

**WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR?
WE ARE HERE TO BE PERFECTED!**

Psalm 122:1; Hebrews 10:24-25; Ephesians 4:11-12

Introduction

Reading *Psalm 122:1* we can sense the excitement of David regarding going to God's House! *Psalm 122:1* – "I was **glad** when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD."

The word "**glad**" there means "**to brighten up; to be full of glee!**" We might say that the Psalmist was **JOYFUL!** We who have believed the Gospel have received the Holy Spirit! We too are to be full of **JOY!** After all, it is the second fruit of the Spirit mentioned in *Galatians 5:22!*

Psalms 120-134 are each given a title as *A Song of Degrees*. I found that these are a series of **15 songs** Israel sang on the way to the House of God to attend the three great festivals.

What is the significance of 15? Well, according to the book *Biblical Mathematics* by Evangelist Ed F. Vallowe, **15** is the number of **REST**. **SPIRITUAL REST, we know, is the result of DELIVERANCE, or SALVATION!**

Isaiah 57:20 "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot **REST**, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

Jesus said in *Matthew 11:28-30* 28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you **REST**. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find **REST** unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

The first mention of the number **15** is in *Genesis 7:20* where after it rained for 40 days and 40 nights the waters reached **15 cubits above the tallest mountain** peak...that's as high as they got. So, the waters crested and rested!

We find in the Old Testament that 3 times in the year Israel **RESTED** on the **15th** day of the month! (*Leviticus 23:6-7; 34-35; Esther 9:20-22*)

Also, in the *Book of Ruth*, The **15th** time the name of Naomi is found is in *Ruth 3:1* where it says, "Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek **REST** for thee, that it may be well with thee?"

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That **REST** came through Boaz their **KINSMAN REDEEMER** (A Type of Christ. (*Ruth 4*) The word **KINSMAN** is found **15** times in the *Book of Ruth!*

After the creation God **RESTED** on the **SEVENTH** day. If you add **EIGHT**, the number for the **NEW BIRTH** or **NEW BEGINNINGS**, to it you get **FIFTEEN**, the number of spiritual **REST!**

Also, the future Millennial Temple that Ezekiel describes in *Ezekiel 40* will have **15 steps**. A series of **seven steps** in the outer court (*Vs 22*) and a series of **eight steps** in the inner court (*Vs 31*)! (Israel will finally have rest!)

So, the significance of **15 Psalms of Degrees** is **REST**. We come to **REST** in the LORD! The **REST** that we enjoy is the result of our **DELIVERANCE**, or **SALVATION** that comes from the LORD!

And don't forget the **threefold DELIVERANCE** or **SALVATION** that we get from our LORD:

1. We Are Saved From The **Penalty** Of Sin! (**Past**)
2. We Are Saved From The **Power** Of Sin! (**Present**)
3. We Are Saved From The **Presence** Of Sin! (**Future**)

As I said, the very first Psalm of these Psalms of Degrees is *Psalm 120*. *Psalm 120:1* speaks of a time when the writer got some help from the LORD! "**In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.**"

As we come to meet with God's people, we ought to look back and remember the many times when we came and got help from the LORD!

The other verses of *Psalm 120* speaks of a present trial that the writer was dealing with that he needed the LORD's help! He says in *Psalm 120:2*, "*Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips and a deceitful tongue.*"

As we come to meet with God's people, we ought to come looking for the PRESENT help we need!

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We're all going through the temptations, the trials, and the tribulations that life in this sin cursed world brings! Jesus said in *John 16:33* "*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*"

We come together as the LORD's Church for many different reasons!

- 1. We should come to be helped of the LORD!**
 - a. We get help through His Word!**
 - b. We get help through His Holy Spirit!**

The LORD uses Holy Spirit filled people of God that have been gifted by God to edify us!

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 3 *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. 5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*

- 2. We should come to Church to be loved and comforted and exhorted by one another! (i.e. By our brothers and sisters in Christ!)** *Galatians 6:2* *Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

- 3. We should come to worship the LORD!**

Hebrews 10:24-25

The writer of the book of Hebrews was giving encouragement for his readers to be faithful to the assembly, the Church! **(We can sense that at least some of them were having a problem with their faithfulness to God's house!**

Times were tough and many of them were under some heavy persecution! **The tough times were causing their love for the things of God (including the people of God) to wax cold!**

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Could I tell you that when we are going through a difficult time, that's when we need the LORD and His people the most!

