

<b>Book</b>	Psalms – Study 10
<b>Topic</b>	Praying Our Depression
<b>Reference</b>	Psalms 42 & 43
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<b>Speaker</b>	Dr. Peter Ng

Originally these both actually were part of the same psalm in some manuscripts and even in some ancient Jewish commentaries they are the same. If you look at Psalm 42 and Psalm 43, you can see the repetition

Psalms 42:5-6 (ESV) Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Psalms 42:11 (ESV) Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Psalms 43:5 (ESV) Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

It is precisely the same thing. So, it's very natural to take the two psalms together as one. So, we are going to talk about depression today and I think there is a classic book written by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in the UK and he writes,

*"If you never had any trouble in your Christian life I should very much doubt whether you are a Christian at all. From the moment we become Christians we become the special objects of the attention of the devil."*

So, it is very rare that you go through life without any depression. You don't even have to be a Christian to get depression. In fact, one in three Malaysians above the age of 16 will experience depression at some stage during the life. There are about 121 million people all over the world who struggle with depression. By the year 2020, mental illness will be the second most important health problem in this country. To handle that problem, did you know there are only about 350 psychiatrists in this country, which is a ratio of one psychiatrist to 200,000 or more. This is a significant huge problem in our society and it hits everybody. I remember first encountering this in my high school days.

Depression actually happens quite often among teenagers, even today and the threshold to suicide is so close. Famous people like Winston Churchill often describe his depression as the black dog that would actually follow him. This is what he writes,

*I don't like standing near the edge of a platform when an express train is passing through. I like to stand back and, if possible, get a pillar between me and the train. I don't like to stand by the side of a ship and look down into the water. A second's action would end everything. A few drops of desperation.*

So, when you are depressed, you don't want to stand near a train. When you are depressed you don't want to stand near a balcony because a little bit of desperation and there you go. So, he describes this, and some writers have written that, sometimes it is not necessarily a bad thing.

*Mania enhances creativity and resilience to trauma, while depression increases realism and empathy. Churchill was a creative, resilient and realistic leader, and empathic to Jews at a time of common British anti-Semitism*

**Leaders with Depression:** Abraham Lincoln, Mahatami Gandhi, Martin Luther King, each struggled with their depression and turned that depression into some sort of realism that help them cope with life and also lead. So, it is not necessarily a bad thing, but actually it is very common.

## THE DESCRIPTION OF SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION:

Let's look at the description in this psalm.

**Psalms 42:1-2 (ESV)** As a deer pants for flowing streams, 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 say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

Here you can actually see that there is a metaphor. As the deer pants for the streams, my soul pants for you O God. It is continuous, it is complaining of loss of God's presence. It is like a drought in the middle of a desert and the most important thing in the desert is water. Without that water your very life and existence is in peril. So therefore, the psalmist regards the presence of God as life giving, as essential as water itself. So therefore, he is suffering on a drought. He is suffering from the loss of the presence of God. So spiritual depression comes in when you feel as if God is not there anymore. He is not real to you anymore. He is just, may be a figment of your imagination. Because everything is coming onto you and you just can't feel him there. This is a testimony from one of the Christian theologian. She actually writes,

*Nausea, confusion, and exhaustion plagued me. Smiling was impossible in the face of intolerable sadness. Pulling myself out of bed each morning was torment. The thought of continuing in such blackness for one more hour, let alone one more week, was unbearable as I struggled to "keep it together." I dreaded social situations. The sound of conversation and laughter among my coworkers became foreign to me,*

*until I couldn't recall what either one felt like. I knew I'd laughed and conversed thousands of times, but now it seemed ludicrous and utterly impossible.*

*Worst of all, although God hadn't left me, the awareness of His presence that I'd always enjoyed had vanished. One evening, I mentioned my struggle to someone who was spiritually sound and whose opinion I valued. "I can't feel God," I said. "This sadness is devouring me, and I can't find Him, no matter what I do."*

