



# E-Worship 4:23

*An online resource for officers and worship leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*

*"A time is coming...when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks." - John 4:23*

**Religion:** from the Latin "re-ligare":

**Re:** Again; **Ligare:** to tie, to bind together;  
**Ion:** A process

*In this sense, religion is about repeating a collection of binding processes which bring a community of people together and help keep them together.*

- Ben Hughes

<http://www.helium.com/items/930585-the-true-definition-of-religion>

*Blessed are those who dwell in Your house;  
they are ever praising You.*

*Blessed are those whose strength is in you,  
who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.*

*As they pass through the Valley of Baca,  
they make it a place of springs...*

*They go from strength to strength,  
till each appears before God in Zion.*

- Psalm 84:5-7

Hypothetical mortal beings  
Known only to themselves and God  
Come and go and play the cameo  
They're just faces in cabs...

All the hearts that are gonna break today  
All the lovers who won't come home tonight  
Nobody feels their dynamite  
They're just faces in cabs...

They're just faces in cabs - so I've been told  
Just faces in cabs - the masses out there  
Just faces in cabs - anonymous souls

Ten million in freshly dug graves  
Ten thousand who will die by noon today  
Four billion who will follow soon  
They're just faces in cabs

Mark Heard

Lately I haven't been able to get Psalm 84:7 out of my head: **"They go from strength to strength..."** I often don't feel I'm going from 'strength' to 'strength', but rather from 'crisis' to 'crisis', or from 'stress' to 'stress'. To top it off, the previous verse talks about making the "Valley of Baca" ('Baca' means 'weeping'), a place of springs, or a place of blessing.

I was looking recently at the origins of our word "Church". It is actually derived from the Greek "kyriake" which literally means "Lord's house", but also partially comes from "ekklesia", which means "assembly".

In the process of my research I came across a blog personally answering the question of why do we go to church, and can someone be a healthy Christian who doesn't? What struck me about this particular blog was that it didn't give the pat scriptural answers, but talked rather in terms of fellowship:

"Most of what we call 'church' today are nothing more than well-planned performances with little actual connection between believers... The call to the kingdom is not a call to isolation. Every person I've ever met who is thriving in the life of Jesus has a desire to share authentic fellowship with other believers... Fellowship happens where people share the journey of knowing Jesus together. It consists of open, honest sharing, genuine concern about each other's spiritual well being and encouragement for people to follow Jesus however he leads them... Meetings are less the issue here than the quality of relationships... Jesus indicated that whenever two or three people get together focused on him, they would experience the vitality of church life." (<http://www.lifestream.org/LSBL.May01.html>)

It was after reading this that I noticed that Psalm 84 was all about "they": **As they** pass through the Valley of Baca, **they** make it a place of springs... **they** go from strength to strength.

I also learned that the Latin origin of our word "religion" comes from a term that means "binding together", in the same sense discussed in Ecclesiastes 4:12... *"a cord of three strands is not quickly broken."*

So how can we go from "strength to strength"?... As a fellowship, a united community who supports each other through crisis and through stress!

But to do that we need to actually **know** one another. So tell me about your church: Is it only a well-planned performance, or do you know the stories behind the faces of your congregation? Is it a religion of perpetual ritual, or a community truly bound together in support and unity? Anonymous souls? Faces in cabs? Or a family of believers who in 'valleys of weeping' provides an oasis of refreshment and blessing for its members? Do tell me...

*E-Worship 4:23* is a product of the Music and Gospel Arts section of Corps Ministries The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory  
2 Overlea Blvd. Toronto Ontario, M4H 1P4  
Phone: 416-422-6108 Fax: 416-422-6109  
E-mail: [Kim\\_Garreffa@can.salvationarmy.org](mailto:Kim_Garreffa@can.salvationarmy.org)

