

# THE WONDERFUL BLESSINGS OF GOD

## **TEXT: PSALM 84**

### **Introduction:**

1. We do not know who (human author) wrote the 84<sup>th</sup> Psalm.
2. Psalm 84 can be looked at both historically and prophetically.
3. Historically, it is “a Psalm for the sons of Korah” (introduction).
4. Prophetically it reveals the future blessing awaiting Israel when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to set up His kingdom (cf. 84:9).
5. The Psalmist addresses God as “O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.” When Christ returns, He is called “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:16).
6. Of course the best way to appreciate Psalm 84 is in neither the past nor the future, but in the present.
7. Psalm 84 describes the blessings we enjoy right now as children of God.
8. Spurgeon, in his *Treasury of David*, said this about Psalm 84, “No music could be too sweet for its theme, or too exquisite in sound to match the beauty of its language.”
9. Spurgeon referred to it as one of the sweetest of the Psalms, and “the Pearl of Psalms.”
10. Psalm 84 is easily divided into three sections – vss. 1-4, 5-8, and 9-12. You will notice “Selah” (“think about this”) after verses 4 and 8.
11. One commentator (John Phillips) divided the chapter this way:
  - I. Dwelling in the Sanctuary of God (84:1-4)
  - II. Drawing on the Strength of God (84:5-8)
  - III. Delighting in the Service of God (84:9-12).
12. G. Campbell Morgan outlined it this way:
  - I. The Pilgrim’s Hope (vss. 1-4)
  - II. The Pilgrim’s Experience (vss. 5-8)
  - III. The Pilgrim’s Prayer (vss. 9-12)
13. I like these outlines, though mine is a little different:
  - I. THE BLESSINGS OF CHURCH
  - II. THE BLESSINGS OF FAITH
  - III. THE BLESSING OF PRAYER
14. We find the word “blessed” three times in Psalm 84 (vss. 4, 5, 12). Albert Barnes says this means the Christian is “blessed in every respect. His lot is a happy one... Oh that men would try it, and experience in their own souls the happiness – the real, genuine, deep permanent joy of trusting in God” (*Barnes’ Notes*). Amen!

## **I. THE BLESSINGS OF CHURCH (84:1-4).**

1. The Psalmist begins by saying, “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!” (84:1).
2. Webster’s 1828 Dictionary defines “amiable” this way: “Lovely, worthy of love; deserving of affection; applied usually to persons. But in Psalm 84:1, there is an expression, ‘How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!’”
3. The tabernacle was the place where God was worshipped. The word literally means, “dwelling places,” and could be applied to either the tabernacle, the temple in Jerusalem, or in any place where God is worshipped – such as this former fish market.
4. John 1:14 says, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt (“tabernacled”) among us.”
5. Verse 4 says, “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be still praising Thee. Selah.” Those who enjoy the blessings of God are found in church every time the doors are open.
6. The Psalmist noted in verse 3 that even the sparrow and the swallow were blessed by God, for they were permitted to build their nests near the altar of God.
7. The birds on our church rooftop are better off than the lost souls who drive by the church every day and never step foot inside.
8. The apostle Paul wrote to young Timothy, “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Tim. 3:15).
9. Paul said in Ephesians 5:25 that “Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”
10. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it but the world has no use for the church. Even many Christians take the church for granted.
11. I get phone calls all the time for worldly people who want to get married in a church building, but the other 364 days of the year they could not care less about the church.
12. We expect sinners to act that way but it is sad that so many Christians often act the same way.
13. Next Sunday is Easter Sunday and this place will probably be packed out, but try and find some of these Easter worshippers the following Sunday! Homeland Security, the CIA, and the FBI won’t be able to find them.
14. The Psalmist longed to go to the house of God and worship. He had a real heart for God (84:2). How about you?

15. It grieves me that so many people (even Christians) skip church. Hebrews 10:25 says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and **so much the more**, as ye see the day approaching.”
16. I remember when my daughter Isabelle was about to be born. We had a “false alarm” on a Sunday morning and had to rush down to the hospital.
17. Driving home that Sunday morning (around 11 AM) my heart was heavy as I saw people mowing their lawn, jogging, playing ball, goofing off, etc. I was tempted to yell at them as we drove by.
18. Psalm 84:2 describes the Psalmist longing for communion with God. That is why he longs for “the courts of the LORD,” i.e., the different areas around the tabernacle or temple where worship services were conducted (cf. 84:10).

## II. THE BLESSINGS OF FAITH (84:5)

1. Psalm 84 reminds us that the joy of the Lord comes from heartfelt faith in God. “Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; in whose heart are the ways of them” (84:5).
2. We have a picture in verse 6 of pilgrims journeying to the temple in Jerusalem. They are “passing through the valley of Baca.” The word “Baca” means “tears.” The Scofield Bible says the valley of Baca is “not a literal valley, but any place of tears” (margin).
3. Their faith transforms this valley of tears into a refreshing well of blessing (84:6). The Gospel pours out blessings of joy and happiness where there was trouble and sorrow.
4. “They go from strength to strength” (84:7). As we grow in the Lord, our faith grows – “from strength to strength.”
5. In Luke 17:5, “the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.”
6. One of the most precious verses in the Bible is Mark 11:22, “And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.”
7. If you want to receive a tremendous blessing, look up all the times our Lord refers to faith. Here are just a few from the Gospel of Matthew.
  - “And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm” (Matthew 8:26).
  - “But Jesus turned him about, and when He saw her, He said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour” (Matthew 9:22).
  - “Then touched He their (two blind men) eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you” (Matt. 9:29).