This is the depths of spiritual depression. How a person describes it

## FEELING LOW AND CONFUSED

**Psalms 42:5-7 (ESV) Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?**

So you feel low, you feel sad, you feel confused, you feel overwhelmed. If you look at verse 7

**7 Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.**

So, the psalmist is very picturesque in the description of his depression. If you stand by the waterfall, the loudest thing you will hear is the sound of the water. You can't speak. The sound of the water is so loud, it drowns up everything else. So, what he is describing in a depression, the sound of your pain and your anxiety and your depression, all the bad stuff swirling down in your brain is the only thing you will hear. You will not hear anything else. Just like deep reminds him the depths of the sorrow and troubles that overwhelm him. So, these are all descriptions of how overwhelming the problem is. Churchill describes,

*Churchill was so paralysed by despair that he spent time in bed, had little energy, few interests, lost his appetite, couldn't concentrate. He was minimally functional – and this didn't just happen once or twice in the 1930s, but also in the 1920s and 1910s and earlier. These darker periods would last a few months, and then he'd come out of it and be his normal self.*

This is not uncommon

## FEELING ABANDONED BY GOD

**Psalms 42:8-10 (ESV) By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. 9 I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" 10 As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"**

So here God who is his rock, his stability, the very pillar of his life, the foundation of his life, suddenly he can't feel him. It is as if not only he can't feel him, you actually feel that God has forgotten you and because God has forgotten you, you go into mourning as if somebody has died. It is as if God in your life died and you started mourning.

## FEELING REJECTED BY GOD

Psalms 43:1-2 (ESV) Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people, from the deceitful and unjust man deliver me! 2 For you are the God in whom I take refuge; why have you rejected me? Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

Not only that, he says, for you are the God in whom I take refuge why have you rejected me? Not only abandon, rejected. You feel as if something that you did, may be a sin, may be some lapse in your morality at some stage, something that should have done but you didn't do, you always pin it to some reason and because of that particular thing, God has rejected you. That's how you are going to feel. So, this is what happens when you have spiritual depression.

## THE CAUSES OF SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION

Psalms 42:1-4 (ESV) As a deer pants for flowing streams, 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? ...4 These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival.

Here he is saying, when shall I appear before God. Number 2, I use to remember, I use to go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God. Which means he is remembering a time where he used to go into worship. Now he is not. That means there are some disruption of community.

My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

So, there he is actually isolated. So actually, one of the causes of his depression is disruption of community. He is separated from his church, with the people of faith. He is in a strange environment. He is looking back to a time where he used to worship with the rest of his people.

## DEPRAVATION

3 My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

Which means he is not eating. When you are depressed, you don't eat, you have no appetite. If you find someone who is depressed and eating a lot then most probably he is not depressed. Physical depravation can also be a contributing factor in depression. Martyn Lloyd Jones writes,

*"Physical conditions play their part in all this. It is very difficult to draw the line between this and the previous cause because temperament seems to some degree to be controlled by physical conditions and there are certain people who constitutionally, almost in a physical sense, are prone to this condition. In other words, there are certain physical ailments which tend to promote depression"*

When you get flu, you tend to get depressed. There is data to show that influenza is associated with depression and you just feel it sucks, not only the fact that you are sneezing and your bones ache, you actually feel very-very low. So physical ailments can play a part in depression

## **DISILLUSIONMENT AS THE EVENTS OF LIFE**

Psalms 42:9-11 (ESV) I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

So he is under some pressure from the enemy

10 As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?" 11 Why are you cast down,

Psalms 43:1-2 (ESV) Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people, from the deceitful and unjust man deliver me! 2 For you are the God in whom I take refuge; why have you rejected me? Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

So, there are life events. Somebody is being treacherous, he is having a fight with somebody and he is being led down. So, this is another possibility. Rick Warren is a very famous pastor in the United States. He wrote the book Purpose Filled Life. He tells a very sad story because he has got a son called Matthew Warren who struggles with depression even as a child. Matthew Warren writes to his dad,

