

Beliefs Matter

Discovery Starters

Fellowship

We are called to **commit to the Church** in both its local nurturing expression and its mobile multiplying expression
[2Ch 29:20-30](#); [Psa 22:25-28](#); [Psa 122:1-4](#); [Joe 2:15-17](#); [Mat 18:19-20](#);
[Act 2:44-47](#); [Act 4:32-35](#); [1Co 14:26-40](#); [Eph 2:11-18](#); [Heb 10:23-25](#)

Belief #5 – Fellowship: Pilgrims Together

Biblical Foundation:

I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD." And now here we are, standing inside your gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a well-built city; its seamless walls cannot be breached. All the tribes of Israel—the LORD's people—make their pilgrimage here. They come to give thanks to the name of the LORD, as the law requires of Israel (Psa 122:1-4).

Discovery Starter:

Fellowship is more than just hanging out. It's togetherness with a purpose. It's an intentional pilgrimage in which we are going somewhere one with another; journeying together towards a common goal. The ultimate purpose is to meet with God and to be shaped by him, "looking forward" in faith to that which God has "designed and built" for us (Heb 11:10).

In ancient Israel every Jew was expected to journey to Jerusalem for three annual pilgrim festivals (Deu 16:16). These pilgrimages are often mentioned in the Scriptures. Isaiah declares, "You will be filled with joy, as when a flutist leads a group of pilgrims to Jerusalem, the mountain of the LORD" (Isa 30:29). Jeremiah speaks of a time when "pilgrims [were] carrying grain offerings and incense on their way to worship at the Temple in Jerusalem" (Jer 41:5 MSG). He mourns Jerusalem's demise after the Babylonian destruction: "Zion's roads weep, empty of pilgrims headed to the feasts" (Lam 1:4 MSG). Jesus' one childhood event recorded in the gospels occurs during a festival pilgrimage. We are told that Joseph and Mary left Jerusalem for the homeward journey thinking Jesus "was somewhere in the company of pilgrims" (Luk 2:44 MSG).

Psalm 122 – today's Biblical foundation – is one of fifteen "songs of ascents" (Psa 120-134) which pilgrims traveling "up" to Mount Zion would sing together as they

approached Jerusalem. Since those times, many Christian authors – from John Bunyan to C. S. Lewis – have written allegories to encourage pilgrims in their onward journey. In the final scene of *The Last Battle*, the last book in C. S. Lewis' extraordinary *Chronicles of Narnia*, the Unicorn "summed up what everyone was feeling" when he said, "I have come home at last! This is my real country! I belong here. This is the land I have been looking for all my life, though I never knew it till now... Come further up, come further in!"

We are all expected to live in this world as "strangers and pilgrims" (Heb 11:13; 1Pe 2:11 KJV) as we journey homeward towards God, for he is our ultimate destination. "LORD, through all the generations you have been our home" (Psa 90:1).

Keep Going:

"Come further up, come further in!" You can read these fifteen songs of ascent (Psa 120-134) in just 10-12 minutes. Savor the longing for more intimacy with God that is woven into the words: "Let us go to the sanctuary of the LORD; let us worship..." (Psa 132:7). May you desire to be among "those whose hearts are in tune with" God (Psa 125:4). What else stands out to you as you meditate on these words. Take a look at some of the key repeated words in these fifteen Psalms in the following word cloud

You may also want to take some time to read some classic Christian allegories, which portray the Christian journey in visually rich ways. Consider reading these together with friends and family around the dinner table. May you be encouraged in your faith pilgrimage!

- *Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan

- The seven-book series known as *The Chronicles of Narnia* (*The Magician's Nephew; The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe; The Horse and his Boy; Prince Caspian; The Voyage of the Dawn Treader; The Silver Chair; and The Last Battle*), all by C. S. Lewis
- *Hinds Feet on High Places* and *Mountains of Spices*, both by Hannah Hurnard
- *The Singer* and *The Song*, both by Calvin Miller

© 2020 David Joel Hamilton: "YWAM Beliefs & Values Discovery Starters." Used by permission.