

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE Thirsty for God, part 3

SERIES Thirsty for God

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KEY SCRIPTURE Psalm 84

SYNOPSIS There's nothing better than connecting with God and we are blessed in his presence.

HIGHLIGHTS Closing song: Better is one Day



☞ **Thirsty for God, part 3**

Psalms 84:1-2

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.

Life without Jesus is like a donut... there's a hole in the middle of your heart. Ecclesiastes 3:11... God has put eternity in the hearts of human beings. Every person has a built-in desire for God, whether they realize it or not. This is why people are always searching for something to satisfy... the next great adventure, the latest gadget, new this, new that... always looking for something more. It is built in. When not handled properly, this built-in desire can lead to all kinds of addictive behaviors... drugs, alcohol, sexual deviances, etc. People need the Lord!

☞ **People want the Lord, but may not realize it.**

Here, the Psalmist knows that his inner man, his soul, is in need of the Lord. This is a soul situation, not just an emotional need. It is a deep-seated desire that can have an outward affect, so that your heart aches and even your body feels the need. The need is for the Lord.

Psalms 84:4

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

☞ **You are blessed when you connect with the Lord.** His presence brings joy and happiness like nothing else can. You may have been lacking in the arena of personal happiness and joy, and if that's the case, it's time to reconnect with God. Here, it says "dwell in your house." The idea is to make the effort to connect with God, and then stay connected.

John 15 is all about remaining or abiding in the vine, which is Jesus. You can't truly be fruitful apart from Christ. You can't truly be successful without Jesus. You can't experience real joy without the Lord. Jesus said the real key to joy and success is abiding in him. So, how do you abide in him?

In John 15, Jesus goes onto say that the Holy Spirit is key to our abiding. The Holy Spirit lives within believers, comforting us in our troubles and leading us into God's truth. So, we need to ☞ **keep on being filled with the Spirit**, which is what Ephesians 5:18 says. So, then, how do we abide; how do we keep on being filled with the Spirit? Ephesians 5 goes on to say we do that **by singing songs of praise and giving thanks to God**. And, interestingly enough, right here it says of those who dwell in God's house, that "they are ever praising you."

This is why music is an important part of our weekly gatherings. It's not just because your pastor has musical inclinations. It's because the bible is filled with encouragement to sing and praise God. And, it's because we understand how important it is to keep on being filled with the Spirit, which comes in no small part through singing songs of praise.

Psalms 84:5-7



5 Blessed are those whose strength is in you... 7 They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.

The strength in verse five is referring to a persevering kind of strength. Those who stick with God and hang in there are blessed. They are happy, joyful and fruitful. So, hang in there. The strength in verse seven is a different Hebrew word which means “stability; virtue; ability; wealth.” When you abide in the Lord and keep on persevering, you grow in so many ways. You become more stable over time; you grow in ability and his righteousness rubs off on you. Even your personal wealth may be affected by you staying connected to God.

I know that most people tend to have a rollercoaster type of life when it comes to personal ☞ stability and growth. But, the Psalmist here is saying that **when we really rely on God and persevere with him, we can see a steady upward trend in our lives.** We can keep on going from strength to strength.

☞ 2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image **from one degree of glory to another.** ESV

As we focus on the Lord and his glory, we are personally transformed and grow more and more into the likeness of Christ. It's the same in all relationships. People who hang out a lot tend to become more like each other. Sometimes you can tell a friendship by the way people laugh – they laugh the same. Other times, it's the mannerisms that we pick up from each other. The most extreme example of this can be found in married couples, who over many years of sharing life together, have the same viewpoints on everything, use the same phrases, have the same mannerisms, and even begin to look alike. That might be amusing or possibly disturbing for some, but when it comes to Christ, it's very desirable. We want to keep on growing to be **more ☞ and more like him.**

In Acts 4:13, the Jewish leaders were stunned at Peter and John's healing power and boldness since they were just ordinary, unschooled men. But they took note that Peter and John had been with Jesus. That's what I want... people might say Phil is just from small town Iowa; he is still in a small town; he doesn't have a doctorate or anything, but hopefully, people can see that I've been with Jesus. How about you?

Psalms 84:8

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

Since the Psalmist has this tight relationship with God, he can expect the Lord to listen when he prays. The same should be for us. We can have that kind of friendship with God and he will listen to us, and since he is the Almighty, he is always able to help.

Abraham was called God's friend. (James 2:23). Jesus told the disciples that he no longer ☞ would refer to them as servants, but rather as friends. **You can be a friend of God,** too, and because of that status, you can **expect him to hear and listen when you pray.**



Psalms 84:10-11

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.

When you connect with God in such a way that you begin to see him as your personal friend; when you know he satisfies the thirst within your soul, then you love spending time with him. The “courts of the Lord” is simply a reference to entering into God’s presence. The Psalmist has come to love the Lord so much that he would rather get just one day up close with God, than a thousand anywhere else.

He infers that even if he can’t be as close to God as some others are, it’s still the greatest place to be. Hanging out anywhere else is just not worth it. There are too many benefits when you are near to God. Even in the darkest hours, he is a light as bright as the sun. When troubles are all around, he is a shield of protection.

Psalms 103:2-5

2 Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits — 3 who **forgives** all your sins and **heals** all your diseases, 4 who **redeems** your life from the pit and **crowns** you with love and compassion, 5 who **satisfies** your desires with good things so that your youth is **renewed** like the eagle's.

Table talk: Which of God’s benefits are you most thankful for?

🕒 **Start timer**

“The Lord bestows favor and honor” is sometimes translated as “grace and glory.” Even when we don’t deserve it, God gives us grace and his ultimate goal for every believer is to enter into his glory. If you hang in there and abide in the Lord, he will welcome you into his eternal glory in heaven one day. That’s the ultimate benefit of finding your soul satisfaction in the Lord.

The Psalmist says that God doesn’t hold back on good things for those whose walk is blameless. When you come to see God in this light, loving being in his presence, drawing near to him over and over again, you understand that **God is not holding out on you**. God is always working for your good.

🕒 **Romans 8:28**

And we know that in all things **God works for the good** of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

🕒 **Jeremiah 29:11**

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "**plans to prosper** you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.



God only has good intentions for you. Don't you forget it!

Psalms 84:12

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

This is the summary. When you trust God, you are blessed, joyful, happy and successful. This ☞ trust of God is more than just words. It means to **place your reliance upon God**, having full confidence in his goodwill toward you.

Warren Wiersbe... When you walk by faith, you put the Lord and His will first, and you keep your priorities straight. This is the Old Testament version of Matthew 6:33 and Philippians 1:21. To men and women of faith, the Lord is all they need. He is to them what the sun is to our universe — the source of life and light. Without the sun, life would vanish from the earth, and without God, we would have neither physical life nor spiritual life. God is our provision and our protection. He is the giving God, and He gives grace and glory — grace for the journey and glory at the end of the journey. If we walk by faith, then whatever begins with grace will ultimately end with glory. God does not give us everything we want, but He bestows upon us all that is good for us, all that we need.

When you come to the point of trusting God this completely, then you are truly blessed. You then understand the earlier verses... One day with God is better than thousands elsewhere. The thirst within your soul is finally satisfied in God's presence.

Piano start playing

☞ Stop looking elsewhere for fulfillment in life; look to God! **Praise him; persevere in your walk with him; pray to him; put your trust in him; pursue him above all other things and you will be blessed.**

Closing song: Better is one Day