

SHIFT

Moving Back to Joyful Living!

Part 4 – Discouragement, Despair, Depression – Psalm 42

- Everything about our faith is directly linked to JOYFUL LIVING
 - Fear, Anger, Grief, Discouragement all KIDNAP us away from joyful living
- Three Steps to SHIFT my heart back to joyful living
 - 1) PURIFY my Heart – acknowledging where I'm at right now
 - Admit where my heart is currently at
 - ▶ The REALITY of the situation
 - ▶ Am I giving this issue an IMPROPER place
 - Confess that where I'm at is not a good place
 - ▶ My heart is carried away into a SINFUL response
 - ▶ My lack of TRUST in God's goodness and purpose
 - 2) Adjust my PERSPECTIVE – put the situation into its rightful place and size
 - This life is TEMPORARY
 - ▶ We are PILGRIMS here, passing through
 - ▶ Any loss, pain, position is MOMENTARY 2 Cor. 4:17
 - God is GREATER than your situation
 - ▶ He is in **control** and constantly monitors my LEVELS 1 Cor. 10:13
 - ▶ His purpose: TRANSFORMATION, not just **resolution**
 - 3) PRACTICE Joyfulness
 - PURSUE His peace – spending personal time with Him via the **Word** and **prayer**
 - Express PRAISE – open the gate to **joyfulness**
 - Connect with PEOPLE – gather with spiritually healthy people for **praise** and **prayer**

Auburn Grace Community Church – January 31st, 2021

Life Group Questions – January 31, 2021

Psalm 42:5 'Why are you in despair, my soul? And why are you restless within me? Wait for God, for I will again praise Him for the help of His presence, my God.'

PURIFY

1. Describe a time when you were in a spiritually "dry" place, when God seemed distant. What does the absence of God feel like to you? Has God called you and gifted you for a specific purpose that you were/are not able to do? What will it take to satisfy this unfulfillment?
2. Though we know that faith is our foundation for joyful living, we may still allow fear, anger, grief and disappointment to steal or hijack our joy. What situations cause your soul to be cast down? How do you self-diagnose your level of discouragement? What remedies have you applied?

PERSPECTIVE (read Psalm 42)

1. In what verse do you observe a heart shift? Why is the psalmist not waiting for a change in his circumstances (resolution)? What is he going to do instead? What happens to him as a result? (see Acts 16)
2. Re-read vv. 9-10. What are the psalmist's enemies doing that causes him to doubt God's care? Are his doubts valid? Are the questions in these verses sinful or God-honoring? Where do we get a glimpse of the psalmist's relationship with God? How does this apply to your life?
3. Explain how a believer can experience "hope" and "sorrow" simultaneously without his/her soul being cast down.

PRACTICE

1. How do you meet with God? What happens in your soul when you meet with Him?
2. What would you say to a believer who says they are perpetually "quenched" or satisfied in their relationship with God? What would you say to them if they said, "If you are depressed your faith must be weak."?
3. What is your attitude about corporate worship at AGCC? Is your soul's countenance downcast because you can only "participate" through livestream services or because live worship is not what it used to be? Are you waiting for the Covid season to end so that you can be restored to vibrant praise and worship with our church family? What are some things you can do to praise and worship God right now?
4. How can you tell when others are struggling with their faith? What are the evidences? What can you do for them when they are spiritually discouraged?

PRAISE and PRAYER

Thank God that He remembers you. Thank Him for His faithfulness and providence. Praise Him that even when He is unseen, especially in difficult circumstances, He is there to guide you. Praise God that He is El Roi, the God who sees us and our struggles. Ask God to "see" you today, to remind you of His good deeds from the past so that you can have Hope in the future.