

Why You Need A Local Church Home



“4 What joy for those who can live in your house, always singing your praises. Interlude” Psalm 84:4 NLT

- Do you view church as unnecessary, outdated, irrelevant, or as essential and to the life of a growing fully devoted follower of Christ?

Psalm 84 is considered a companion to Psalm 42 & 43. It expresses the same yearning of the psalmist's heart for worshipping God. The *Life Application Study Bible* explained, “The writer long to get away from the bustling world to meet God inside his dwelling place, his holy Temple. We can meet God anywhere, at any time. But we know that going into a church building can help us step aside from the busy mainstream of life so we can quietly meditate and pray. We find joy and strength not only in the prayers, music, lessons, and sermons but also in fellowship with other believers in a special place.” (84:1, 4).

The author of Psalm 84 is unknown. The only indication is the heading: “A psalm of the descendants of Korah, to be accompanied by a stringed instrument.” The Old Testament indicates that they were descendants of Levi and worked in the Jerusalem Temple as gate-keepers and musicians (1 Chronicles 6:22; 9:17-32; 26:1).

The Jews looked forward to going to the Temple. They celebrated three annual festivals. It was a joyous time of worship and a time of connecting with others in fellowship. The psalmist described his longing for the Temple (84:1-2). He felt like it was a spiritual home and he longed to be there (84:3-4). Today, we need a spiritual home—a local church family.

- The **Temple** was God's ordained (or appointed) place for Israel to assemble to worship God and receive instruction from the Old Testament scriptures.
- The **local church** was God's ordained (or appointed) place for Christ-followers to assemble to worship God and receive instruction from the New Testament scriptures. This is why Hebrews 10:25 tells us, *“And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.”*

Central Lesson:

It is God's will that you have a church home where you gather to worship Him, pray, study the Bible, fellowship, serve, evangelize, and make disciples.

The Temple no longer exists. The local church is now the center of the assembly of God's people and worship. Just like the Temple, there are important advantages to having a church home.

1. A place to experience God's **STRENGTH** (84:5).

“5 What joy for those whose strength comes from the Lord, who have set their minds on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.”

A healthy church can be a source of God's strength for facing the demands of life.

2. A place to be **REFRESHED** after facing sorrow (84:6).

“6 When they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs. The autumn rains will clothe it with blessings.”

Scholars do not know where “the Valley of Weeping” is located. Bible Teacher, Warren Wiersbe, explained, “The Valley of Weeping is a translation of ‘The Valley of Baca.’ ‘Baca’ is a Hebrew word meaning ‘balsam tree,’ and the sap of this tree oozes like tears. The term can apply to any difficult and painful place in life, where everything seems hopeless and you feel helpless, like you are in a ‘pit of despair.’” (84:6).

The *Life Application Study Bible* adds, “...Growing strong in God's presence is often preceded by a journey through barren places in our lives. The person who loves to spend time with God will see his or her adversity as an opportunity to re-experience God's faithfulness. If you're walking through your own Valley of Weeping today, be sure your pilgrimage leads towards God, not away from him.” (84:5-7).

3. A place to grow **STRONG** spiritually (84:7).

“7 They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Jerusalem.”

4. A place to **WORSHIP** God (84:7).

“7 They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Jerusalem.”

5. A place of **PRAYER** (84:8).

“8 O Lord God of Heaven's Armies, hear my prayer. Listen, O God of Jacob. Interlude”

We should pray anytime anywhere. But we must also pray as a church family.

6. A place to seek God's **FAVOR** for our country & its leaders (84:9).

“9 O God, look with favor upon the king, our shield! Show favor to the one you have anointed.”

The New Testament urges us to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

7. A place to surround ourselves with **RIGHTEOUSNESS** rather than the world's wickedness (84:10).

“10 A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else! I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of my God than live the good life in the homes of the wicked.”

8. A place to seek God's **FAVOR** and **GOODNESS** (84:11).

“11 For the Lord God is our sun and our shield. He gives us grace and glory. The Lord will withhold no good thing from those who do what is right.”

9. A place to experience the **JOY** of the Lord (84:12).

“12 O Lord of Heaven's Armies, what joy for those who trust in you.”

Central Lesson:

It is God's will that you have a church home where you gather to worship Him, pray, study the Bible, fellowship, serve, evangelize, and make disciples.

- ▶ Accept Christ as your Savior. ▶ As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ.
- ▶ Invite someone to next Sunday's study. ▶ Attend a small group. ▶ Read the Bible this week & journal meaningful verses. ▶ Pray for friends that need Jesus.