

“A Yearning for God”

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Scriptural Foundation: Psalm 84, NIV

For the director of music.

According to gittith.

Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.

¹ How lovely is your dwelling place,
O LORD Almighty!

² My soul yearns, even faints,
for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh cry out
for the living God.

³ Even the sparrow has found a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may have her young—
a place near your altar,
O LORD Almighty, my King and my God.

⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in your house;
they are ever praising you. Selah

⁵ Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.

⁶ As they pass through the Valley of Baca,
they make it a place of springs;
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.

⁷ They go from strength to strength,
till each appears before God in Zion.

⁸ Hear my prayer, O LORD God Almighty;
listen to me, O God of Jacob. Selah

⁹ Look upon our shield, O God;
look with favor on your anointed one.

¹⁰ Better is one day in your courts
than a thousand elsewhere;
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

¹¹ For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
the LORD bestows favor and honor;
no good thing does he withhold
from those whose walk is blameless.

¹² O LORD Almighty,
blessed is the man who trusts in you.

In his book, God is The Gospel, John Piper asks this pressing question: “If you could have Heaven with no sickness and with all the friends you ever had on earth and all the food you ever liked and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed and all the natural beauties you ever saw and all the physical pleasures you ever tasted and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with Heaven if Christ were not there?” Think about that question for a moment. The answer we give to that question will reveal much about the condition of our soul.

If we answered, “Yes, I would be satisfied with that Heaven,” we are admitting we really rejoice in ourselves and we have not yet been awakened to the delightfulness of God Himself. If we answer, “No, that kind of Heaven would not satisfy me,” we give ourselves evidence of genuine conversion, for biblical regeneration awakens the dead soul to the glory of God in such a way God’s glory becomes the very foundation of our joy. For the born-again Christian, Heaven would not be Heaven without Christ. Rather, it would be an intolerable place, no matter how much “fun stuff” was there.

The metaphor God uses to describe the relationship of His people to His Son is the metaphor of the bride and the groom. Let us ask John Piper’s question with this metaphor in view: “If a bride could have a wedding with a beautiful white gown, a church decorated with flowers, candles and tapestry, a ten-carat diamond ring ready to be placed upon her finger, a limousine escort to a luxurious banquet hall, live music by a Grammy-winning popular group, a twenty-one day honeymoon to Hawaii, would she be satisfied with her wedding if her groom did not show up?” If the bride loves the groom she would say, “That would be the worst day of my life.” Despite all the other things that were pleasant and wonderful, if the groom were not there that would be the worst day of my life, because all the other pleasures are pleasurable because they are attached to my joy in this person.”

A person is fit for Heaven when God shines the light of the glory of His Son into our hearts with the result that we treasure Him. That is what conversion is and that is what conversion does; it causes us to see God in a new way, that we would enjoy Him, that we would treasure Him above everything else. This is the testimony of the Bible concerning the effect of the Gospel upon the soul. Listen to what the Apostle Paul says,

2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

Philippians 1:23b I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.¹

The Apostle Paul understood this life of his to be one of a wandering of a foreigner in a foreign land. He is a foreigner because Christ is to be experienced in His absolute fullness in another place – Heaven itself.

Philippians 3:8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ...²

For the Christian, Christ is everything. Our faith is not merely a set of doctrines, not merely an ethical lifestyle, not merely a compulsion to do good and to help mankind, not merely a religious activity, but, rather, our faith is absorbed in the glory of Christ, knowing Him and enjoying Him.

J.C. Ryle preached a sermon entitled, “Christ is All,” from Colossians 3:11. He says, “But, alas, how little fit for Heaven are many who talk of going to Heaven when they die. While they manifest Heaven they have no saving faith and no real acquaintance with Christ. You give Christ no honor here. You have no communion with Him. You do not love Him. Alas, what could you do in Heaven? It would be no place for you. Its joys would be no joys for you. Its happiness would be a happiness into which you could not enter. Its employments would be a weariness and a burden to your heart. Repent and change before it is too late.

