been reading along, feel free to join in. You can download the Bible Reading Plan from the MBC website.

The challenge every week is picking which Psalm to dive into on Sunday, because there's just so much good to pick from. I figured today we would just go with the one we're scheduled to read today, Psalm 117. It's the shortest chapter in the entire Bible—two verses, 17 Hebrew words. Interestingly, it's also the middle chapter in the entire Bible. There are the same number of chapters on either side of Psalm 117.

So what do these two short verses have to teach us in the middle of a global pandemic? The answer is: so much! We are now in week seven of lock-down, so to speak. This is the seventh Sunday we've been worshiping online from our homes, as more people have joined in with us all around the world. We are all in many ways isolated from the world which is why this Psalm in particular is so helpful for us. It beckons us to lift our eyes from our homes and look around the world.

Let me ask you a question. Amidst all the news sources you're going to or headlines you're tracking about developments, how often are you tracking what is happening in other countries? Did you read this week about 36 countries that are now facing potential famines of biblical proportions filled with millions of people who will starve to death if they shelter at home? Have you read about places with no infrastructure for a crisis like this—no doctors, no medical facilities—where countless people don't even have the ability to wash their hands in their homes? Have you read about the swarms of locusts in the horn of Africa ruining crops, while also dealing with COVID-19? Have you read about the world's worst food crisis in Yemen, about the effect of all of this on refugees in Syria, on the orphan crisis in Ethiopia and Haiti, the poorest country in the Americas? How do you do social distancing in a setting like this?

The Psalm we are about to read reminds us as the people of God that we don't just care about our country—we care about people in all countries. We don't just focus on needs in our homes—we focus on the needs of the nations. We don't just follow what's happening right around us—we follow what's

happening all around the world. Do you know why? Because our God loves the world and we want our hearts to be a reflection of His heart.

So as we dive in Psalm 117, let's ask if our daily practices—our thoughts, what we are learning and reading about—are a reflection of God's heart for the world or just for the people right around us? We've spent the last seven weeks of this pandemic seeing God's love for us in His Word every week, which we all need. And we are sharing His love all across our city.

Seventy-thousand pounds of food came through this building this week alone. That's amazing! That's more than we did in the first three weeks of this crisis combined. You are donating food on top of that. I am so proud of you, our staff and the volunteers who are making this happen. People are coming to Christ. It's amazing seeing people share the gospel through their masks with people who are walking up or driving by to get boxes. People coming to faith in Christ right in their cars. It's awesome!

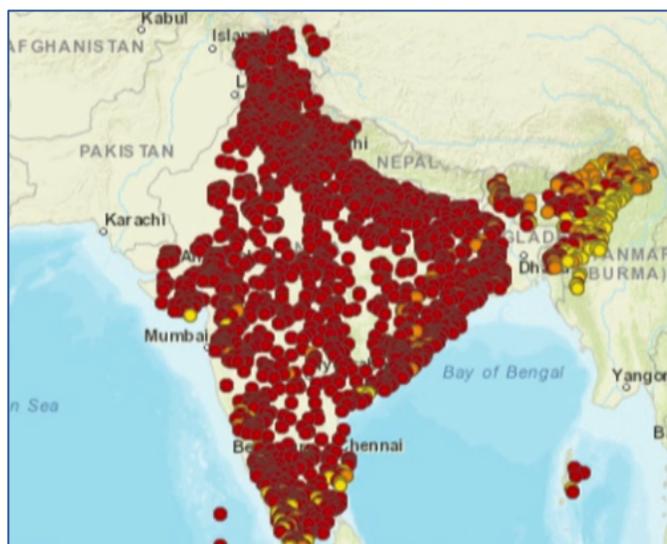
So yes, we focus on love for each other. Yes, we focus on love for our city. And we focus on love for the world. This is what it means to be the people of God, according to the Word of God. So Psalm 117 starts this way: *"Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!"* Let this soak in because every word in this short little Psalm matters. Let me actually start at the end of these sentences with "nations" and with "peoples."

We really need to know what the Bible means by these words. When the Bible says "nations," it doesn't just mean geopolitical entities like we might think of today, such as 200 or so countries in the United Nations. Instead, "nations" is actually a synonym with "peoples." Both of these words refer to groups of people who share common language and cultural characteristics, which is why we often talk about "people groups." There are other words we see in the Bible for this too: clans, tribes, nations, peoples. In the Bible, think of the Israelites, Jebusites, Amorites, Hivites, Hittites, Girgashites and Sinites. We could go on and on and on. In the same way, we could describe groups of people today.