*"Dad, it's really obvious I'm not going to be healed of this mental illness. We've gone to the best doctors in the nation, I've taken the best medicine, got the best therapy,*

*we've had prayer, lawyers, intercessors, everything you can imagine and nothing has worked. Why can't I just die and go to heaven?"*

Rick Warren writes,

*The biggest one for me is, "Why didn't you answer the prayer I prayed every day for 27 years?" The prayer I prayed more than any other prayer went unanswered. But explanations never comfort. What you need in tragedy is not an explanation, you need the presence of God. Then you come to the stage of surrender. Surrender is when you say I'd rather live and walk with God and have my questions unanswered than have all my questions answered and not walk with God*

Here is a father who has prayed for his son for 27 years with the best of medical treatment, prayer and everything else and his prayers were not answered. His questions were not answered and one day they rushed to Matthew's house as he locked himself in the house and his wife and him were outside and they try to bang the door down and rescue their son and they heard a gunshot wound and Matthew Warren killed himself in 2016. In fact, he was interviewed by Piers Morgan on CNN and Piers Morgan is not a Christian and says, has this shaken your faith. Rick Warren said, No, it never did shake my faith but I doubted His wisdom.

There is a difference, you go into trouble with your parents, you never doubt that your parents are your parents, but you fight with your parents about their wisdom. If you are fighting against your father and mother, at any stage you will never doubt that they are your parents. They always love you, never let you go, but when you fight with them is what they want you to do or what you want to do is the wisdom. The same thing is with God. What Rick Warren is trying to tell us is that, I never did doubt he exists, and he loves me but I doubt his wisdom, because I think I am smarter than God. God why did you allow my son to suffer 27 years, why did you allow my son to take this gun and blow his brains off. That is what people will struggle with. For most Christians, they will not struggle with the existence of God or the love of God or the faithfulness to God but they will struggle with the wisdom of God. That's what we need to understand.

## HANDLING SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION

It is already obvious that we don't speak about depression in church a lot. Maybe once in a blue moon we will hear about it. If mental illness is going to be the second most important health problem in this country in two years from now, we have to take a step forward.

So, we are complex people. Some of us who believe just being moral, all you have to do is just pull yourself together if you are discouraged. Some people believe it is all physical, take drugs, take SSRI inhibitor, Prozac and you will be fine. Others believe, you just need to see a psychologist or psychiatrist, but in real life the biblical view of

man, we are moral, we are physical, we are psychological. Morally, we need the truth. Psychological, we need community. Physical, we need medicine and we need rest. They are all combined together, because the nature of humans is that we are actually complex. For example, we look at the story of Elijah and Jezebel and Ahab. Elijah had a big confrontation with the prophets of Baal. So, Elijah put up a sacrifice and ask the Lord who sent fire from heaven and burnt up the sacrifice and then the Baal people, priest 300 of them came and basically called the same fire and the fire consumed them rather than the sacrifice. Elijah won the big battle. Right after he won the battle, at the height of his spiritual success then

1 Kings 19:1-8 (ESV) Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." 3 Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

Can you imagine why would someone who has had a great spiritual victory, one word from this stupid woman and you capitulate, and you run away. Why?

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers."

After he ran away then he realized that he ran away, he is ashamed, loss of self-esteem. He shouldn't have run away. According to him he failed God. So, he has a forbidden sense of failure in his life. He was the great prophet, stood up, held the name of Jehovah, won the spiritual battle and now run away, he let God down, so therefore he can't live with himself.

5 And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat." 6 And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. 7 And the angel of the Lord came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." 8 And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

Here we actually have an angel of the Lord, which actually is interpreted as God himself. If devil would have visited Elijah, the devil would have said, Elijah you were supposed to be very good prophet isn't it, what kind of fellow are you. Now the devil will say that. The first thing that God do, give him food. Why? He doesn't give him a lecture or preach to him, doesn't condemn him, doesn't lift him up. Once Elijah has eaten up, then he goes on his way. Which tells you the importance of physical factors as not only a cause of spiritual depression, but it is also a way in which you heal your spiritual depression, because when you have your tears only for your food

every day, you are going to be malnourished and you will be more prone to depression. So here we can see very practical lesson in 1 Kings 19 that the important factor in spiritual depression is malnutrition and not eating and exhaustion. When you are exhausted you are very-very vulnerable. That's why one phone call from the Queen and you collapse. So therefore, we understand physical factors are important.