“Do you enjoy God? Do you love Him? Do you find the greatest delight of your life is Jesus? If so, take heart. You have the evidence of genuine conversion, but if not, we are given pause to wonder why.”

In our text God uses Old Testament believers to instruct us as to the heart which yearns for God Himself, not only for God’s gifts and the good things God supplies, but God Himself. In this psalm sung in worship to God by the Old Testament saints there are three motivations which stand out. Each one is presented with the word “blessed” and each motivates a person to long for God Himself. The first reason a person would yearn for God is the Lord is our delight. The second is the Lord is our strength. The third is our Lord is our Provider and Protector.

The first reason why we are motivated to yearn for the Living God is: **The Lord is our delight**. He has intrinsic value. We first notice in the text the script written above the psalm which tell us it is written by the “sons of Korah”. This will be important and we will discuss that soon. The text begins,

¹ How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD Almighty! ² My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD...

Here we find the psalmist having a longing for God’s House. Why would the psalmist long for God’s House? It is not because the house is so cool. This house, the Temple, is build in a beautiful fashion and Solomon built it with great glory. In and of itself it would have been a great museum piece to walk through. That is not the reason why the psalmist says, “How lovely is your dwelling place. My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord.”

Rather, the answer to that question is because God is there. God, in His glory, meets with His people in a wonderful way. We are reminded in the Old Testament the Temple was the place where God demonstrated and revealed His localize presence and His glory.

¹ English Standard Version (ESV)

² ESV

How do we know the psalmist did not just have an enthusiasm for the House of God because of the House itself? Was it sort of a Disneyland for them where they wanted to go? There are two ways. The first way we know the Lord is the attraction is because of what the psalmist says at the end of Verse 2 and Verse 3,

² ...my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. ³ Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar, O LORD Almighty, my King and my God.

It is the fact this Temple is the dwelling place of the Living Place where they can go and meet with God and know Him which excites him. He is envying the fact the sparrows and swallows can fly into the Temple and be able to be near to God, even as creatures. It is God Himself who excites him.

Do you know your God is the Living God and He is not dead? Do you know He actively communes with anyone who comes to worship Him in repentance and in faith? Do you know such a joy can be yours as well? The joy of the psalmist is the joy of the believer and one who has been made new by Jesus Christ.

The second reason we know the writer is so excited about God and not just a house is because of the identity of the authors. The authors are described as “the sons of Korah”. Here I wish to share with you a story which has been a great encouragement to me from a pastor who is now in Heaven, Donald Grey Barnhouse. When Donald Barnhouse was in seminary, in the early 1900’s, he noticed a student who seemed to be filled with sinicism and who took nothing serious in the spiritual realm. He went to a prayer meeting one night at the seminary, and this student was there. The leader of this prayer meeting asked for students to stand and share a verse of Scripture which had been a special blessing to them. This student solemnly rose and said, “1 Chronicles 26:18.” There was a pause, as there is here. I have never heard that verse referenced before.

People were busy shuffling through their Bibles wondering, “What does that say?” Before they got there, he rapidly quoted this verse,

¹⁸ At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at Parbar.³

Everyone was a bit puzzled. Then the seminarian quipped, “If you believe in inspiration in the Bible, find some inspiration in that verse!” Of course, he was trying to be humorous, funny, and whimsical at a time when the people of God were called together for worship. But, the story of his life ended poorly in that he left seminary and Donald Barnhouse did not know exactly what happened to him after that.

Years went by and from time to time Barnhouse remembered that moment. One day he was studying his Bible and he came across this verse and he decided to find out what that verse really meant. He looked in the context and he found it was a record of assigning the sons of Levi to various places of service in the Lord’s House. In that text was a record of assignments given to the third branch of the family of Levi, namely the sons of Korah. This chapter is about the sons of Korah and what God had intended for them to do in His service.