Here's why this is really important. Yes, there are 200 or so nations in this world, but we'll miss the point of Psalm 117 if all we think about are these 200 countries. There are thousands of distinct people groups in all these countries who share a common language and culture. We know this here in the United States. We certainly know this here in Metro Washington, DC.

Even in this church, we have over 100 different countries represented, but there are far more people groups than that. Some of the different languages that are spoken across our church are people from the same country who speak different languages and who have different cultural backgrounds. Let's just think of one example. There are many people in our church from India, but not everybody from India is exactly the same. There are many different peoples and nations in India. You can go to the Joshua Project online and see how they track the spread of the gospel among different people groups in the world.

Here's the map they use to identify all the people groups in India. You see little dots everywhere and if you click on one of them, you'll learn about the Gadaria people in India. They traditionally raised sheep and goats. Now they're mainly involved in masonry work. They have a low literacy rate. They live in northeast India.



Then there's the Mahratta people of India, in the central southern part of India on the west coast, who are farmers by class, but in the upper echelon of rural society. There are the Kashmiri

Muslims in northwestern India, in a highly disputed region of land near Pakistan. When India and Pakistan divided, Kashmir was given the choice of siding with either of the countries. The ruling class was Hindu, so they sided with India, but most of the people were Muslim, so they felt more alliance with Pakistan. So today, parts of Kashmir are controlled by India, parts are controlled by Pakistan and parts are controlled by China. So there is tension and conflict between the three.

We could go on and on about hundreds of distinct people groups in India alone—and that's just one country. That means we could go through thousands of people groups in the world like this. We won't do that, but I do want you to notice something. Did you notice one number that kept coming up over and over again in what I just put on the screen? Go back to the Gadaria people. There are 6.4247 million people. How many followers of Jesus? There are 0.0%. The Mahratta have 30.4 million people. How many are followers of Jesus? It's 0.0%. Zero out of 30 million. Look at the Kashmiri Muslims of India? There are 6.6 million people and 0.0% are followers of Jesus.

These are groups of millions of people where no one knows Jesus, where no one is praising the Lord. So the Gadaria and the Mahratta are Hindu, which means they're worshipping millions of false gods. The Kashmiri Muslims are bowing down to Mohammed. None of them—zero of them—are praising the Lord. Psalm 117 is a cry for them to praise the Lord. Just substitute these people groups in place of these words. "Praise the Lord, all Gadaria and Mahratta. Extol Him, all Kashmiri men, women and children."

Get the picture here as we read Psalm 117. It's not just three people groups like this, spanning 40 or so million people. It's thousands of people groups like this, spanning billions of people right now where there is no one praising the Lord. Estimates are there about six to seven thousand people groups. We could go through six to seven thousand pictures just like this, representing people groups where there are few if any churches at all praising Jesus today.

So, church, for followers of Jesus who believe Psalm 117, this is not acceptable. This is not tolerable for us. I know, sometimes people say—and maybe you're thinking it right now—"Pastor David

talks too much about the nations. Doesn't he know we have needs, especially in this crisis?" Yes, we have needs, and yes I, we, want to work hard to meet one another's needs and the needs in our city. We're doing that.

But God Himself is shouting to us in His Word right now, not David Platt. There are two exclamation points at the end of these verses. In our Bible reading today, God is saying to you and me, "Call all the nations, all the peoples, to praise Me as Lord." That's the Word of God. And if we don't do this, who will? There are no Christians in these groups of people to do this. No followers of Jesus among millions and billions of people.

Imagine going through this crisis right now with none of the truths that we've had the privilege of walking through together these last seven weeks. Imagine facing COVID-19 with no hope of eternal life, with only empty hope in false gods that will all fail. Brothers and sisters in the church, with all due respect, it is the height of arrogance to have this hope and hold on to it by ourselves, focusing only on ourselves. No, we do what God is beckoning us to do. We lift our eyes and turn our hearts to all the nations and all the peoples, crying out, "Praise the Lord!" So let's think about that phrase, "Praise the Lord" which is literally one word, hallelujah. Praise Yahweh, the LORD.

