



Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups

"Blessed is the Pilgrim"

**Preached by Dr. Daniel Grothe
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"And how blessed all those in whom you live, whose lives become roads you travel;
They wind through lonesome valleys, come upon brooks, discover
cool springs and pools brimming with rain!"

P S A L M 8 4 : 5 - 6 M S G

Summary

Have someone from your group read the following summary aloud.

This morning's message invites us into the beautiful and honest world of Psalm 84, where we discover what it truly means to live as pilgrims in this life. Pastor Daniel reminded us that the pilgrim's path isn't about having arrived somewhere perfect, but about finding deep, sustaining joy even while we're still on the journey, especially when that journey leads through difficult terrain.

The heart of this message centers on a profound truth: we don't have to wait until we reach our destination to experience God's blessing and provision. Even when our current season feels like a "valley of weeping," marked by loss, disappointment, or the agonizing struggles that plague this earthly life, we have a choice before us. We can allow these valleys to become places of despair, or we can, by God's grace and through the posture of our hearts, transform them into "places of springs."

This transformation isn't about denying our pain or manufacturing false optimism. Rather, it's about discovering how faith opens our eyes to see God's presence and provision even in the midst of difficulty, allowing us to become people who find—and offer—life-giving hope wherever we find ourselves walking.

Opening Prayer

Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own.

"Father, we come before you today knowing that each of us is walking our own pilgrim path. Some of us in seasons of celebration, others navigating valleys we never expected to find ourselves in. As we open your Word together, please do what only you can do: soften our hearts to receive truth, open our eyes to see your hand at work even in difficult places, and give us the courage to be honest about where we really are in our journeys.

"Lord, we aren't looking for feel-good assurances; we want to be *changed*. Help us to truly understand what it means to live as pilgrims who trust you, people who can find your springs of grace and hope even when life's twists and turns leave us totally and utterly spun out. Give us wisdom to know how to take these truths and live them out in our Monday-morning realities. In your mighty name we pray, Amen."

Getting Going

Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.

When you hear the word "pilgrim," what comes to mind? In your spiritual life, how is being a pilgrim different from being a tourist or a settler in your spiritual life?

Discussion Questions

Answer as many of the following questions as time and interest permit.

1. We all struggle with comparison, looking at someone else's marriage, career, or spiritual maturity and feeling like we're somehow behind. What makes comparison so tempting, and how does it steal joy from our own journey with God?
2. Think of a specific season when life felt difficult or disappointing. Looking back, can you see any ways God was working or providing that you couldn't see at the time? What did that teach you about his faithfulness?
3. The psalmist says those "whose hearts are set on pilgrimage" are blessed (Psalm 84:5). What do you think it means to have your heart "set on pilgrimage"? How is that different from just going through the motions of faith?
4. Pastor Daniel talked about finding joy in the journey, not just at the destination. What's the difference between happiness that depends on circumstances and the deeper joy that can exist even in difficulty?
5. When you're in a season of waiting or uncertainty, what thoughts or lies tend to creep in? How do you fight for hope when the waiting feels endless?

6. This question might require some thought, but if you were to make your current circumstances “a place of springs” for others, what would that actually look like this week?

Making It Personal

Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week’s sermon to your everyday life.

This week, choose one person in your life who is walking through his or her own “valley of weeping.” Maybe it’s a coworker facing a difficult transition, a neighbor dealing with health issues, or even someone in this group navigating a tough season.

Instead of just saying “I’ll pray for you” (though that is helpful, too), commit to one concrete action that could help make the valley feel a little more like a place of springs.

It might be as simple as taking time to hand-write a note, bringing a meal, offering to watch his or her children for an afternoon, or just showing up to listen without trying to fix anything. The goal isn’t to solve their problems. It’s to be God’s hands and feet in demonstrating that they’re not walking through this alone.

Key Takeaways

Commit to memory one point from the message before you dismiss.

Which of these points will you carry with you this week?

- Blessed are those who find their strength in God, not in circumstances.
- We can choose to make our valleys places of springs through our attitude and faith.
- Comparison and complaining hinder our ability to find joy in the journey.
- Even a rigorous journey can be delightful when we recognize Jesus as the way.

Closing Prayer

Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.

“Father, we come to you with hearts stirred by your Word. You’ve shown us that this pilgrim life—with all its valleys and detours—is not something to endure but to embrace with faith. Thank you for that reminder.

“Forgive us for the times we’ve grumbled in our valleys instead of digging for the springs you’ve placed there. Give us pilgrim hearts that are set not on temporary things but on you and your kingdom. Help us trust your process even when we can’t see the purpose.

"Lord, help us hold loosely to our own plans and tightly to your promises. May we find joy in the journey because we know the One who holds our destination secure. We trust you to complete the good work you've begun in each of us. In your name we pray, Amen."

Key Passage | Psalm 84:1-7

These verses were highlighted during this week's sermon and appear here for your reference.

How lovely is your dwelling place, 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, 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, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baka, 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.

Verses for Further Study

- Proverbs 3:5-6 | "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."
- Psalm 37:23-24 | "The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand."
- Deuteronomy 1:31-33 | "There you saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place. In spite of this, you did not trust in the Lord your God, who went ahead of you on your journey, in fire by night and in a cloud by day, to search out places for you to camp and to show you the way you should go."
- Philippians 3:20-21 | "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."