In 1 Chronicles 26, these men were chosen to be gatekeepers, doorkeepers, janitors of the Temple. It tells us, in the early part of that chapter, the sons of Korah were very capable men of strength to do the work. That is to say, God looked upon their work as very important, though man may look upon it as very menial. God equipped them specially to do this work as janitors, as gatekeepers, as doorkeepers in the Temple.

We come to the verse this seminarian quoted. “Parbar” is a Hebrew word. At the time the King James translators translated this verse they did not know what it meant because they had no context to discover what “Parbar” meant. They transliterated it: Parbar means Parbar. However, since that time we have come to discover this is a reference to the Temple’s western colonnade. The New International Version translates this verse,

¹⁸ As for the court to the west, there were four at the road and two at the court itself.

³ King James Version (KJV)

This chapter teaches us God is taking great pain to appoint specific people to specific duties within the Temple, thus honoring them with service to be rendered for His glory and for His praise.

Donald Barnhouse, years later, would write, “Many times I thank God for the cynical twist in the mind of that fellow who tossed a seemingly, nonsensical verse into the midst of a prayer meeting. He meant it for confusion, but the Lord meant it to me for good, for I learned later, as I probed into the depths of the Word of God, God is interested in the simplest tasks of the simplest men.” 1 Chronicles 26:18 is not a bad life-verse after all.

Here is where we weigh so deeply on our understanding of this psalm. The men who wrote this psalm went to the Temple everyday and performed what many would consider menial tasks. They would sweep it and they would clean it. They would organize the food brought to it. They would repair the furniture and the utensils worn from use. If you and I went to a place everyday to sweep, clean, and maintain and do the exact same thing in the exact same place day-in and day-out, would we not be tempted to sit back and say, “This is getting really mundane and common. I might be starting to get a little bored with this.” Yet, when these people, who everyday went to the Temple to sweep and clean and repair and maintain, we hear of their attitude about this place,

¹ How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD Almighty! ² My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

These men displayed an untiring joy, not in the place because the place could not sustain such joy, not with men who were assigned such daily duties there, but it was the God of infinite value, and, thus, a God of whom they could never tire in praise. They would never wear out in their enthusiasm and their zeal,

¹⁰ Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. ¹¹ For the LORD God is a sun and shield...

Think about that for a moment; one day in the Lord’s courts is better than a thousand elsewhere! Imagine you get to that point in your life where it is time to retire from the place you have worked years and years. On the day of your retirement there is a party for you and your company comes and says, “We have a gift we want to give to you.” “Great, what is that?” “Well, we want you to choose between one of two gifts. We want to send you on a trip. We want to provide everything you need on that trip. Here is the choice: we have one special place where you can spend one day. You can choose that and go for one day, or you can choose any other place you want to go, anywhere the wildness of your imagination can possibly dream up, and you can spend one thousand days there.” What would you choose.

I might be a little bit curious enough to say, “That is an odd choice because it does not seem like any choice at all.” I might be curious enough to say, “Where is this place,” not because I am interested, because I cannot imagine one place being so great that it would be so much better than every other place, one thousand times fold.” Yet, here is what they said, “I would rather have one day there rather than one thousand anywhere else in this world.” Why? Because God is their delight and they would rather be near God than any other place where God is not.

Such is the heart of the believer. This is the heart of the Old Testament saints throughout time,

Psalms 42:1 (The Sons of Korah) As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.

Psalms 27:1 (David) One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.

Isn’t God everywhere at the same time? Why is there such a focus upon this place?

