

OVERFLOW

THE LESSON: PSALM 84

Jesus said, “In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:2-3).

Believers cherish a longing to be “at home with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8). When we think of our eternal home, we know it will be a place where we are loved, a place where we can be confident that we belong – because Jesus has gone to great lengths to prepare it *for us*. We know most of all, that it will be a place without sin and sorrow, and characterized by the presence of our Lord.

When believers establish a home, that place can be an earthly foretaste of our eternal home, and a blessing that overflows to become a blessing to others too. What does this look like? In a word, hospitality. A couple joined in holy matrimony are blessed with one another. In many cases, that blessing will overflow into the blessing of children. But the Christian home should also be a place that overflows with the blessing of hospitality. Married or single, we can all witness to the Gospel by inviting others into an experience of a loving place prepared just for them.

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The Psalm we’re going to look at today speaks of a longing to be in the house of the Lord. The writer was referring to the temple, the place where the Lord’s presence was found. Today, we worship “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24), knowing that the presence of the Holy Spirit is with us wherever we are – in church, at school or work, and in the home as well.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

The following blessing is included at the conclusion of a little service called “Thanksgiving after Childbirth”, designed for when a newborn child is welcomed into a family. But think for a moment of all those you welcome into your home: each one of them was lovingly made by God. Ask God to help you offer hospitality with what you have – whatever that may be – as a way to love and serve him in this life. As you say the blessing, consider treating it as a prayer you could offer for those who visit your home as you send them on their way again.

Unto God’s gracious mercy and protection we commit you. The Lord bless you, and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace, both now and evermore. Amen.

(BLESSING FROM THE THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILD-BIRTH, BCP PAGE 575)

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PSALM 84: **WHERE GOD DWELLS, BLESSING OVERFLOWS**

¹How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

²My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God.

³Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself,

where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

⁴Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise! *Selah*

⁵Blessed are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

⁶As they go through the Valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools.

⁷They go from strength to strength; each one appears before God in Zion.

⁸O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! *Selah*

⁹Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed!

¹⁰For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

¹¹For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favour and honour.

No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.

¹²O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!