There are five things that happens in this psalm which Keller outlines that we could do to help mitigate spiritual depression. I am not asking you to do this alone. Sometimes our depression is due to circumstances, sometimes are our depression are due to biochemical factors. Let say, for example you are pushing 40 and above or maybe you are a young man in the 20s as well. You are going to be prone to some sort of depression. Medical specialist will call this endogenous depression where you have got some imbalance of your chemicals and for no apparent reason, you are going to be depressed. Some of these need treatments with medical therapy. These will help augment as a general guideline. If you are suffering from depression for a length of time, you need to see a doctor, it is a fact, because we have physical factors as well.

- A. Lament : Pouring out our soul to Him
- B. Analyses our hearts
- C. Remember the grace of God
- D. Wrestles between hope and despair
- E. Learn how to preach to our own hearts

#### A. LAMENT: POURING OUT OUR SOULS

**Psalms 42:3-4 (ESV) My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?" 4 These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:**

Pouring out my soul is lamenting.

**Psalms 42:5-6 (ESV) Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?**

Here you are telling God, Lord it sucks I feel bad, I am really upset that's call lamenting. The same thing a wife does to a husband. Woman tend to be more vocal in their laments. Men tend to suppress it. When women are actually vocal, it is good, it actually helps them. Lament is something like that for us. When we turn to God and we are actually pounding on his chest and saying, I am really pissed off, I am really down and he is telling God how many times my soul is cast down. Why is he doing that? He is lamenting.



Psalms 42:9 (ESV) I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

Michael Card is a famous musician who works in lament music. He writes,

*"It seems to me that we do not need to be taught how to lament since we have so many models in Scripture. What we need is simply the assurance that it's okay to lament. We all carry deep within ourselves a pressurized reservoir of tears. It takes only the right key at the right time to unlock them. In God's perfect time, these tears can be released to form a healing flood. That's the beauty and the mystery of the prayer of lament."*

He is saying that inside us is a reservoir of tears. At the right time, you release these tears out and it becomes a healing flood. So, lament is actually healing for you. The problem for men is that we are John Wayne, we are the heroes, real man don't cry, because you don't cry you get high blood pressure, you got stroke, you get all sorts of trouble. So therefore, Michael Card is saying, it is the right thing to do because inside you have got this pressurized reservoir of tears and you need to release this and it actually helps minister to you. So, lament is good but here we are lamenting to God.

Habakkuk was a prophet in time of Israel when they were really having terrific problems with enemies coming to Israel. He says,

Habakkuk 1:2-4 (ESV) O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save? 3 Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong?

He is casting God as a bad guy. He is saying that God they are making so much trouble, God why are you allowing this to happen. So, this is lament.

Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. 4 So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted.

But that fact that you are actually expressing that to God is lament. You are supposed to express that. Hannah is the wife of Elkanah

1 Samuel 1:4-6 (ESV) On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. 5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the Lord had closed her womb. 6 And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb 7 So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat.

1 Samuel 1:10-11 (ESV) 10 She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. 11 And she vowed a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head."

1 Samuel 1:15-18 (ESV) But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord.

She has been lamenting, expressing, other people look at her and they thought that she has gone mad, but she has not.

16 Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation." 17 Then Eli answered, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him." 18 And she said, "Let your servant find favor in your eyes." Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

Actually for a long time, she was lamenting and the lord hears here. So therefore, why do we lament. We lament like Hannah because God hears our prayers. He knows our pain. He cares, he responds, and lament is evidence of our trust and expression of our confusion. We don't doubt the presence of God, we don't doubt relationship with God, but we doubt his wisdom.