- “And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him (Peter), and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” (Matt. 14:31).
  - “Then Jesus answered and said unto her (Syrophenician woman), O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour” (Matt. 15:28).
  - Our Lord said in Matthew 17:20, “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”
  - “Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matt. 21:21, 22).
8. Our Lord said in Matthew 21:22, “. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” The key word here is “believing.” God blesses our faith.
  9. As our faith grows, our prayer life grows. The Psalmist says in Psalm 84:8, “O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.”
  10. This brings us to my third and final point.

### **III. THE BLESSINGS OF PRAYER (84:8-12)**

1. Prayer is based on our relationship with God. The Psalmist prayed, “O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob” (84:8). God is the “God of Jacob (Israel).”
2. When we were born again, we became children of God. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:12).
3. Galatians 3:26 says, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”
4. Our Lord told us to pray, “Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name” (Matt. 6:9).
5. And He said, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” (Matt. 7:11).
6. Prayer is based on faith. Our Lord said in John 14:13, 14, “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.”

7. Rosalind Goforth, wife of missionary Jonathan Goforth, labored with him for many years in China and wrote several books. One of them is entitled, *How I know God Answers Prayer*.

8. "He answers prayer; so sweetly that I stand  
Amid the blessings of His wondrous hand  
And marvel at the miracle I see,  
The favors that His love hath wrought in me.  
Pray on for the impossible, and dare  
upon thy banner this brave motto bear,  
'My Father answers prayer.'"

9. In chapter 9, Mrs. Goforth sets down "conditions of prevailing prayer."

1. **Contrite humility before God and forsaking of sin** – "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chronicles 7:14).
2. **Seeking God with the whole heart** – "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:12, 13).
3. **Faith in God** – "For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:23, 24).
4. **Obedience** – "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1John 3:22).
5. **Dependence on the Holy Spirit** – "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).
6. **Importunity** – "And He said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Luke 11:5-10).
7. **Must ask in accordance with God's will** – "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us" (1John

5:14).

8. **In Christ's name** – “And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it” (John 14:13, 14).

**NOTE:** *There is some confusion over what it means to pray in Jesus' name. Andrew Murray correctly said it is through our abiding in Christ and His abiding in us that the Holy Spirit breathes in us what He wants to ask and obtain through us. Therefore when we pray in Jesus' name, the prayers are really ours and really His.*

9. **Must be willing to make amends for wrongs to others** – “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Matthew 5:23, 24).

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Psalm 84:11 contains one of the sweetest promises in the Word of God. “No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”
2. This precious promise strengthened the faith of George Muller. His beloved wife Mary died in 1870. They had been married for nearly 40 years. This is what George Muller wrote in his journal:

The last portion of scripture which I read to my precious wife was this: “The Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, **no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.**” Now, if we have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have received grace, we are partakers of grace, and to all such he will give glory also. I said to myself, with regard to the latter part, “**no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly**”—I am in myself a poor worthless sinner, but I have been saved by the blood of Christ; and I do not live in sin, I walk uprightly before God. Therefore, if it is really good for me, my darling wife will be raised up again; sick as she is. God will restore her again. But if she is not restored again, then it would not be a good thing for me. And so my heart was at rest. I was satisfied with God. And all this springs, as I have often said before, from taking God at his word, believing what he says (*George Muller's Narrative*).

3. Lately my wife and I have been talking much about effectual prayer. She told me an illustration from Andrew Murray was a great blessing for her. A brother in the ministry once asked, as we were speaking on this subject, whether there was not a danger of our thinking that our love to souls and our willingness to see them blessed were to move God's love and God's willingness to bless them. We were just passing some large water-pipes, by which water was being carried over hill and dale from a large mountain stream to a town at some distance. Just

look at these pipes, was the answer; they did not make the water willing to flow downwards from the hills, nor did they give it its power of blessing and refreshment: this is its very nature. All that they could do is to decide its direction: by it the inhabitants of the town said they want the blessing there. And just so, it is the very nature of God to love and to bless. Downward and ever downward His love longs to come with its quickening and refreshing streams. But He has left it to prayer to say where the blessing is to come. He has committed it to His believing people to bring the living water to the desert places: the will of God to bless is dependent upon the will of man to say where the blessing must descend. ‘Such honour have His saints.’ ‘And this is *the boldness* which we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us. And if *we know* that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, *we know that we have* the petitions which we have asked of Him’ (*With Christ in the School of Prayer*).

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