The second word translated here is "extol Him." It means to boast loudly in. It's not just to tell someone they're great, casually, but to brag loudly about their greatness in a way that everyone can hear. Both of these words are marked by pleasure and joy. This is not praise as obligation; this is praise as celebration. This is not extolling someone because you have to; this is extolling Someone because you can't help it.

Praise flows from pleasure.

Here's the way I would put this: praise flows from pleasure. This is so important to see. Think about what you praise. You praise that which you enjoy, that which you desire, that which brings you delight.

C.S. Lewis writes this in his Meditation on the Psalms:

All enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise. The world rings with praise. Lovers praising their mistresses, readers their favorite poet, walkers praising the countryside, players praising their favorite game. Praise of weather, wines, dishes, actors, motors, horses, colleges, countries, historical personages, children, flowers, mountains—and it goes on and on.

It makes sense, doesn't it? I love telling my wife that she is beautiful. Do you know why? Because I love my wife. I love telling my kids how much I love them. Why? Because I delight in them. One of them is having a birthday today. Caleb is 14. I love him. I enjoy my kids. I enjoy being with them. I enjoy

playing games with them. I enjoy having pizza night with them. I enjoy pizza. Why? Because I find pleasure in pizza. Praise flows from pleasure.

Praise leads to pleasure.

Praise doesn't just flow from pleasure; it leads to pleasure. Particularly based on the second word—"extol"—which means to boast in or brag on. Praise leads to more pleasure.

C.S. Lewis continues, commenting on the Psalms in the Bible:

Just as men spontaneously praise whatever they value, they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it. "Isn't she lovely?" "Wasn't that glorious?" "Don't you think that is magnificent?" The psalmists, in telling everyone to praise God, are doing what all men do when they speak of what they care about.

In other words, when we know something or someone is lovely or great or magnificent, then we spontaneously overflow into telling people about how great, lovely and magnificent that something or someone is. Again, we do this, not because we have to, but because we delight to. Lewis writes, "I think we delight to praise what we enjoy, because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment." Did you follow that? Praise completes the enjoyment. Think about how true that is.

We all know baseball has not started, which means for all we know, the Nationals could be world champions for multiple years. At least in the absence of baseball for now, Metro DC has some good memories of how last season ended. Game seven of the World Series, seventh inning. The Astros are pitching a one-hit shutout until Anthony Rendon cranks a solo home run. Then Howie Kendrick gets up, with one man on base, down one run, and, well, let's just remember what happened. Watch this.

(Video) In the 11 games he's worked this post season, he struck out eleven, walked one, opponents hitting 176 against him. That's down the right field line into the corner! It's gone for a home run! Nationals on top. Howie Kendrick has made it 3-2. Off the pole in right.

Did you see the celebration in that dugout? They're dancing all the way through the dugout. Grown men, mind you, jumping up and down in uniforms. Then at the end of the dugout, did you notice them doing what they call a "clutch and drive" dance? So for a home run hit in the clutch, they act like they're driving a race car, then they stand up and mob each other. Why? Don't miss this. It's not just because they were happy Howie Kendrick hit a home run. Yes, their praise flowed from pleasure, but their praise also led to pleasure, right? They were having a really good time boasting in what had happened. Praise doesn't just express enjoyment; praise increases enjoyment.

Here's the deal. If grown men and an entire city praise like this with pleasure over a rubber-corked ball wrapped in yarn going over a fence, how much more should praise overflow from pleasure in the God of the universe? See how lovely, how magnificent, how great He is. Sit there on your sofa or chair and do

the clutch and drive dance. He is so much more glorious than anything in this world. How much more reason should we have for praise to erupt from enjoyment and increase enjoyment to boast in God?

Look at the next word here in verse two: *“For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.”* Why? Why praise and extol the Lord, all nations, all peoples? This word “for” means “because.” Because His love is great and His faithfulness is forever. *“For great is His steadfast love...”*

You’ve got to see this. I want to show you how this word that’s translated “great” here is translated in other places in the Bible to give you a feel of what “great” means here. Interestingly, this word is often translated in the Bible as “prevail.” Watch this with me. Genesis 7:19. When a flood was coming over the whole earth, the Bible says, *“And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered.”* The word for “prevailed” there is the same word that’s translate “great” in Psalm 117 to describe God’s love. The love of God is like prevailing mighty waters that covered the whole earth.