Lament is also a form of worship. Graham Cooke writes this,

*"Lamentation is a powerful, and meaningful, form of worship because it places our love for God above even the worst of circumstances in our life... God does not ask us to deny the existence of our suffering. He does want us to collect it, stand in those things and make Him an offering. The Holy Spirit, our Comforter, helps us to do this: He aligns Himself with our will and says, 'I will help you to will to worship God.' The glory of the majesty of God is that He helps us will and do." - Graham Cooke*

So the beauty of worship in lament is that in the middle of your pain, you can actually stand up and worship God with your tears and that's the new experience, that's a deeper experience of spiritual life. Otherwise our faith is a transactional faith. It is a very superficial faith. Our faith is only worship when I am happy, when I am sad, I don't worship. That means you are a cartoon. All your life is only blessing, good things happen to you that's God, bad things happen there is no God. Real life is complicated. Real life is not one dimensional. Real life is complicated, so that there is good, bad and ugly and through it all the beauty of God when God makes you concur and one of the ways you conquer is that even in pain you lament and that lament is precious because you are actually gathering your tears and your pain

and saying despite this pain I am going to worship you and when God looks at you, he is pleased.

It is so easy to worship God when you get a lottery. So happy to worship God when your children get married and have grandchildren. It is harder to worship God when the grandchildren come out with medical problems. Most people will walk away but you chose to worship God in that pain and that's a different level of spirituality. It's a different level. You are still there. That's a real Christian life. Because we are more than conquerors, we can worship God in lament. So, deepen your faith, it is not just one-dimensional.

So lament changes us. This is what happens when you lament.

Habakkuk 3:1-2 (ESV) A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth. 2 O Lord, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O Lord, do I fear. In the midst of the years revive it; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy.

Habakkuk 3:17-18 (ESV) Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, 18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

God didn't answer his prayer, he is still suffering and in the middle of that he can still honour and rejoice in God. That is what lament will do. If you don't lament, you won't feel this. Job went through a terrible thing and he says,

Job 19:25-27 (ESV) For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. 26 And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, 27 whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

## **B. ANALYSE OUR HEARTS**

Psalms 42: 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?

So, what he is trying to do, he is trying to ask himself why am I sad. When we are confronted with trouble, the psalmist always asks these questions to analyze his heart. Why is he actually cast down? In Psalm 3 David was cast down because Absalom has rejected him. His family is rejected him. His nation has rejected him. His reputation is finished. His own son is hunting him down. In Psalm 3, David supposed to relocate his glory and you find that when we are in trouble, we find all the pillars of our life, family, wellness, career, some of these are shaken. The reason for your depression is sometimes of that particular pillar in your life that is shaken,

that is so important to you. The only pillar that is supposed to be important to you is the pillar about God. When you actually undergo depression, it reveals to you how you are actually placing your weight on too many other pillars, so that your composure and your feelings are affected. So basically, what he does, is he analyzes heart, why. I remember just two days ago I was preparing the sermon rooster for next year and one of the regular preachers actually wrote back to me and said, I want to cut my sermons into half, which means I have to work double. I actually was very upset about it. For the next two days, I went under a cloud and I couldn't pinpoint. It is only when I went back and actually analyzed, why I am upset. One little email changed the colour of my two days. I located it. So, it is analyzing your heart, finding out where your loyalty lies. Why are so upset that he wants to quit, don't you believe that God will provide somebody else or something? Isn't this an adventure in faith? The church always had enough preachers, so why should you complain. So you basically analyze and work out your heart.

### C. REMEMBER THE CHESED OF GOD

**Psalms 42:8 (ESV) By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.**

So you remember how God is totally faithful to you looking back and what I would do is look back at the last 10 years leading this church. I saw so many miraculous things, how God has provided people to preach for the last 10 years, we don't have a senior pastor here and God has still provided. God has never let us down, no matter what has happened. So you remember the grace, you remember his steadfast love and you just perk up, say, it is another adventure, it is another test of faith, so you don't get depressed. Now remembering is important, so what he is doing he is focusing on remembering versus pouring out. Joy versus sorrow. So what he does, he combat his sorrow by remembering joy.