Oh I know we can come up with excuses of why that's not true in our particular case, but God's Word shows it to be true! We need the LORD and we need His Church (His people...His Body) that He ministers through in this age!

Of all people, we as New Testament believers should be excited about coming to the House of God!

- 1. Because Of Our Access To God! – (Hebrews 10:19-20)**
- 2. Because Of Our High Priest! – (Hebrews 10:21; 4:14-16; 7:24-26)**
 - a. We Have A Reason To Draw Near In Faith!(Hebrews 10:22)**
 - b. We Have One Who Is Faithful! (Hebrews 10:23)**
 - c. We Have Each Other! (Hebrews 10:24-25)**

Many folks have lost sight of why we even come to Church! If we don't understand why we come and why we ought to be here, sooner or later we possibly might fall by the wayside and stop coming!

So, let me ask again, **WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR?**

Ephesians 4:11-12

The Most Important Thing That Takes Place In The House Of God Takes Place From The Pulpit—The Preaching! (Ephesians 4:11- 12)

**Singing
Fellowship
Worship
Preaching**

Vs 12 – What are you here for?

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**Men of God are God's gift to the Church for three reasons laid out here!
But I just want to take the time tonight to look at just the first one!**

WE ARE HERE TO BE PERFECTED! (*Vs 12a; Cf. Matthew 5:43-48*)
In *Ephesians 4:12*, "perfecting" means "the complete furnishing."

In *Matthew 5:48*, the word "perfect" means "complete."

Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, **he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Those of us that are saved, are "in Christ!"

And every one who is "in Christ" should have a desire to be just like Christ because one day we are going to be like Christ!

How many of you are just like Christ? Me neither! But, I'm going to be like Him one day! (The children's song "He's Still Working On Me!")
1 John 3:2-3 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: **but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.** 3 **And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.**

The goal is to be like Jesus! The reality is that I'm not like Jesus! I'm not perfected yet! We've all got a long way to go! In fact, God wants us to GROW into His likeness!

That is the **PERFECTING** process Paul talks about here in *Ephesians 4:12!*

It is what we all need and none of us have arrived yet and that's why we need to be here at the house of God!

God has given us men of God who proclaim to us the Word of God that we might be perfected of God!

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We might can worship the LORD out in the woods or on a boat or anywhere wherever else we might be other than the LORD's house....But we can't be perfected out there!

Even Paul recognized that he wasn't perfected either!

Philippians 3:12-14 12 *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.* 13 *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,* 14 *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

The only way to apprehend that for which you have been apprehended of Christ is by being under the teaching and preaching of the Word!

And, by the way, we need preaching from the Word that speaks to us and our imperfections! (Not "ear tickling" preaching!)

Matthew 21 tells about Jesus delivering some of his parables.

Matthew 21:45 *And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.*

Do you perceive when the things of this book speaks of you?

What is your reaction when that takes place...when the Word of God nails your hide to the wall...when the preaching is dancing on your toes and it is more than just a two step...when the Holy Spirit grips your heart in conviction.

Some may say, well I don't like that! **So, WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR?**

Because the perfecting process is NOT going to be a painless process!

Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

The perfecting process is going to expose things that we'd rather keep in the closet:

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Hebrews 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR? Are you here to find the faults of others or here for the LORD to point out and change your own faults?

Conclusion

If you come to find the faults and imperfections of others (including this preacher), you'll find them!

But that's not what we are supposed to be here for.

If you come to find a reason NOT to be here, you'll find that too!

But that's not what we are supposed to be here for!

By the way, if you look for a reason to leave this Church, you'll find that...some have...but if you look for a reason to stay, you'll find that too!
What are you looking for? We can choose to be part of the problem or we can choose to be part of the solution...it is up to us!

If you come to hear from God through the man of God teaching and preaching the Word of God so that you might be more like Jesus!

Now that's what we are supposed to be here for!

Are you perceiving the things that the LORD has for you in order to perfect you?

That's what we are supposed to be here for!