



still waters

home church studies

## Psalm 90

[Worship]

1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. 2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. 3 You turn us back to dust, and say, "Turn back, you mortals." 4 For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night. 5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning; 6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.

13 Turn, O LORD! How long? Have compassion on your servants! 14 Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. 15 Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us, and as many years as we have seen evil. 16 Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. 17 Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands—O prosper the work of our hands!

### Consider:

[Think & Pray...]

I was religious-channel surfing a couple of weeks ago and stopped at a televangelist whose hair and make-up were mesmerizing. She was talking about how Christianity has only one law - the law of love - and how everything else comes afterward. I was pleasantly surprised at her emphasis but cringed when, to stress her point, she described Judaism as a religion of hundreds and hundreds of laws and Christianity as a religion that is no longer enslaved by the law.

This brand of supercessionism is nothing new. Very early in Christian history, Judaism was depicted as a religion of enslavement in which the law existed as an end in itself, rather than as a gift from God that ordered and directed the people's life and faith. As enlightened as I like to think my

upbringing was, I still remember the shock at realizing that Jesus did not write the great commandments he cites. The primacy of love for God that the TV preacher touts comes straight from Deuteronomy and Jesus' "golden rule" in Matthew is a quote from Leviticus.

In many ways, the same desire to distinguish one's beliefs on the backs of another has characterized inter-Christian relationships as much as it has interfaith ones. Many Protestants still harbor a suspicion that Catholics worship Mary and are saved by works, while official Catholic teaching continues to insist that Protestants are deficient in their faith, at best.

We forget that the law that norms all others - the phrase God repeats throughout Leviticus 19 - is "I am the LORD." Our task is to give thanks and praise - and love one another.

— Kari Jo Verhulst

[Scripture]

## 1 Thessalonians 2.1-8

1 You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, 2 but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. 3 For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, 4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. 5 As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; 6 nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, 7 though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. 8 So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

