Knowing God uses His Word to shape us, and is the Shepherd whose relentless love provides, protects, and guides us, still does not mean we will be immune to trials and tragedy, despair and despondency. But are we left to overwhelming sadness without hope? Psalms 42 and 43 give us both the freedom to express our despair and the path to turning it into joy and praise.

Strophe #1, 42:1-4:  \textit{I love you God, but life hurts right now!}
Chorus: vs. 5: \textit{The conversation begins …}

Strophe #2, 42:6-10: \textit{I am despairing and overwhelmed!}
Chorus: vs. 11: \textit{The conversation continues …}

Strophe #3, 43:1-4: \textit{I trust you God, and leave it all to you!}
Chorus: vs. 5: \textit{The conversation ends with sincere hope and trust.}

Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer; from the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I, for you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy. Psalm 61:1-3
MONDAY | PSALM 42:1-4
Have you ever experienced a time in your life where you felt like God was distant? What was that time like? What were your emotions like? What was your hope? When the circumstances of life hit hard, when we are surrounded by obstacles and danger beyond our control, when sadness, or anger, or despair, or hopelessness become our everyday experience, what do you do? Where do you run to?

TUESDAY | PSALM 42:6-10
Do you have a theology of suffering? What is it? How would you walk with a person who is experiencing suffering in their life? In what way would you seek to encourage them? What truths about God would you remind them? How would you help them not to turn to faithlessness? How would you help them hold fast to their confession of faith, that God is good, all the time, even when His goodness comes in packages we don’t like? How would you help them to hope in God and see the danger of turning from Him?

WEDNESDAY | PSALM 43:1-4
How consistent is your prayer life? Have you ever pleaded with God for anything? What sort of things do you plead for? In the midst of suffering, are you tempted to not pray to God? What resolve do we learn from the Psalmist in this passage? How does his language change from the previous chapter? How do the things he pleads for indicate where his hope is?

THURSDAY | PSALM 42:5, 11; PSALM 43:5
What do we learn about the Psalmist’s resolve in these passages? Even in the midst of trouble, where does he find his hope? How do you think he is able to come to the place of hope in the midst of trial? How do you preach truth to your own soul? What truths about God bring you comfort? How do you make a practice of remembering who God is? Are there any scripture passages that you keep on your mind daily? How could you encourage someone with the truth of scripture today?

FRIDAY | PRAY
Reflect on some of the questions from this week. Ask the Lord to help you grow in any areas you might be struggling in. Pray for someone you know who is experiencing suffering right now. Ask the Lord to provide comfort and care. Pray that they would find their ultimate hope in Christ no matter the outcome of their trial. Thank the Lord for the hope we have in knowing who He is.

If you have any questions or need additional resources, email Pastor David: david.hegg@gracebaptist.org