

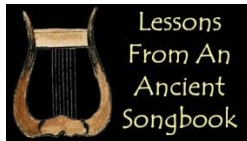
“Crave”

July 22, 2018

OPEN

What is a favorite food that you often crave?

How many synonyms can you come up with for the idea of “craving”?



The twelve psalms written by the sons of Korah deal with the depths of the Christian experience. **Psalm 84** is an exploration of craving for God. There are three experiences, each one highlighted by a **blessing**.

DIG

In relationship with Jesus Christ our longing and desire for God is being recalibrated and restored. When the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us and does an amazing job of restoring in us our hunger after God.

What are some ways in which the Holy Spirit is helping you to crave God?

ONE: the blessing of God’s presence – read Psalm 84:1-4

For what is the author of this psalm longing? To what extent is that longing evident in his life? See verses 1-2

How does this longing compare with what we read in Psalm 43:3?

Though the Temple in Jerusalem was a focal point of God’s presence, in no way was God’s presence restricted to it. What picture is described in verse 3 and how does that celebrate God’s presence?

What does Psalm 15:1-2 require of the person who longs for God’s presence?

Compare the conclusion of Psalm 84:4 with the anguish of Psalm 42:2. What had changed in the author’s experience?

“The appetite for God has all the cheerful spontaneity of a natural even a physical, desire.”

~ C. S. Lewis in *Reflections on the Psalms*

TWO: - the blessing of God’s power - read Psalm 84:5-8

The one who craves after God will know a deep, inner, personal happiness and wholeness. Why? In what ways has God empowered you?

The “Valley of Baka” is not a literal location but suggests affliction. “Baka” translates to “balsam” or “aspen” which grew in very arid places. Also, the term is similar in sound to the word for “weeping”. Instead of a barren wasteland, what does God provide? See verses 6-7

Compare the phrase “strength to strength” to what we read in II Corinthians 3:18? How does God make this experience real in our lives?

Note the prayer in verse 8. When was the last time you prayed for God’s power? Should this occur only in times of crisis?

THREE: the blessing of God’s provision - read Psalm 84:9-12

The third benediction is a promise to those who trust in God (v. 12). In what ways was the welfare of the king (“our shield” or “Your anointed”) tied to the welfare of the Israelites?

What is the declaration made in verse 10? Is this true for your life?

In what ways has God been a “sun and shield” to you? In what way has He bestowed “favor and honor” in your life? See verse 11

In what ways has God blessed you as you have trusted in Him?

REFLECT

What do you crave? If we are going to grow in our longing after God we need ongoing reminders of how He has rescued us from sin. Listen carefully to the song [“REMEMBER”](#) by Laura Story and reflect on the amazing lengths to which God went to redeem your life.

In Philippians 2:1-11 we can read another “ancient song”. This passage highlights Jesus endured for our salvation. This includes VULNERABILITY when Jesus came to earth helpless and dependent to fully identify with all that we experience. Jesus suffered VIOLENCE by a tortuous death to bring atonement, that is, to pay the price of our sin. But Jesus won the VICTORY when He rose on the third day in victory and triumph over death and the grave.

In his book *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* author and pastor John Piper has written, “God is most glorified when you are most satisfied in Him.” [READ MORE](#) about what it means to be a “Christian hedonist” – to find your greatest pleasure in God Himself.