

News Story Summary

Last week marked the 141st anniversary of the Battle of Little Big Horn, where Colonel George Armstrong Custer died. Every summer the battle that took place along Montana's Little Big Horn River on June 25, 1876 is re-enacted. Park Ranger Steve Adelson describes the battle that lasted a little more than an hour as a terrifying cauldron of fear and violence. Markers have been placed where Custer and others died during that battle. "This place talks to you, and you don't have to strain to hear it," Ranger Adelson said. "It is a spiritual place."

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase "Custer's Last Stand.")

Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea, ask: *How would you define the word "spiritual"?* Write answers on a board. Read the news story summary about the Battle of Little Big Horn annual re-enactment. Ask: *What do you think draws people to visit the site of and watch this re-enactment? If spiritual is defined as we have indicated, would you say there was something spiritual about this event? Explain.* Explain that every year, hundreds of people attend the re-enactment. It becomes a worship-like experience for them.

Psalm 84 captures the essence of worship, which is not just a religious event, but is centered around a true and living God. Though God is continually with us in everyday life, we can find joy in His presence when we worship.

Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge ideas, say: *The psalmist expressed joy because he was in the presence of God. For him, worship in the temple was a privilege that gave him overwhelming happiness.* Remind group members of the news story summary, emphasizing the ranger's comments. Explain that being present at the re-enactment causes the type of response given by the ranger. Ask: *How does our presence in a worship experience give us joy? What can we do to increase our joy through worship?* Challenge group members to focus on the presence of God as they worship today and every time they worship. Encourage them to relish the joy the experience brings.