**Dwelling In the House of the Lord**

Psa. 23:4-6

Introduction:

1. During my early childhood I memorized this passage.

2. It has brought me great comfort as I have walked through valleys of the shadow of death—not just physical death, but through valleys of temptation and sin.

3. It is comforting that God’s goodness and His lovingkindness are with me through such valleys.

4. It is comforting to dwell in the house of the Lord.

5. But how does this come about? What are the indications of dwelling in the house of the Lord? All of us would like to be with the Lord after this life. Is that what this passage is referring to or is it referring to something in the here and now?

Discussion:

I. Dwelling in the house of the Lord is made possible only by God’s goodness and lovingkindness (Psa. 23:6).

 A. The emphasis in Psa. 23 is about what the Lord as done.

 1. Since he is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He provides what is necessary for us

 sheep, who are vulnerable and unable to provide for ourselves.

 2. He makes us lie down in green pastures, leads us beside quiet waters.

 3. He restores my soul.

 4. He guides me in the paths of righteousness, and does so for His name’s sake. It is a

 reflection of His goodness (Deut. 7:6-9). It is not because there is something

 commendable about me (cf. Rom. 5:6, 8, 10).

 5. He prepares a table.

 6. He anoints my head.

 7. He fills my cup.

 B. No one has a right to the Father’s house. Isn’t this what Paul is teaching in Rom. 1-3?

 1. The righteous man shall live by faith (Rom. 1:17; Hab. 2:4).

 2. All the world is guilty (Rom. 3:10-18; Psa. 14:1-3; 53:1-3).

 3. “The salvation of Israel comes out of Zion!” (Psa. 14:7).

 4. Neither the prodigal younger son, nor the son who stayed how had any rightful claim

 on what the Father had. It was His generosity to both that granted them privileges

 in His house (Lk. 15:11ff).

 C. Dwelling in the house of the Lord is not something that is deserved, therefore we ought

 to be thankful, rather than demanding.

 1. This is something some seem never to learn.

 2. The always seem to have a demanding attitude as if to say, “I want this or that.” “I

 want my way.” When what they want is only available through someone else’s

 sacrificial gift.

 3. I fear for these people. They are like the unmerciful slave who after having his debt

 forgiven choked his fellow demanding payment (Matt. 18:28ff).

II. Dwelling in the house of the Lord demands an appropriate response to His goodness and lovingkindness (Psa. 27:4ff, 11; Psa. 15:1-5).

 A. The Psalmist is seeking to dwell in the house of the Lord (27:4).

 1. The Prodigal abandoned his Father’s house and then sought it out.

 2. The older son refused to come in, condemning both his Father and the young

 prodigal.

 B. The Psalmist appealed for grace (27:7-8).

 C. He asked for guidance (27:11ff). “Teach me Your way.” Dwelling in the house of the

 Lord involves submission to His way.

 D. There were blessings resultant (27:5-6).

 E. Psa. 15 describes the Lord’s way (1-5). How do we think we are dwelling in the house

 of the Lord if we lie, slander, do evil, take financial advantage? If we were in the house

 of the Lord how do we think we could continue there and act in this way?

 F. Spending our lives in sin is not consistent with dwelling in the house of the Lord (Titus

 3:3-4; 1 Cor. 5:1-2; 6:9-11).

III. There is a sense in which, after the return of Christ, God’s people dwell in His house (Jn. 14:2-3; 1 Thess. 4:13ff). But there is also a sense in which the people of God dwell in His house now.

 A. Psa. 23 suggests that dwelling in the house of the Lord is a present experience and

 involves provision currently made by the Shepherd, protection from enemies, etc. but it

 suggests an on-going dwelling too.

 B. Psa. 27:4ff would seem to suggest the same (note vs. 4, 5, 6).

 C. We are God’s household (Eph. 2:19). We are God’s children (Gal. 3:26-27).

Conclusion:

1. There is great blessing and comfort in the house of God.

2. Would you dwell with Him?