**Psalms 42:4 (ESV) These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival.**

He remembers the wonderful time of worship he had. He remembers the wonderful time where he use to lead worship as he struggles by

**Psalms 42:3 (ESV) My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"**

He remembers

**(ESV) My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.**

He struggles

Psalms 42:7 (ESV) Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.

He remembers

Psalms 42:8 (ESV) By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

He struggles with

Psalms 42:9-10 (ESV) I say to God, my rock "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" 10 As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

So therefore remembering God's grace changes the way he feels, so therefore he looks in anticipation one day he will go back to church. So basically what he does if you look at this psalm. If you read the whole psalm in one shot, you will find there are two things. He is remembering with joy, how God has dealt with him in the past and then he struggles with sorrow. Every time you remember your sorrow, you remember his joy.

#### D.     WRESTLES BETWEEN HOPE AND DESPAIR

So that is psychologically what we do. We struggle it is good and bad, but we never give up the struggle. So, what you do in this prayer is that you actually struggle between hope and despair.

#### E.     LEARN HOW TO PREACH TO YOUR OWN HEART

Tyson Fury is a fighter in Britain. He shared the testimony after his match. He actually went for a draw. Even though he was knocked down twice. He said, I actually struggle with depression and it came to suicide but I got out of it, you know how, I looked deep inside and if I can get over it you can too he said. If you are part of the world, you look inside and you look for strength. Christian doesn't do that. What a Christian does, is a Christian learns to preach to himself.

Psalms 42:5-6 (ESV) Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation 6 and my God.

He is preaching to his soul. When you actually have depression, there are thoughts that crowd your mind, the thoughts are God is not there, God does not care, your sins are too big, you are a loser, you will never change. The problem in depression is that we are always listening to ourselves. You sit down there and all the things, you

just keep on telling yourself all these things, it will never happen. It is going to be bad. I am going to lose my job. I am going to fall into this sin again. God hates me, God has abandoned me and then some of your friends don't help you either. So, these thoughts crowd your mind and what happens is when you are preaching to yourself, is basically you take the theology and your circumstances, and you crash them together. You take what you know about God and how he cares for you and you apply that to your situation and then you pray it out.

*prayer "is a preaching to ourselves in God's hearing. We speak to God to warm ourselves, not for his information, but for our edification."*

Thomas Manton

So when you actually preach to yourself in the context of prayer, you are not informing God, but what you are doing is, you are praying, you are preaching to yourself in the presence of God and that actually encourages us. Martin Lloyd Jones writes,

*The main problem in the whole matter of "spiritual depression" in a sense is this – we allow our "self" to talk to us instead of "talking to ourselves." Most unhappiness in life is due to the fact that we "listen to ourselves" instead of "talking to ourselves." David, in effect, says, "Self, listen for a moment to what I have to say – why are you so cast down?" The main art in the matter of spiritual living is to know how to handle yourself, question yourself, and preach to yourself – you must remind yourself who God is, and what God has done, and what God has promised to do – this is the essence of the treatment in a nutshell. We must understand that this "self" of ours – this other man within us has got to be handled; do not listen to him! turn on him! speak to him! remind him of what you know! So rather than listening to him and allowing him to drag you down and depress you – you must take control!*

So, when Tyson Fury struggles with his depression, he is looking for strength inside. He is telling himself, you got to be good, you got to fight and all that, but for a Christian it is different. When we actually preach to ourselves, we are taking what we know about God and using what we know about God to interpret us in our situation and then we preach to ourselves. So therefore, we cut this vicious cycle of listening to ourselves and going to a spiral and crashing. So, this is how preaching to yourself actually works.

The whole psalm tells you about lament, analyzing your heart, remembering God's grace, wrestling between hope and despair and learning to preach to our own hearts.