

Going On a Journey

**Your life is a journey
you must travel with
a deep consciousness
of God. You have a
future in God.**

From 1 Peter 1:18,21,
The Message

If we want to learn to make the journey of life well, then Peter, a man who knew Jesus, has an answer for us. In some ways this journey is just like any trip we hope to make.

It is not enough to plan, to search the web for information, to learn the history of a place, or to talk to other people who have made the same trip. Ultimately you have to get on the road, on the plane, on the boat, on the trail, and just go.

Maybe that is why Christ's command to us from beginning to end is "Follow me." He is the companion on the way, and being with him is the destination our hearts long for.

You really have to **see** a person to follow them well. It is good to read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John often. Get to know this surprising Jesus. Find out how much better a person he is than you have ever known anyone to be. See how he sees the Father

and learn to trust him because you are experiencing him the way Jesus did. Knowing Jesus through the Gospels is the best way to learn to imitate him and stay with him on the path. The Scriptures invite us to see Jesus and follow after him. And they also invite us to see our own longings, longings that give us the desire to make this journey toward God.

Perhaps Psalm 84 will help you recognize your own longing to make this journey to God and with God. So let's spend some time with it. But rather than analyzing the psalm, we want it to grab our hearts, stir our imagination, speak to the doubts and questions we have. A translation of Psalm 84 is offered below.

Psalm 84

How I love your Temple, LORD Almighty!

²How I want to be there! I long to be in the LORD's Temple.

With my whole being I sing for joy to the living God.

³Even the sparrows have built a nest, and the swallows have their own home; they keep their young near your altars, LORD Almighty, my king and my God.

⁴How happy are those who live in your Temple, always singing praise to you.

⁵How happy are those whose strength comes from you, who are eager to make the pilgrimage to Mount Zion.

⁶As they pass through the dry valley of Baca, it becomes a place of springs; the autumn rain fills it with pools.

⁷They grow stronger as they go; they will see the God of gods on Zion.

⁸Hear my prayer, LORD God Almighty. Listen, O God of Jacob!

⁹Bless our king, O God, the king you have chosen.

¹⁰One day spent in your Temple is better than a thousand anywhere else; I would rather stand at the gate of the house of my God than live in the homes of the wicked, than live in the homes of the wicked.

¹¹The LORD is our protector and glorious king, blessing us with kindness and honor.

He does not refuse any good thing to those who do what is right.

¹²LORD Almighty, how happy are those who trust in you!

(Good News Translation)

Read and Choose to be Quiet

Find an alone place and read the psalm aloud several times. In between each of your readings, try to sit for 5 minutes in utter quiet. That can be hard. But it's worth the effort. As you take that time to sit quietly, notice if a word or phrase from what you read aloud lingers in your heart or mind.

Write

Writing can keep us focused and help us to know what is taking shape in our souls. So you may want to write out -- simply and honestly -- what comes to you as you listen to this psalm. Don't analyze the psalm or look for "personal applications." Simply receive the psalm's message as Spirit-inspired words from a fellow traveler. The following questions may help you.

Has this psalm stirred up longings, fears, resistances, relief, tears? Pay attention to your own heart and write whatever comes to you.

The psalm is full of images. List as many of them as you can. Which image most stirs your own soul? If good journeys, good following after Christ, begin in our deep longings, what image from this psalm most encourages your heart to be on the path with him? Write out how you respond to that image.

The Apostle Peter says, *your life is a journey you must travel with a deep consciousness of God. You have a future in God.* If that is indeed true, how does this psalm speak to where you really are, right now in your own life? How does it shape your prayers and longings as you think about the "future" that seems to be down the road in your life?

What would take shape in your heart if you received your life as the life of a pilgrim on the way to Zion?