

Intro

- ~ Discouragement knows no boundaries. Even Spurgeon battles with discouragement and depression
- ~ Spurgeon "Fits of depression come over the most of us. Usually cheerful as we may be, we must at intervals be cast down. The strong are not always vigorous, the wise not always ready, the brave not always courageous, and the joyous not always happy."
- ~ Causes of discouragement – relationships, finances, bad choices, failure, sin, job, health, family adversity
- ~ This is a Psalm for the discouraged and troubled
- ~ The Psalmist gives us instruction for discouragement
- ~ Maschil, or a Psalm giving instruction, of the sons, etc. Or, "An instructive Psalm. It is generally supposed to have been written by David when driven from Jerusalem and beyond Jordan, by Absalom's rebellion.

Outline

- 1 Discouragement's Part (What he has working against the Psalmist despite his thirst for God?)
- 2 God's Part (What he has working for the Psalmist?)
- 3 Our Part (The answers for discouragement)

Text

V1,2 Psalmist pants after God and is thirsty for God (the living God)

- The Psalmist's thirst for God is given in the analogy of a deer
- panteth — desires in a state of exhaustion. (JFB), to have a keen, consuming desire for
- Pants (arag = to long for). The Psalmist gives us the word picture of a deer that's being hunted by the dogs and is overcome with thirst from the chase and when he comes to the water plunges in.
- The Psalmist thirsted for God despite
 - 1 Discouraged (Ps 42:5,6,11; Ps 43:2,5)
 - 2 Conditions that caused his flight from his place of worship
 - 3 Enemies (Ps 42:3,9,10; Ps 43:1)
 - Enemy mocks (v3)
 - Enemy oppresses (v9)
 - Enemy reproaches (v10)
- There's a tendency to lose our enthusiasm for God because of discouragement and enemies
- We have our three enemies (world, flesh & devil) trying to steal our thirst for God
- We've seen many Christians over the years lose their thirst and desire for God
- There's many competing voices in our life
- The Psalmist thirst for God was
 - *Despite* discouragement and enemies
 - *Aided* by hope and praise
 - *Because* God is the health and help of his countenance

Discouragement's Part (What he has working against the Psalmist despite his thirst for God?)

V3 – his tears have been all he's had for a meal because his accusers say God has abandoned him

V5 - As though he were two men, the Psalmist talks to himself. His faith reasons with his fears, his hope argues with his sorrows.

V5 – his soul is cast down/why and I depressed? –

- Cast down – to sink down, to bow down, to bend low
- He asked himself this question which shows he knew something wasn't right in his soul
- It's beneficial to ask ourselves this question and ask God what is wrong in our heart
- Contrast this with how Elijah when he was depressed didn't ask himself this question

V5 – he's disquieted - to murmur, growl, roar, cry aloud, mourn, rage, sound, make noise, tumult, be clamorous, be disquieted, be loud, be moved, be troubled, be in an uproar

V6 – his soul is cast down again/why am I depressed?

V7 – overcome by deep waves of water –

- The language used here would seem to imply that the psalmist was near some floods of water, some rapid river or water-fall, which constituted an appropriate illustration of the waves of sorrow that were rolling over his soul.

God's Part (What he has working for the Psalmist?)

V5,11 – The help of God's countenance -- God's face seeing us and noticing us in what were going through

V8 – God's goodness

- Despite what was working against the Psalmist he has God's goodness for his whole day
 1. will command lovingkindness (daytime)
 2. will give song in the night (night time)
 3. All day long there's something from God for the Psalmist all day long

v9 – A faith confession that God is the rock

Yet, the Psalmists will say God is his rock even though he feels like God has forsaken him

- Though situations change continually God is a rock and doesn't change
- Had God forsaken the Psalmist? No but because the Psalmist had faced enemies, discouragement, accusation and waters overflowing his soul
- We know God mentally that God hasn't forsaken us but we must tell our soul, heart, mind, emotions and will that God hasn't forsaken us
- The one time when God forsook man was when the Father forsook Jesus on the cross
- Job might have felt forsaken but God hadn't forsaken him. The Lord was present
- Joseph might have felt forsaken yet the Lord was with him

V10 – The enemies reproach made the Psalmist feel as if a sword was driven into his bones. Their accusation was where is your God? He's forsaken you.