Or check out Exodus 17:11, which is talking about a battle between the Israelites and the Amalekites. It says, *“Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed.”* This word “prevailed” is the same word that’s used in Psalm 117. The love of God is like a conqueror in battle. You might think, “Okay, then what does God’s love prevail over?”

That leads to one more place where we see this same word. Psalm 65:3 says, *“When iniquities prevail against me, you atone for our transgressions.”* The psalmist here is talking about how sin has prevailed over him.

Let’s put all this together because this is the story of our lives. Especially if you are not a Christian yet, please follow closely here. Your life, my life, the life of every single person listening right now—we have all sinned against God. We’ve all turned aside from God’s ways to our own ways. Sin has prevailed in our hearts. It’s prone to prevail in our hearts all the time. As a result, we’re separated from God and will be judged by God in our sin. The Bible teaches that eternal judgment and separation from God await all who have succumbed to the prevailing force of sin.

But the good news of the Bible—back to Psalm 117:2—is that the steadfast love of the Lord is so great that God sent Jesus to atone for, to cover over, our sin by dying on a cross in our place. Then God raised Him from the dead, so now God says to all people and all nations, including you and me, “I will forgive you of all your sin if you will trust in My love.”

His love is stronger than our sin.

Why is the Lord worthy of all praise? Because His love is stronger, it prevails over and is greater than our sin. That’s really good news. The love of the holy God of the universe is stronger than our sin. It prevails over our sin. So if you have never trusted in the love of God through what Jesus did on the cross

for your sin, let today be the day when His love prevails over your sin. And for all who have trusted in the love of God, know that in your struggles with sin, the love of God is stronger. His love prevails even over our propensity to sin.

His faithfulness will never, ever fail us.

If that's not enough, "...*the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.*" How about that reason for praise and extol the Lord? In a world where so much is up in the air, He is firm. He's a rock. His faithfulness, His constancy, will never, ever fail us. That's reason for praise. You just think about that and all we're walking through right now. All the things of the world will one day fail you and me. Let these days open our eyes to this.

We're missing sports during this pandemic. Sports are great. I was speaking to a group of professional athletes this week, saying, "You cannot count on sports to always be there." In the same way our economy may have been strong, we cannot count on the economy to always be strong. Our medicine is world class, particularly here in the West. But we cannot count on it when a new coronavirus comes. Medicine fails. Money fails. Jobs fail. Relationships fail. People fail.

God never fails. Ever. Ever. Ever. His faithfulness endures forever. Ten trillion years from now, His faithfulness still will not have failed you. So boast in that. Brag about that. Sing about that. Say to your neighbor and say to all peoples, "There is only one Lord Whose love is stronger than our sin and Whose faithfulness endures forever. It will never, ever fail you. So praise the Lord!"

Psalm 117 is calling you and me to praise the Lord and in every one of our lives to make the Lord our boast. I ask you, right now where you're sitting, "Is the Lord your boast? Is God the boast of your heart, the One you worship, praise, extol and sing loud about? If not, you are missing out on the purpose of your life. Don't miss it.

The purpose of your life is to praise the Lord.

You are included in the nations. You are included in the peoples. Praise the Lord with your life. Don't praise any other gods. No Hindu gods. No Muslim gods. No American gods. Stop praising them. Don't praise money. Don't praise success. Don't praise your status, your job. Don't praise the stuff you have, the pleasures and pursuits of this world. Don't praise sports or sex or fitness or work. These are all good things, but none of them is God. Praise the Lord.

When you do, then spend your life making His praise known among all the nations and all the peoples. Spend your life making His love and faithfulness known in all the world. We know this is where all of world history is headed. Let me remind you where the Bible ends in Revelation 7:9-12: "*After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages...*" It's like a thesaurus—everybody, all the people groups in the world. "...*Standing*

before the throne and before the Lamb,” that’s a reference to Jesus, “clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands.” And what are they doing? They are “crying out with a loud voice.” Not a whisper. They’re shouting.

“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever!”

“And ever” adds nothing to the meaning—it just emphasizes that this is the God Who is worthy of praise without end, “Amen.” All of history is going to culminate in every people group giving praise to the Lord for His salvation. Do you realize what this means? This means we must—you must, I must—spend our lives and our families and our church making His praise known among all the peoples. Among all the peoples in Metro Washington, DC. Among all Gardaria and the Mahratta and all the peoples of Kashmir and among every other people group on the planet.

The purpose of your life is to praise the Lord among all nations.