Yes, the godly sons of Korah knew that and Solomon understood it when he built this Temple. Solomon understood God does not dwell on the earth and Heaven, even the highest heavens, cannot contain God in His such immensity. They also understood God had put His name in Jerusalem. He had given a special expression of His localized presence

to His people there, at this localized Temple so the people could come, experience, and enjoy the wonder of His Shechinah glory.⁴

How does this apply to a New Testament Christian in an age in which the Temple in Jerusalem has been destroyed. There are three ways and three applications. First, in the New Testament we find every believer's body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ and you have been born-again, then your body is a temple of God's Spirit,

¹ Corinthians 6:9 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

The implication, of course, is a believer can meet with God and enjoy Him personally in a very unique and special way every moment of every day. This idea that we have become temples unto God, where we can draw near to God and meet with God because of the change God has wrought in our hearts to sanctify us and to make us ready to meet with God and make us fit to be worship centers unto God, is the highest and greatest blessing of the Gospel.

The foundational blessing of the Gospel is forgiveness. Without forgiveness no other blessing can possibly take place, but forgiveness is only joyful because it leads us to the point where we become temples unto God and where we can meet with God personally and commune with Him and fellowship with Him, and where we can enjoy Him and take delight in Him.

One of my greatest pleasures has been to listen to my youngest son learn praise songs on the piano. His mom has him practice the more complex music to help him grow his skills, but his love, in the evening after he has done his hard practice, is to sit at the piano and play praise songs unto God. As he plays he begins to sing. He is all by himself in the room and I do not believe he is aware anyone is listening, but I listen from another room so he does not become self-conscious. He belts out praise songs to God, singing at the top of his voice as he is learning the piano music.

I love that for two reasons. First, I enter into his joy in the Lord. It is so evident his joy is so great in the Lord that I can enter into that and worship God, also. He is learning and he makes mistakes. He is not as flowing as other musicians, but, oh, what joy comes from his heart.

The second reason I have such great joy is this is because such glad worship is the strongest evidence I know of genuine conversion. Do you enjoy worshipping God through the week? If not, what is happening? Perhaps a strange corruption has weakened the life of God within you. Perhaps you are born-again, but you are not in your normal state of the Christian life, because the normal state of the Christian life is one of joy in God. Something is deeply wrong, though. Perhaps we ought to ask ourselves this question, if this is happening in our soul and we are not finding joy in the worship of God and delight in God Himself, "Am I born-again?" I urge you to find out because the question is too serious and too great. Something is not right.

The second application is the New Testament also teaches the church gathered as a temple of God. God tells us through the Apostle Paul, and Paul tells the local church,

² Corinthians 6:16 ...we are the temple of the living God.

⁴ According to Jewish tradition the radiance of the Shechinah, with its untold blessings, "rests" upon all those who are pious and righteous. According to ancient Rabbis the Shekinah appears in the midst of at least a minyan of worshipers when they pray in congregation, and of two or more Jews when they engage in the study of Torah, or on a man when he recites the Shema. The Shekinah is said also to rest upon the chaste, the benevolent, and the hospitable, and upon husband and wife when they live in peace and harmony. The ancient Rabbis also said that the Shekinah appeared before Moses at the burning bush, rested upon the Tabernacle in the Wilderness on the day of its dedication, and in the holy of holies in the Temple at Jerusalem, and it has illuminated the bliss of the righteous in the world-to-come ever since.

In Ephesians 2, Paul is not only talking about the local church, but also about the church universal,

²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

That is what the church is; we are the Temple of God now, both in its local expression at Bethany Baptist Church, but also universally with other believers throughout this world. The church is a special place because God is in our midst. It is not so much our building as it is a result of the people who have been called out for the purpose of delighting in God and bringing glory to God and worshipping God.

This implication is we love being together because together we meet with God and we praise and worship Him in a way we could not do so on our own. That is the reason why, on Sunday morning, when we come, we come not because there is an obligation and if we do not we will feel bad about ourselves and other people will hassle us and it is better to go and get it over with. Out of merit maybe God will think well of us. None of those becomes the motivation of our soul in regards to corporate worship, but it is because we are pursuing our joy.