V11 – This verse is the same as v5 except the Psalmist here says God is the health of my countenance and my God

Thirsting for God in Scripture

- *Psa_63:1-4 A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. 3 Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. 4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.*
 - The words that David uses to describe his desire for God
 - Early will I seek thee – when he would seek God
 - My soul thirsts for thee – All his being
 - My flesh longs for thee – with his body he wants to seek God in a dry and thirsty land
 - He wanted to see God's glory and power in his desperate situation. He wanted to see God and experience God just as he did when he was able to to the sanctuary of the Lord
- *Psa_84:2 To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm for the sons of Korah. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! 2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. 3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God. 4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.*
 - He longed to see God in the court of the Lord
 - His soul longed and even fainted for the court of the Lord
 - His heart and flesh cry out for the living God
 - There's blessing to be found in the house of God

- *Psa_143:6-7 I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah. 7 Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. 8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee. 9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me. 10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.*
 - The Psalmist stretched his hands unto God
 - His soul thirsts for God just as a thirsty dry land longs for water
- *Isa_26:8-9 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. 9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*
- *Matt 5:6 Blessed are they which hunger and thirst for righteousness*
 - If we hunger and thirst for God's righteousness we will be filled and satisfied
- *Jn 7:37,38 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"*
- *Rev 22:17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.*

Conclusion

- ~ We must be discerning of ourselves and talk to the Lord about ourselves
- ~ God will diagnose us with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God
- ~ After we've listened to the Lord's diagnosis we must do something about what the Lord tells us
- ~ Don't listen to the voice of discouragement but listen to God speak through his word
- ~ We must be careful in discouragement to speak to ourself instead of listening to ourselves unless we were speaking to ourselves the Word of God
- ~ Through the word we find "Our Part"

Martyn Lloyd-Jones, in his best-selling book *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cure* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), wrote:

- ~ The ultimate cause of all spiritual depression is unbelief. For if it were not for unbelief, even the devil could do nothing.
- ~ It is because we listen to the devil instead of listening to God that we go down before him and fall before his attacks. That is why this psalmist keeps saying to himself: "Hope thou in God for I shall yet praise Him...." He reminds himself of God.
- ~ Why? Because he was depressed and had forgotten God, so that his faith and his belief in God and in God's power, and in his relationship to God, were not what they ought to be.... Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?...
- ~ Now this man's treatment was this: instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says: "Self, listen for a moment, I will speak to you." (Holman Old Testament Commentary – Psalms 1-75.)

When a believer finds himself in difficult times, the solution is always the same—hope in God. This is the wise counsel of the psalmist. When faced with demanding circumstances, we should put our confidence and trust in the Lord. This may sound too simplistic in man's eyes, but it is, nevertheless, heaven's solution. But unfortunately, when confronted with encroaching trials, we are tempted to panic and turn to man-made solutions. These can never release us from pain. Some people turn to their work or to a hobby to get them through. Others turn to a new purchase or a new pursuit to numb their sorrow. Still others turn to the bottle or to drugs to ease their pain, only to multiply their agony all the more. Lasting peace and genuine contentment are found in only one place: Hope in God. We must discipline our minds and direct our wills to hope in God when tempted to dissolve into a pool of despair. Hope in God. Nothing else and no one else can pull us out of the depressing moments of life. (Holman Old Testament Commentary – Psalms 1-75.)

Our Part (The answers for discouragement)

- 1 Hope in God – a confidence in God for our future (Ps 42:5,11; Ps 43:5)
- 2 Praise for God – Worship and praise for God in our circumstances/Thankfulness & love for God (Ps 42:5,11; 43:5)
- 3 Love for the House of God – A place to worship God with others

In this idea of thirsting for God there is the idea of
1 humility – Because we know we're nothing without God
2 dependence - because we know we're not sufficient in and of ourselves

- Answer to these things
 - 1 Hope (Ps 42:5,11; Ps 43:5)
 - 2 Praise (Ps 42:5,11; Ps 43:5)
- Why? Because of God's countenance (face). His countenance is his face and His countenance is:
 - Countenance – God's face seeing us and noticing us in what we're going through
 - 1 Help
 - 2 Health
- What God will do (v8) he'll command a blessing

God's role in the discouragement

V5 the help (aid, welfare) of his countenance

V8 lovingkindness in daytime

V8 a song in the night

V9 God is his rock

V11 health (aid, welfare) of his countenance

V11 He's the Psalmist's God