

Psalms 42-43 Keeping Your Soul

Key Scriptures:

Ps. 42:1 As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. ² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? ³ My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?" ⁴ These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival.

⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation

⁶ and my God. My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar. ⁷ Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me. ⁸ By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

⁹ I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

¹⁰ As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

¹¹ Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Psalms 43:1 Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people, from the deceitful and unjust man deliver me!

² For you are the God in whom I take refuge; why have you rejected me? Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? ³ Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling! ⁴ Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God. ⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Key Point: To be resilient through the trials of life, we must train our soul to both long after and be confident in God as our refuge and our very life

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- What is something that recharges your soul when you are feeling spiritually dry?

Reflect, Think, & Share: Read through the key scriptures and share any observations or questions with the group.

- What does the initial setting of the deer in v. 1 tell us about the Psalmist and his situation?
- Throughout the psalm, what are the negative experiences and feelings he is going through in contrast with times he has a hopeful attitude?
- What do you think it means to "hope in God" when your circumstances haven't changed? How is that different from simply waiting for things to get better?
- The psalmist misses corporate worship deeply. How has being away from Christian community affected you in the past, if at all? What does that say about your affections?
- What are the names for God in this psalm? What do the Psalmists names for God tell us about his walk with God and how he feels?
- Have you ever experienced a spiritual "dry season" like the one described in this psalm? What helped you through it—or what didn't?
- As in many of our songs today, the chorus or refrain is often repeated because it is the most important part of the song to remember. What do you feel is important and that you need to remember in the refrain? (v. 42:5, 11, & 43:5)
- In what ways do the refrain (v. 42:5, 11, & 43:5) as well as Psalm 103:1-2, and 116:7-6, speak of how we should be instructing our souls?
- How does the Psalmist's honest confrontation with his feelings encourage us to be honest with ours, especially when it comes to our faith journey?
- What steps can you take to keep your faith strong when you feel overwhelmed by the "deep waters" of life?

Start doing: The psalmist talks to his soul instead of listening to it. What might that look like practically in your life this week?

Prayer Requests. Take some time to pray together. Use the key scriptures as a guide in praying the scriptures back to God.

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