Why does a Chicago Cub fan like to watch the Cubs play? Saint Louis Cardinal fans would say, “I do not know. Tell me the answer.” Again, with the Cubs it is the hope of glory and the small chance of glory after a one hundred year drought. Yet, they still root because there may be glory there.

We do not commend myself or others for going to church every Sunday. This is not because we are good people, no, we are going because we want to go and enjoy God together. God meets with His people here. The application is: our corporate worship is to be an active and joyful expression of our delight in God. I know different people express joy in God in different ways, and that is perfectly appropriate. One person with the same level of joy could have a little smile on their face. Another person with that level of joy could be bouncing off of the ceiling. It is appropriate we have different ways we express joy, but all of us, if we enjoy God, will participate in it.

Is it possible for us to be in the midst of God’s people, as God’s people are singing, and we are just looking around, not paying any attention, being passive, and hoping “this gets over soon!” Is it possible for a healthy Christian to have that experience among God’s people?

When I go on vacation I love going to church. No one will check up on me and ask, “Pastor, did you go to church while you were gone? We missed you.” I want to be there because I understand the temple of God is there and I can meet with God. That is why I do go to church. That is one of the greatest aspects of our life.

In the third application we learn the New Testament teaches we will see God face-to-face when we go to Him in His dwelling place in Heaven. Revelation 21 describes Heaven this way,

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.”

That is Heaven. The Apostle Paul will say, “My desire is to depart from this life to be with Christ in Heaven.”⁵ We are excited about Heaven and we think about it often because God is there, the One we long for most. While here, in this life, we have a unique and very powerful revelations of God to our own soul so we would delight with Him and draw near to Him in fellowship with Him. We know the day is future when we will see Him face-to-face when that dark glass we through now is remove and we will be in the full presence of His full glory. This is why Paul says,

^{2Colossians 1:2} Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth...⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

We eagerly look with anticipation toward Heaven and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. It is not possible for a Christian to think about Heaven too much. It is not possible for a Christian to think about the Second Coming of Jesus too much.

⁵ Philippians 1:23

One of the sad trends in modern evangelical teachers is to tell us we are too heavily minded and we should not think about Heaven or the Second Coming of Jesus Christ so much. We need to think more about this earth and that is what will make Christianity great in this world. There is nothing further from the truth and nothing could be more unbiblical.

We consider from our text,

⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.

God can bless you, also, with making Him your delight. Do you what Him to?

The second motivation for a yearning for God is: **The Lord is our strength,**

⁵ Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.

This is the second time the word “blessed” appears. The first time it is in reference to those who delight in God and who are praising Him. The second time is in reference to those who come the end of their own personal strength, refusing to take confidence in their own flesh, but they realize God is all they need, all sufficient, and they trust in Him.

⁶ As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools.

“Baca” is a reference to a desert and the writer is talking about pilgrims who are able to go to the Temple in order to worship Him on an annual basis and they must pass through this desert in order to get to Jerusalem. Baca is a balsam tree known for it weeping sap and is used as a metaphor for weeping. If we take this as a metaphor as well, it refers to a valley of weeping and a tough place. But, as they pass through it, this place becomes a refreshment. The place which used to be a place of death is now a place of life and of joy.

⁷ They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.

Their natural weakness does not overcome them and they do not perish. Rather, they survive and more than that they thrive. They go from one condition of strength to the next higher level of strength and they are getting stronger as they travel through this valley.

There are two big principles here. First, God’s people always make it through the valley. No believer ever ends up in the Valley of Baca. God has a process and an end in mind. In the midst of that process His ends are always completed. No one is left forever and ever in the Valley of Baca. It may seem as though sometimes we are in the Valley of Baca for a very long time, even as though an eternity, but God is a God who sees us through each one of these difficult places in our life.

The second principle is God brings supernatural transformation into our lives because of the times in the valley. It is because of the Valley of Baca the people go from strength to strength. Without the Valley of Baca they would not gain strength. Here, I believe, this is a reference to the strength in the inner man, being strong in the Lord and His might power. As a result of these valleys, these desert places God has us pass through, we become stronger and stronger, thus able to enjoy God more and more.