According to God—not according to David Platt—the purpose of your life is actually not just to praise the Lord. That statement would be incomplete, based on all we’ve seen in Psalm 117 which says the purpose of your life is to praise the Lord among all nations. That makes sense, doesn’t it? If the purpose of your life was just to praise the Lord, then He would immediately take you to heaven where you could do that perfectly. But the purpose of your life, as long as you have breath here, is to say to the nations—starting with your neighbors and coworkers, but not stopping there; starting with the people right around you, but not stopping there—the purpose of your life is to say to all the nations and all the peoples, “Praise the Lord, for great is His steadfast love toward you; His faithfulness endures forever.”

This is why we as a church—before this pandemic, during this pandemic and after this pandemic—must do everything we can to spread the praise of God right around us and far from us. We live and breathe to praise the Lord among the nations. It drives the way we work day in and day out. It drives the way we spend our money. It drives the way we pray. It drives every facet of our lives. The purpose of our lives is to praise the Lord among all nations.

So what does this look like among the Gadaria, the Mahratta and the Kashmiri peoples? Well, this week I had an opportunity to interview a brother in Christ named Conrad Prescott—a good friend of mine—who has spent the last 25 years working among unreached people groups in the world, in places where the gospel has not yet gone. In the middle of this pandemic he could have come back here to the comforts of the United States, but he did not. Instead, he stayed and actually got very, very sick. The country he’s in right now—which I won’t mention for security reasons—has very little medical care and

no testing for COVID, so from all we can tell, it sure looks like that's what he lived through. Grueling days, struggling to breathe, writhing in pain, yet God by His grace brought him through. Conrad is leading a new initiative with Radical called Urgent.

Let me share a little background. About ten years ago, serving as pastor and leading a local church on mission, we started Radical as a resource and event ministry to encourage other churches and pastors on mission. Just to be clear, I get no money from Radical; I give money to Radical. In an effort to mobilize Christians in churches on mission, we started radical.net, we've hosted events like Secret Church this last weekend.

Well, Radical is relaunching right now, in partnership in many ways with MBC. Instead of just mobilizing churches and Christians for the front lines of mission, Radical is going to the front lines of mission and working in places of urgent spiritual and physical need. Picture urgent physical needs—places where there is no clean water, food, medical care or education; places where slavery trafficking is prevalent. Urgent physical need and urgent spiritual need—places in the world where there is no gospel.

Wherever these two needs collide, that's where Radical is starting work through indigenous brothers and sisters. We're identifying and coming alongside the few brothers and sisters in Christ who are in those places. Places like North Korea, all across India, Syria, Somalia or Afghanistan.

All this to say, I was interviewing Conrad this last week, who's leading this Urgent initiative, and I was asking him a ton of questions about a global perspective on this pandemic. At the end of that interview, I asked him to share one story of how he has seen a people group where there was no gospel be reached with the gospel. What does it take? What does that look like? I want you to hear what he said. Follow this story. How does a nation, a group of people—like the Bible is saying here—come to praise the Lord?

Conrad: Well, many years ago there was a young girl my wife and I had the opportunity to come into contact with. She was at a place in her life, like so many children across the developing world, where if someone didn't step in and help in just really practical terms, she was very prone to be a victim of human trafficking. She was set on a course to be entirely uneducated for the rest of her life. She was suffering in many ways physically. My wife and I had the opportunity to get involved and spend time with her. Over the years, as she began to reach her teenage years, she came to a point where she really wanted to follow Christ. She had heard us talking about Who Jesus is, what He means to us and how we were wanting to use our lives to make Him known. I think the Holy Spirit began to bring conviction to her heart about her own state before God. She came to us with her heart open, desiring to be included in the family of God.

Of course, nothing thrilled my wife and me more than to be able to join hands with her and pray, then we began to do whatever we could to lead her into God's Word, explaining what this decision would

mean. Hunger grew in her heart. She came back for more and more. We would find her praying on her knees and in the Word of God. It wasn't long after that experience that she came to us with a burden that had grown in her heart. All of a sudden she realized that her family didn't have that same revelation she had that her sins were forgiven through belief in Jesus Christ. It was unconscionable for her to go on another day in life knowing that her family members were lost in their sins. So we did our best to coach her and help her know how to share Who Jesus is.

