

A Saint Is Someone Who . . .

Hides in Christ - Relies on Christ - Drinks of Christ - Looks to Christ

Pastor Matthew Ude

November 2, 2025

Psalm 84:1-12 How lovely *is* Your tabernacle, O LORD of hosts! ² My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. ³ Even the sparrow has found a home, And the swallow a nest for herself, Where she may lay her young-- *Even* Your altars, O LORD of hosts, My King and my God. ⁴ Blessed *are* those who dwell in Your house; They will still be praising You. Selah ⁵ Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in You, Whose heart *is* set on pilgrimage. ⁶ As *they* pass through the Valley of Baca, They make it a spring; The rain also covers it with pools. ⁷ They go from strength to strength; *Each one* appears before God in Zion. ⁸ O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah ⁹ O God, behold our shield, And look upon the face of Your anointed. ¹⁰ For a day in Your courts *is* better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. ¹¹ For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good *thing* will He withhold From those who walk uprightly. ¹² O LORD of hosts, Blessed *is* the man who trusts in You!

If you know Tommy Peccaro, you've likely heard him speak of his grandmother, whom he describes as an inspiring woman of great faith, peace, and confidence. Others on this list share similar qualities, serving as powerful reminders of all that Christ has done for us.

The book of Hebrews urges us not to forget such witnesses. They are not perfect. They are sinners who found forgiveness and victory in Jesus Christ. Their faith and peace are gifts from Jesus, reminding us that even in our failures, Christ has already done the work for us.

Psalm 84 echoes this truth, reminding us of the rest, strength, and service we receive through Jesus. It beautifully describes what it means to belong to Christ, to be part of His kingdom and to be one of His saints.

Jesus Gives Us Rest

Verse 3:

"Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young— Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in His house. "

A saint is someone who finds rest and security in Jesus. In the Old Testament, the tabernacle and temple were open courtyards. There were many places where birds easily made their nests. They found safety there where no predators could enter. The psalmist uses these birds as a metaphor for the peace and refuge we find in the Lord.

God promises that those who take refuge in Him do not need to fear the fowler's trap. We often forget this. We forget that we are inside God's house, safe from the dangers outside.

I remember in 2015, during a trip to Africa, many pastors believed the world was ending because a woman was running for president of the USA. It is a common problem for people to worry about impending catastrophe. But as believers, we don't have to be anxious or fearful.

We don't need to get worked up by global crises—wars, diseases, political turmoil, inflation. These are "out there," beyond our control. But in God's house, we are safe. Even if trouble affects us personally, it cannot ultimately destroy us. If the worst happens and we face death, we know where we are going. As Martin Luther said, "Take they our goods, fame, children, and wives—they still have nothing won. The kingdom ours remains."

Jesus has given us His saints safety in His house.

Verse 7:

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

The saints rely on God's strength, not their own. We will never make it on our power alone.

In polar regions, whales migrate from one open patch of water to another to breathe—moving from one place of refuge to the next. Similarly, Israelite pilgrims traveled from village to village, resting and refueling along the way. We can travel much farther without stopping, but we still need to refuel, sleep and eat.

Psalm 84 reminds us that we move day by day, strengthened by God's Word and His forgiveness. We can't rely on our own strength. We must be continually refreshed by His presence. Only then can we hope to stand before God in Zion. The saints are those who are regularly strengthened by His Word—those who rely on God's power, not their own.

1 Peter 1:5 (NKJ):

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

Our journey is sustained not by effort or willpower but by God's divine strength.

Jesus continually gives strength to His saints.

Verse 6:

"As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a spring."

A saint drinks deeply from Christ's grace and forgiveness so that they overflow with His love.

The term "Valley of Baca" is often translated as the "Valley of Sorrow." It represents the struggles of this life, difficult times, deserts of despair. Yet, the saints transform these hardships into springs of life, watering others with God's grace and love.

Just as a rain cloud passes through a barren desert, bringing life, God's saints bring meaning and joy to this world. Jesus reminds us, *"You are the salt of the earth"* and *"the light of the world."* It is the saints who bring divine flavor and illumination amid darkness.

Some might say religion causes conflict and violence. Unfortunately, history has examples of those who use God's name for wickedness, but those are not the true followers the psalm describes. The psalmist's picture is of those who trust in the Lord, those who seek peace, not violence.

Matthew 5:9 says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

Those spreading violence do not trust in God's Word.

Isaiah 52:7 (NKJ)

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaim salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'"

The feet of those who bring good news are beautiful, those who proclaim peace and salvation, not those who wield the sword.

As saints, we are like springs of water in a desert—not because we are always cheerful or positive by nature, but because we carry the joyful message of the angels: ***"Behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all the people—for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior."*** (Luke 2:10-11).

Each of us has this divine power, the power to forgive sins. We can forgive those who have wronged us, and in doing so, we display the love of Christ. We can tell others that all their sins are forgiven through Jesus. The saints are springs of living water in the desert because we carry Jesus in our hearts and mouths.

Verse 5 says:

"Blessed are those whose hearts are set on pilgrimage."

A saint is someone whose heart is fixed on Jesus. Some interpret this as their heart being set on "ascent"—on the journey upward toward heaven. Most scholars see this as a reference to the roads leading up to Jerusalem, symbolizing our spiritual journey through life toward our eternal home.

Hebrews reminds us that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had no permanent city on earth. They wandered with their hearts fixed on the home that God has prepared for them. Likewise, our hearts and eyes are set on our heavenly home, on Jesus, the ultimate destination.

The eyes of the saints are always fixed on Jesus who alone is the author and finisher of our faith.

All these faithful witnesses went before us. They suffered, worried, sinned, stumbled, doubted, and yet, through God's grace, they persevered and reached their eternal home with Christ. We too will persevere, not by our own strength or efforts, but through Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and gives us the strength to carry on. Amen.