

DSC Community Group
Sermon Summary, 05/13/2012

Title: "A Better Home"
Series: "Pour Out Your Heart to Him: A Study Through the Psalms"

Text: Psalm 84
Preacher: Ryan Kelly

There's no place like home. For those of us with happy homes, that glory points beyond itself to a greater home to come. For those of us from whom "home" is not such a happy place, that emptiness and longing is also a pointer to a greater home. Home refers to a place, but more than a place - a place in the presence of a certain person or people. So it is with the presence of God. We were made for it.

1. The True Home is God's Presence (1-4)

- Augustine: "You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you." The Psalmist is restless for the presence of God. He envies the birds that nest in the temple and the gatekeepers who keep it. Other key verses on the Psalms on the theme of God's presence: Ps. 16:11; 27:4, 8, 10; 42:1-2, 4, 6.
- Christianity is a religion of both mind and heart, truth and experience. We should think rightly about God, and long to feel God with us.
- Already/Not Yet: There is a sense in which we are in the presence of God as he is with us by his Spirit. But we aren't completely there yet. Mother's day is a parable of this. For some it is a glorious day, and for others a day of heartbreak (infertility, lost children, children who have died, bad experiences with mothers, etc.). For both it points to an utter fullness to come in our better and future home.

2. Going Home Means Pilgrimage (5-7)

- The Bible often describes our way to God as a pilgrimage. This was certainly true in the Old Testament. They had to enter the land, go to the temple, etc. As New Testament Christians there is one sense in which the pilgrimage is over (Eph. 2:19), but another in which we are still on it (1 Pet 2:11; Heb 11:13-16, 24-27).
- This pilgrimage takes effort and is worth the effort. Notice the goal of blessing (4, 5, 12) and that blessing is the favor of God himself.
- This is a pilgrimage of beholding the glory of Christ (Ps 27:4; 34:8). John Owen wrote, "How, then, can we behold the glory of Christ? We need, firstly, a spiritual understanding of his glory as revealed in Scripture. Secondly, we need to think much about him if we wish to enjoy him fully. If we are satisfied with vague ideas about him we shall find no transforming power communicated to us. But when we cling wholeheartedly to him and our minds are filled with thoughts of him and we constantly delight ourselves in him, then spiritual power will flow from him to purify our hearts, increase our holiness, strengthen our graces, and sometimes fill us "with joy inexpressible and full of glory."
- Pilgrim's Progress is a great help in grasping the nature of the Christian life as a pilgrimage.

3. Going Home Requires Prayer (8-12)

- In 8-9 he trusts that God will hear him, and then verse 10 begins with "for," signaling that what follows has to do with prayer. We should pray that God would show himself (11a) and provide (11b).

Sample Questions

- Ryan discussed the nature of the Christian life as being about both the mind and the heart, about truth and experience. He said that some of us can be about more than one than the other, or even about one to the exclusion of the other. Where are you? How should these relate in our Christian life?
- Ryan discussed the Christian life as being a pilgrimage. We have arrived in God's presence through Christ, but we are "not yet" fully there. We desire to be with God perfectly, and yet we don't live like it. A pilgrimage means we're going somewhere but aren't there yet. Where are you on your pilgrimage? Are you moving toward or away from God?
- Ryan said that the Bible shows us the utter closeness of God (like a mother hen with her chicks) and the utter distance of God ("Holy, Holy, Holy!"). He is both, but what is your default conception of God, and how has that changed over time? How must it change?
- In all of our "religious activity" what are we seeking? Business, accomplishment, or more of God? Why do we want one of the blessings of salvation such as forgiveness? Freedom from guilt, or freedom to stand in the presence of God accepted?