We come to know how strong God is in the midst of this valley. That is the reason why the Apostle James would say,

² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.⁶

That endurance is strength and that strength is something we will know, experience, and enjoy throughout this life and into eternity and we will understand the strength of God.

⁶ New American Standard Bible (NASB)

How does God bless us in this Valley of Baca? It is not necessarily with money and wealth and promotion in this world, but it is by making us aware that God's strength is sufficient and His supply becomes our joy. Jeremiah 17 contains a great passage that relates the blessing of knowing God is our strength,

⁵ This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord. ⁶ He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives.

It is a horrible life to live all of our life depending upon ourselves and our own strength. This is a cursed life because it is not connected to God. In this life we will be like the desert tree, knurly and not lush with fruit. They are just surviving. This is talking about the life of one who is spiritually lost and the inner life. But, then Jeremiah says,

⁷ "But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. ⁸ He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

What kind of life do we want to live, the first or the second, the one described as barren as a result of trusting their own strength or the life described as fruitful as a result of them placing their confidence in God? We discover our yearning for God is motivated by the fact the Lord is our strength and He provides what we need to have that blessed-kind of life.

The third motivation is: **The Lord is our provider and protector,**

¹⁰ Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. ¹¹ For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.

The Lord is the One who offers life and the sun is the symbol for God's provision. All life is dependent upon the sun. He is our shield and that is a symbol of protection against harm.

As the sun, God is a source of life for us, physically, but more importantly spiritually. Jesus tells us,

^{10 b} *"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."*

As our shield, God protects us spiritually from sin, that which would corrupt our soul, that which would condemn us, that which would enslave us. We escape sin's piercing blade by God being our Protector and our Shield.

Why do we yearn for God? It is the same reason we yearn for air and for food and for water; that is where life is. It is for the same reason we desire a strong national defense because the threats are real and we need protection.

In Verse 11, in the King James Version, we read, "the Lord bestows grace and glory." The Lord gives grace and glory. He does not sell it or auction it off. It is His gift. We receive grace so we can be accepted by Him. We receive glory so we can connect with Him in such a way His own glory will be revealed.

The big problem we face is we are disconnected from God's grace and God's glory. All who have sinned and are disconnected from God's grace. As a result they fell short of God's glory. But, here we find the Gospel in Old Testament form: God gives grace and glory.

Some say, "I do not need grace. I am climbing my way to Heaven, with a little bit of God's help and I know that, but I am making progress." Friends, if you do not receive God's grace as a gift you will not have it.

Some say, "I do not need glory! I have my own glory to satisfy me and my own life pursuits to make me content. I find glory in my money, my family, my accomplishments, and my life." Friends, if you do not have the glory of God then our glory is a glory that will fade as quickly as a flower which is plucked and it fades from view.

When John Owen, a great pastor and theologian in England, was dying in 1683, his whole focus was on the glory of Christ. He wrote many books, but his last was entitled, Meditations On The Glory of Christ. In his understanding, the best way to get ready to die was by meditating on God's glory. Consider what he writes, "If our future blessedness shall consist of being where He is and beholding of His glory, what better preparation can there be for it than in constant, previous contemplation of that glory and the revelation made in the Gospel. Unto this very end, by view of it we may gradually be transformed into the same glory."

The editor of John Owen's book visited him near his death and this is what William Payne says John Owen told him as his last words, "O, brother, Payne, the long-wished for day has come at last in which I shall see the glory in another manner than I have ever done or was ever capable of doing in this world."

¹² O LORD Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in you.

Are you blessed because you find delight in Him?

Are you blessed because you have found Him to be your strength, even in the Valley of Baca?

Are you blessed because He is your Provider and the One who gives you grace and glory?

He offers Himself to you freely, but we must come to Him and ask.