

LIFE GROUP APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Psalms Series

These questions are for the **February 27, 2022**, sermon, "Spiritual Depression, Part 2." Please read the sermon passage (Psalm 43) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

AS WE CONSIDER THE NATURE OF THE DOWNCAST SOUL, NOTE . . .

1. The appeal that is being made. (1-2)
 - a. The downcast soul is often focused on past and present injustices.
 - i. "Vindication" and "defense" are desired. Our own "cases" are pled.
 - ii. We feel opposed by foes, and as if they have the home field advantage.
 - iii. Our downcast 'selective memory' focuses on the unjust, the negative.
 - b. The downcast soul must guard against downward spirals.
 - i. God does not reject his own, though we may feel distant.
 - ii. God does not inflict his own, though an enemy oppresses us for a season.
2. The guidance that is being sought. (3-4)
 - a. God's light (illumination) and truth (sure guidance) will show us how to move forward.
 - b. Great oppression and disappointments are always temporary.
 - c. Excellent days of rejoicing in safety with God's people in God's presence will return.
3. The hope that is being prescribed. (5)
 - a. Self-counsel according to God's Word restores both confidence and hope.
 - i. We stop questioning God and start questioning ourselves.
 - ii. Do we really believe what God has shown us? Do we believe God?
 - b. The future is characterized by God's perfect faithfulness and salvation.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: Is there a current situation in which you feel as though some enemy or unjust person has been successfully accusing you? Does that enemy seem to have the Lord's ear? Does that enemy persist unhindered? How does your "selective memory" about this situation always seem to focus on the negative and the losses?
2. Based on #1, above: The psalmist here appeals to God for "vindication" (to be declared guiltless and the trial to end) and "defense." This is a lament, a prayer. How has your unjust situation impacted your outlook, and especially, your prayer life?
3. Based on #2, above: When we ask for guidance, we are asking for specific resources which will aid in moving forward. Do you want to move forward? Are you willing to look to God alone for insight about how to move forward? What sacrifices might you need to make to do this?
4. Based on #3, above: Self-counsel is re-stating God's Word and taking it to heart. This can be very difficult when your soul is downcast. It involves ceasing our insistence that we are in the right and ceasing our insistence that God is guilty of treating us unfairly. What are some resources which might prepare your heart for self-counsel?
5. Based on #3, above: Hope is all about the immediate present and the future. Do you hope in God for your own deliverance (salvation)? How does this affect your downcast soul?