

Evening Sermon Outline – December 27, 2020

“The Blessing of Nearness to God” Psalm 84

In Old Testament times the dwelling place of God was the tabernacle and later the Temple. When Jesus walked our earth, He was God’s dwelling place and now we, the church, God’s people are the dwelling place of God!

To the Chief Musician. On an Instrument of Gath. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.

The sons of Korah mentioned here were priests, they had the great privilege of ministering in the tabernacle. Here they sing about such a privilege!

I. The worth of the place –

¹ How lovely is Your tabernacle, O LORD of hosts! Psalm 84:1

- 1. The place was lovely in and of itself, the tabernacle was designed by God!*
- 2. It was the type of and pointed to Heavenly things, even to Christ!*

3. It was desirable because God met with His people there -

² My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Psalm 84:2

4. It was a place where the humblest of God’s creatures found shelter -

³ Even the sparrow has found a home, And the swallow a nest for herself, Where she may lay her young— Even Your altars, O LORD of Hosts, My King and my God. Psalm 84:3

5. Those blessed to stay there, praise God continually -

⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; They will still be praising You. Psalm 84:4 Selah

Verse 1.—“How lovely is Your tabernacle.” What made the tabernacle of Moses lovely was not the outside, which was very mean (plain, humble), as the Church of God outwardly is, through persecution, affliction, and poverty; but what was within, having many golden vessels in it, and those typical of things much more precious: moreover, here the priests were to be seen in their robes, doing their duty and service, and, at certain times, the high priest in his rich apparel; here were seen the sacrifices slain and offered, by which the people were taught the nature of sin, the strictness of justice, and the necessity and efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ: here the Levites were heard singing their songs, and blowing their trumpets: but much more amiable are the Church of God and its ordinances in gospel times, where Christ, the great High-Priest, is seen in the glories of his person, and the fulness of his grace; where Zion’s priests, or the ministers of the gospel, stand clothed, being full fraught with salvation, and the tidings of it; where Christ is evidently set forth, as crucified and slain, in the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances; here the gospel trumpet is blown, and its joyful sound echoed forth, and songs of love and grace are sung by all believers; besides, what makes these tabernacles still more lovely are, the presence of God here, so that they are no other than the house of God, the gate of heaven; the provisions that are here made, and the company that is here enjoyed.—*John Gill.*

II. The reach of God’s grace –

1. God’s grace and glory, even in OT times, reached far beyond the walls of the tabernacle and / or temple –

A. There is strength given to pilgrims (travelers, seeking God) even those who may have been FAR OFF -

⁵ Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, Whose heart is set on pilgrimage. Psalm 84:5

B. Glory and refreshment reach even the worst places -

⁶ As they pass through the Valley of Baca, They make it a spring; The rain also covers it with pools. ⁷ They go from strength to strength; Each one appears before God in Zion. Every step through this place of pain, is a step closer to Heavenly Gain!

2. *The wise men of Matthew 2 seeking Christ fit in this category –*
2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”
Matthew 2:1–2 (NKJV)

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.
Matthew 2:10 (NKJV)

3. *We might fit in this category too, a different place, a different time period than Jesus Christ, but still, we seek Him, and by God’s grace we find Him –*
³⁸ Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, **and to all who are afar off**, as many as the Lord our God will call.” Acts 2:38–39 (NKJV)

4. *We are far off morally and spiritually and because we were gentiles, but we are brought near by Christ’s cross -*
¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.
¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:11–13 (NKJV)
“To Him Who is everywhere, men come, not by travelling, but by loving” -Augustine

5. *The tabernacle itself, a tent, is a symbol of pilgrimage, a sweet sanctuary as we travel through a sin-filled world –*
¹⁴ For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.
Hebrews 13:14 (NKJV)

²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Philippians 3:20 (NKJV)

As the tabernacle was a little picture of Heaven on earth, so shall Christ’s church be! We are the church!

III. *The realm of God’s grace –*
5 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have access by faith **into this grace in which we stand**, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Romans 5:1–2 (NKJV)

1. *It is a place of prayer, communication with God, even answered prayer -*
⁸ O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob!
Selah Psalm 84:8

A. *We pray to a God Who is sovereign, He is the LORD God of Hosts, He is in control of all of our circumstances!*
B. *We pray to a God Who is both Personal and Merciful, He is God of Jacob, telling us two things: He knows our name and nature and He loves us despite our sin!*

2. *It is a place of God’s presence, His attention and care -*
⁹ O God, behold our shield, and look upon the face of Your anointed.
Psalm 84:9

3. *It is by far the best place –*
¹⁰ For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. Psalm 84:10

“The tents.” It is not any tents, or tents of any ordinary kind, that are understood, but rich, powerful, glorious, and splendid tents.—
Venema.

Being in God’s presence, in God’s place, for God’s purposes, surpasses anything and everything an ungodly world can offer! This means, First Presbyterian’s Sunday Evening Service beats the Super Bowl!

4. *It is the best place because it is the place of God’s comforting, life-giving and protecting presence –*
¹¹ For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good *thing* will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.
¹² O LORD of hosts, Blessed is the man who trusts in You! Psalm 84 (NKJV)

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