She spent some time with her parents and siblings, sharing this message with them. She was a little timid and shy, so she needed some encouragement in that process. But one night, God powerfully moved and used her life and words to also bring conviction to her parents. She was able to explain the Scriptures and one glorious night they came to Christ. It was really the first people in her entire people group who confessed Jesus Christ.

She came back into a school program we were helping her with and just days after her parents had come to Christ, she received the news that they had been martyred for their faith. Here's a young girl who now has a lot of questions. There are not easy answers for some of these things. She had a grief-stricken heart and of course emotions filled with hurt and pain and confusion. The best thing we knew to do was just put our arms around her, get on our knees and go before the Lord together. I was curious how this would play out in her heart. It could go one of two ways. She could develop bitterness because her obedience had in a sense somehow led to her parents' death Or could God do something miraculous in her heart?

Several months passed by. I remember she came to my wife and me with a little piece of paper in her hand. She asked if she could sing a song to us. I think any parent is all ears when approached by their child who wants to sing a song. She began to sing a worship song that God had put in her heart. As she began to open her lips and breathe out this worship, our eyes filled with tears. We had the realization that this was the first time in her language and in her people group that a worship song had ever come before God. We had the sense that something so sacred and beautiful was taking place and that God had used even this horrible tragedy and this incredibly painful moment to somehow turn it into a sacrifice of praise and fill her with such joy. Now a new song was being sung amongst a people group that had never before expressed their unique tone of worship to God.

I tell you what, that's being repeated in so many places around the world today. I just want to encourage those who are watching or listening today that: there is something to live for beyond just this earthly realm. We're called to be more than just mere humans. We're called to render ourselves before a Master and King, living for things that are so heavenly, even with our feet firmly planted in this world.

There is something we can taste in God and in His presence and in His mission that can never be met in the things of this world. So I just want to encourage all of us to set our affections on things that are above, not on things in this world. I think the result is going to be men and women across this planet who

are going to begin to say, “God, I will obey You regardless of the consequences, because there’s something more than just this world. There’s something in eternity that I want to live for.”

David: I really wish you could hear the whole interview, but obviously we don’t have time for that today. If you want, you can hear the whole thing at radical.net.

Let’s return to Psalm 117: *“Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Amen.”* Praise the Lord!

Based on what God has just said to us in Psalm 117, how much do we want all the peoples and nations to praise the Lord? If we want it enough, we need to lift our eyes from our homes and this church, saying, “Lord, I don’t know what it means, but I do know this is my purpose. So use my life, family, resources and church however You want to lead the people and nations of the world to praise You.” How much do we want to live for that which is beyond this world?

Let me ask you to bow your heads right where you’re sitting, all of us scattered in all the places where we are right now. I want to ask you two questions. First and foremost, is the purpose of your life to praise the Lord? Have you trusted in the steadfast love of the Lord? Have you put your faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins and been brought into relationship with God so that you know Him and know His love? Are you confident that when you die, you will spend eternity with God in heaven, because you’ve put your faith and trust in His love?

If the answer to that question is not, “Yes! The purpose of my life is to praise the Lord—that’s what I live for,” then I invite you right now, with your head bowed and eyes closed, to pray, “God, I know I have sinned against You. I’ve turned from Your ways to my ways, so I’m separated from You. I deserve judgment for sin before You. But today I believe in Your steadfast love for me; not just believing it, but receiving it today. I put my faith in Jesus. Please forgive me of my sin. Bring me into relationship with You and use my life to praise Your name.” Pray that from your heart to God today. Let this be the defining moment when you say that to Him. As you do, know that God delights to answer that prayer.

This leads to the second question. For all who know God’s steadfast love and faithfulness, do you realize the purpose of your life is to praise the Lord among all nations? I just want to give you an opportunity to pray to God, saying, “God, I see it. I see it in Psalm 117. I don’t know all it means for my life. I don’t know all it means for my family. I don’t know all it means for my finances, my resources, my future. But today in response to Your Word I say use it all for Your praise among all the nations and all the peoples. Use my life, my family, our church for the spread of Your praise, love and faithfulness among all the nations.”

Help us, God, we pray to live for another world, to lift our eyes beyond that which we see right around us, to live for that which will matter most ten trillion years from now. Bless us, we pray. Use us to make Your praise known, to extol You as Lord among the nations, for great is Your steadfast love. Your

faithfulness endures forever. We praise and boast in You. I pray especially for the spread of Your praise around the world in the middle of this pandemic. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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