

Psalm 42:title–5

To the Chief Musician. A Contemplation of the Sons of Korah.

¹ As the deer pants for the water brooks, 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 continually say to me, “Where is your God?”

⁴ When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.

⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance.

Craving God **Psalm 42:1-5**

INTRO:

Have you ever had a craving? You know what I am talking about, you are in bed and you are reading a good book and suddenly, the words on the page dissolve before your eyes and reform themselves into the form of a pizza with all the toppings you love. Your stomach growls and your mouth salivates. You go to the refrigerator hoping to tame the roaring beast within you with something near at hand. You consider the leftover goulash you had for supper and your stomach turns up its nose. It must be a pizza, nothing less and nothing else.

In **Psalm 42**, the Psalmist has a craving. His craving is not for food. This is a craving of the heart and not of the stomach. He yearns for God and God alone – a desire to be in the presence of the Living God. While I think most of us can identify with the craving I described above, I am not sure all that many of us know what it is to long for God. The Psalmist describes his thirst in in picturesque language. The danger can be that we are so mesmerized by the vividness of the picture, we miss the intensity of the Psalmists need for the presence of God.

I. The Fact of His Desire (v. 1-2)

II. The Source of His Yearning (v. 3-5)

I. The Fact of His Desire (v. 1-2)

A. Do we really desire God? In our text, the Psalmist describes a desire for God we can almost taste.

“As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God.”

1. This Psalmist is not the only one who desired to be in the presence of God. In **Psalm 63**, David also sung of his great longing to be in the presence of the eternal God.

“O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.”

As with our Psalmist, David uses the language of thirst to describe his great need for God. Have you ever been thirsty? Can we honestly say our desire for God is on the level of a deep body thirst? From what these Psalmists told us, it should be at that level.

2. In **Psalm 84:1-2** David again pled for God’s presence in his life.

“How lovely are Your dwelling places, O LORD of hosts. My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.”

Do we feel that way when we come into church? We love the fellowship of God's people. However, do we love fellowship with the living God even more? David wrote, ***“My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.”***

B. Do we recognize desiring God is something only those who really know Him can do? Only those, who know the Lord Jesus as Savior, really seek Him today.

Romans 3:10-12 ***“As it is written: ‘There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.’”***

The very fact the Psalmist had this desire, tells us that he entered into a saving relationship with God through faith.

C. The Psalmist's desire is very focused.

(v.2) ***“My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?”***

God and God alone can fill the hole and satisfy the deep thirst of the psalmist’s soul. No one and nothing else will suffice. Augustine wrote, ***“The soul is restless until it finds its rest in God.”***

1. Some people desire many things in life. Some thirst after treasures, some power or influence. The Psalmist wanted one thing and one alone. He wanted to be in the presence of God.

2. I am reminded of what another Psalmist wrote after he had stumbled by looking at the apparent prosperity of the wicked. He concluded his song by saying,

Psalm 73:25 *“Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.”*

This is similar to the song isn't it?

“I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold/ I'd rather be His than have riches untold/ I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land/ I'd rather be led by His nail pierced hand/ than to be the King of a vast domain/ or be held in sin's dread sway/ I'd rather have Jesus than anything/ this world affords today”

Do we really mean it when we sing these words? I hope we do.

II. The Source of His Yearning (v. 3-5)

“My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, ‘Where is your God?’ When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast. Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance.”

A. Ok, we want to desire to be with God like the Psalmist did. How do we learn to have a desire like He had?

B. One method God uses to bring us to the place of wanting to be with Him is sending trouble into our lives. Look at **verse 3**.

“My tears have been my food day and night.”

Another verse in another Psalm sums this up.

Psalm 23:4 *“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.”*

C. Another thing God uses to produce a passion for Him is to bring to mind the way it used to be in our relationship with Him. Here is **verse 4** from the NASB.

“These things I remember, and I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go along with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God, with the voice of joy and thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival.”

1. The public worship of the people of God was such a joy to this man because he remembered the relationship he had personally with the Lord of Glory. External worship, acceptable to God, is always the expression of a heart delighting in God.

2. The Psalmist pioneered the advice the Lord Jesus gave to the Ephesian church in **Revelation 2:5**

“Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works.”

When we remember the way it used to be, then we are motivated to repent and to return to that blessed relationship with the Lord.

D. Out of this remembering and desiring to return, the Psalmist found the strength to talk to his own heart.

v.5 ***“Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance.”***

v. He wrote in effect, *“Listen heart. God will yet deliver me. I will yet praise Him.”* I am convinced we need to learn to talk to our hearts. Jesus taught us to do this in **John 14:1**.

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.”

Later in the same chapter, **John 14:27**, He said, ***“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”***

None other than our Lord Jesus told us it is our responsibility to not let our hearts be troubled or afraid. We do this by reasoning with our hearts, reminding ourselves of what is really true.

2. Our Psalmist spoke to his heart in this Psalm.

v.5 ***“Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him For the help of His countenance.”***

The Psalmist had this confidence because he believed that God would answer his prayer and God would be found of him.

Do we thirst for God like this Psalmist did?

If not, it may be a storm is just on the horizon to drive us to Him.

If not, it may be we have no memories of sweet fellowship with Him to wet our appetite for our return to Him.

If not, we may not really know Him.

If this lights a fire in your heart and you find yourself thirsty for God, do what the Psalmist did.

❶ Remember from whence you are fallen, repent, and return to the first works.

❷ Pray and seek His face in His Word and worship Him in the services of the church.

God said to Jeremiah,

Jeremiah 29:13-14 *“And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the LORD.”*

Hymn #206 *There is A Redeemer*