

A Prayer Concerning God's House

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By Dave Butts

"How lovely is Your dwelling place, O LORD Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. 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. Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they are ever praising You. Blessed are those whose strength is in You, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion. Hear my prayer, O LORD God Almighty; listen to me, O God of Jacob. Look upon our shield, O God; look with favor on Your anointed one. 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. 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. O LORD Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in You."

Psalm 84 is a prayer of pilgrimage for those who are traveling to Jerusalem to worship at the Temple. As such, it is a fitting model for those of us who find ourselves on a pilgrimage through this world. The Apostle Peter describes us

as “*strangers in the world*” (1 Peter 1:1). We move through this life recognizing that, according to Jesus, we are in the world, but not of the world.

One of the major distinctions between the Old Testament pilgrims and the New Testament saints is that we are no longer making a physical journey to a specific building to encounter God. Though we continue to grow “toward” God, the most amazing fact of our pilgrimage is that we are journeying “with” God. Through His Spirit, God Himself has come to dwell in us and lead us through this life.

This does not mean that we do not need to seek after God. The vast majority, if not all believers struggle to walk in that continual awareness of the Lord’s presence in our lives. We must still keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, seeking first His kingdom and His righteousness. Learning to pray Psalm 84 with a New Testament mindset can give us great help on our pilgrimage. Here is one way to pray this powerful Psalm:

Lord, I can hardly fathom the beauty of where You dwell. Nothing I have experienced on earth can adequately prepare me to experience Your glorious house. But I do know this: I long to see Your house. I am almost weak with my desire to experience Your presence. Everything in me cries out for You, my God!

I am so grateful that I do not have to wait until death to dwell in Your house. You have come to dwell in me through Your Spirit, and oh how amazing – now I can choose daily to live in Your presence. How blessed are those who dwell in Your house. Our lives will overflow with praise as we continually gaze upon Your beauty.

My Father, though You allow me to dwell, even now, in Your house, still I live in a world that is filled with danger, toil, and sin. I need Your strength to walk through this world with my eyes on You. My Lord, I commit myself to the journey

toward You, daily experiencing more of Your grace and mercy, and finding myself transformed by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

As I travel daily through the dry places of this world, places of tears and travail, may Your Spirit within me well up as a mighty river of life that flows from me and makes this world a better place. May those who find themselves in places of desperation experience Your joy, peace, and strength because You have somehow led me into their lives. Not because of anything in me, Lord, but because of Your mighty power at work in me.

Keep my feet on the right path, Lord. As I make this journey through life, help me to grow in strength and intimacy with You. May the end be better than the beginning. I long to appear before You in Zion, my God, because of the grace of Jesus Christ.

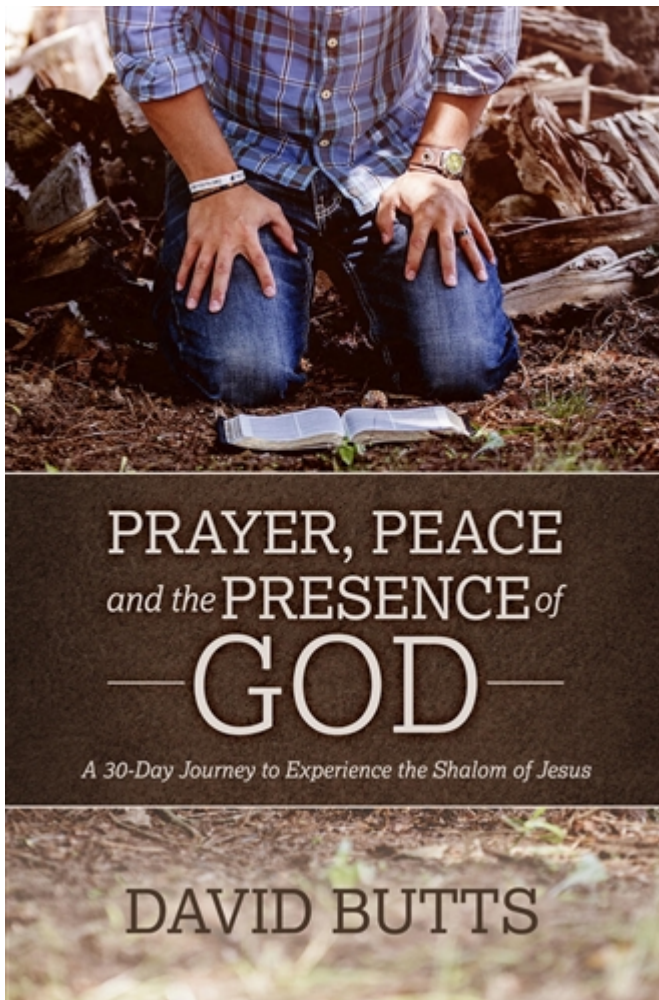
Hear my prayer, O Lord God Almighty. I am so serious about this request. This is my heart's desire. As You listen to this prayer, please hear it as coming from the heart of Your beloved Son, my Lord, my Savior, my Shield – the Lord Jesus.

I want so much to dwell in Your house with You, that I would even be content to just hold the door for others to enter. Just that proximity to You would be joy. I'd rather stand by Your door as a servant than live in the greatest of mansions in this life.

I'm so grateful that Your house is available to me even now. In the midst of the darkness of this world, You give light and protection. You shine bright as the sun, changing my life, and allowing me to walk in Your light, warmth, and life-giving power. Lord, You do this for everyone who has been made blameless in Your sight through Jesus Christ. Thank You for that amazing blessing of Your presence and power.

I want You to know, Lord, that I turn from dependence upon

anyone or anything else other than You. My trust is in You – not just for heaven some day, but for everyday life now. Thank You for the gift of faith that opens up the blessings of Your house for me this day. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



PRAYER, PEACE, and the PRESENCE of GOD by David Butts

As believers, we are supposed to walk in the peace of Christ, yet we all have stressful issues and circumstances that rob us of this peace. Subtitled “A 30-Day Journey to Experience the Shalom of Jesus,” *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God* powerfully encourages the reader on how to hold onto that peace in any circumstance.

The author, David Butts (1953-2022), started writing this book and 10 days into it he got word that he was in stage 4 with a rare form of lymphoma. God allowed him to live in a greater way for five additional years of full-strength ministry. Dave has challenged readers in *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of*

God to seek after His best life, no matter what it holds.

His 30-day devotional will encourage, inspire and challenge you that you, too, can experience and walk in the peace of Jesus no matter what circumstances you are walking through.

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