**The Quiet Hour #10**

Spiritual ICU

**Psalms 42-43**

 Spiritually speaking, when a Christian is no longer **thriving**, and is only **surviving**, it’s time for some **reviving**. A care plan must be developed that will refresh, renew, and restore the reality of God’s presence in the life of that person. The physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of the individual must be carefully evaluated before that reviving work of God can occur. With that thought in mind, take a moment to honestly answer the following questions. In the last six months:

* Have you been **disappointed**?
* Have you been **doubtful**?
* Have you been **disillusioned**?
* Have you been **defeated**?
* Have you been **discouraged**?
* Have you been **distressed**?
* Have you been **despairing**?
* Have you been **depressed**?

Now look back at every question to which you answered “yes”, and ask yourself “why?” Go ahead. Be specific. When, where, what, who? If you are honest, you will probably end up admitting to yourself that in some way or another, life has not been easy. Maybe it has just been hard.

 Psalms 42 and 43 were written by an individual who would have answered “yes” more than once. This individual was dealing with a variety of physical and emotions distresses which only complicated the spiritual distress he was experiencing.

* Begin by reading through both Psalms.
* Take a pen and circle the word *“why”* each time it appears. (Hint – you will find it 10 times, usually in pairs of two)

It is obvious that the writer is questioning some undesirable circumstances that occurred in his life. You might say that he was a “Why’s Guy” who was struggling to grasp and process all that life had brought his way.

 However in these chapters, along with the questions that haunted him, the Psalmist also records the answers that helped him. Now let’s go back through these chapters, and identify the spiritual care plan that is provided from the Word of God. There are seven key words that are found throughout the chapter that will guide us.

**1**

1. *“My soul \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for God, for the living God…”* (42:1-2)

 In this psalm, the author expressed a great longing and desire for God. Though he had sought fulfillment in other things, he concluded that his soul could not be satisfied apart from the reality of God in his life. He compared his thirst to that of deer being chased by a hunter.

* How would you describe your desire for God at this time? Would you say that you have intense passion for God?
* Compare: Psalm 63:1-2

2. *“When I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ these things…”* (42:4)

 In this verse, the psalmist took “a trip down memory lane”. His recollection included the following details:

* Who he went with - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Where they went - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* When they went - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* What they did - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Can you recall an occasion when you felt like you were truly close to God? Do you desire to experience that again?
* Compare: Psalm 91:1

3. *“…I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ out my soul in me…”* (42:4)

 The writer continues by taking time to verbalize the personal trauma he was experiencing. This was not just a glorified “gripe session” or “pity party,” but an honest confession of the realities of life that were troubling him. It did him well, and it will do you well, to simply lay out before God everything that you are experiencing.

* What is the greatest challenge, burden, or struggle you have dealt with in the last year? Talk it out with God in prayer.
* Compare: Psalm 55:22

4. *“…\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ thou in God…”* (42:5, 11, 43:5)

 The word hope literally means “to wait or to be patient.” It communicates the need to wait “for” God to work, and the wait “upon” God to work. It implies anticipation and confidence that ultimately God is going to accomplish something significant both in and through the life of the one who is seeking Him.

**2**

* At this moment, what would you like for God to do for you? Be specific and sincere as you express your desire to the Lord.
* Compare: Psalm 31:24

**Read it or Sing it**

My hope is in the Lord, who gave Himself for me,

And paid the price of all my sin at Calvary,

For me He died, for me He lives,

And everlasting life and light He freely gives.

**-Norman J. Clayton**

5. *“…for I shall yet \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Him for the help of His countenance.”* (42:5, 11, 43:5)

 Praise has a unique way of moving an individual from self-centeredness to God-centeredness. Praise allows the heart and mind to focus on the person and the character of who God is. Very few things will do more to change your outlook and adjust your attitude about life, than spending time thanking God for who He is and what He is like.

* Prepare a list of 5 things that you are thankful for about God. Take time to read your list to God in a spirit of gratitude.

 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Compare: Psalm 67:3, 5

6. *“…and my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ unto the God of my life.”* (42:8)

 Communication with God includes taking those things that we are thinking and feeling, and putting them into words. It means that before God, requests are offered based upon the needs that are experienced. E.M. Bounds said that “…prayer is the awareness of my need of God, and my asking God to meet that need.”

* Complete this statement: “God I need \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”

* Compare: Psalm 55:1-2

**3**

7. *“Then will I* \_\_\_\_\_ *unto the altar of God…”* (43:4)

 The psalmist understood the therapeutic value of regular appointments with God. He needed a daily time and place where he could meet with God. He wanted to be in the *“holy hill”* and the *“tabernacles”* of God (43:3), spending time at *“the altar of God.* Nearness to God was his desired pursuit.

* Evaluate your own daily time with God. Are you satisfied with it? Is God pleased with it? What do you need to improve? What changes do you need to make? In conversation style, talk to God about this important part of your life.
* Compare: Psalm 27:4, 8

 Charles Spurgeon described these Psalms this way: *“…it is the voice of a spiritual believer, under depressions, longing for the renewal of the divine presence, struggling with doubts and fears, but yet holding his ground by faith in the living God”* (**The Treasury of David).** Though struggling physically, mentally, emotionally, and even spiritually, he focused on God as the ultimate source of the health, the help, and the hope that he needed. In times of desperation, it is typical to desire that God would work through us to change the circumstances. However, God in His providence desires to work through the circumstances to change us. Though God may not remove our trouble, He will give us Himself. It is the reality of that experience that moves us from “survival mode” to “revival mode” in life.

When you come to the place where God is all you have,

You find that God is all you need.

However, God never will be all you need,

Until He is all you have.

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