

**Welcome to the  
Common Ground Café!**



**Sunday, January 21, 2024**

**Looking Up When You're Down  
A Study of Psalms 42-43**

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We know something about drought conditions in central Texas. How does drought affect our area? (example: It depresses lakefront home values. Now name a few more)

What measures do cities and residents take to deal with drought?

In Psalms 42-43, the poet fights discouragement. He begins with an image of a desperate need for water. How is depression like walking through a waterless wilderness?

Enlist 4 people to read this poem aloud. Notice that "Person 2" has 3 different verses to read:

Person 1: Read Psalm 42:1-4

**Person 2:** Read Psalm 42:5

Person 3: Read Psalm 42:6-10

**Person 2:** Read Psalm 42:11

Person 4: Read Psalm 43:1-4

**Person 2:** Read Psalm 43:5

Notice how the verses **Person 2** read are exactly the same. These 3 verses end 3 stanzas. In music lyrics, this is called a "refrain."

- ❖ Pastor Tom said there are *two* meanings for the English word "refrain." What are they? (Use your smartphone if you need to!)
- ❖ In 42:5, 42:11, and 43:5 what does the poet repeatedly *refrain* himself from doing?

In his book, *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cure*, Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote: "Have you not realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself...? You have to preach to yourself, question yourself. You must turn on yourself, upbraid yourself, condemn yourself, exhort yourself, and say to yourself: 'Hope in God!'"

Is this a realistic way to address grief and depression? Why or why not?

Since this poem can be divided into 3 stanzas, let's study it that way.

**Stanza 1: Psalm 42:1-5 (Just have your Bible open to them; no need to read them again)**

How would you describe his state in 42:1-4?

Why would the poet miss going to "the house of God"? In other words, what benefit did it bring him? What is "the house of God" for us today? (Hint: Read 1 Peter 2:5.) What benefit does it bring you to be in "the house of God"?

This man was suffering, but more than that he was discouraged. What would you say the difference is between 'suffering' and 'discouragement'?

What does he say to himself in 42:5 to interrupt his self-pity?

**Stanza 2: Psalm 42:6-11 (Just have your Bible open to them; no need to read them again)**

In the first stanza, the poet uses the image of water (42:1), and in the second stanza, he also uses the image of water (42:7). What's the water crisis in 42:1, and what's the water crisis in 42:7?

What is the question asked in 42:3, 42:9 and 42:10? Although the poet asks the same question that his enemies ask of him, how is the question different when asked while praying than when asked while mocking?

What does he say to himself in 42:11 to interrupt his self-pity?

**Stanza 3: Psalm 43:1-5 (Just have your Bible open to them; no need to read them again)**

Not all of what the psalmist says is about himself and his past. He also focuses on God. What aspects of God's character does he acknowledge (42:5, 8-9; 43:2, 3)? Back in the second stanza, in 42:6 David says: "My soul is downcast within me; therefore I remember you." What are some 'God-things' you can remember in times of discouragement?

Once again, what does he say to himself in 43:5 to interrupt his self-pity?

Close with praise reports and prayer requests