

COME TO THE ALTAR

(How David Went From Downcast To Joyfulness)

Psalms 42 & 43



DAVID'S CAUSE FOR TEARS:

- ◆ His Plans Go Unfulfilled
- ◆ His Feelings Go Unrelieved
- ◆ His Questions Go Unanswered

“Then Will I Go Unto The Altar Of God” (Psalm 43:4)

Bill Kirk

(So Much So That:)

- ◆ God gives us three instructions that will change us.
- ◆ Three words of power that transform the mind.
- ◆ Three absolutes that affect how we think and how we feel:

I Quit Looking At Yourself And Start Looking At God

Fact: 51 personal pronouns are found in Psalms 42 and 43.

Fact: David uses the word "I" 15 times, the word "ME" 16 times, and the word "MY" 21 times.

Fact: Life was a mirror to David as he was looking only at himself.

Fact: And God reveals why David was discouraged and downcast.

(David's 3 Causes For Lamenting)

#1. David is downcast because his plans had not been fulfilled:

(v. 2) "When shall I come and appear before God"?

(v. 4) "When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me". (In Other Words)

- ◆ David wanted to join the pilgrims in their annual trip to the temple (but he couldn't go).
- ◆ David was in exile and his agenda was changed by a higher agenda.
- ◆ David's plans were not fulfilled because of events and people outside of his control.

Question: Have you been disheartened because of unfulfilled expectations that have touched your own life?

#2. David is downcast because his feelings had not been relieved:

(v. 3) "My tears have been my meat day and night". (In other words)

- ◆ Instead of eating food, David can only weep. A cloud of heaviness hangs over his head.
- ◆ David is continually feeding on his tears and downcast emotions.

Questions: Have you found yourself in recent days downcast in spirit?

#1. David is down because his plans have not been fulfilled.

#2. David is down because his feelings have not been relieved.

#3. David is downcast because his questions have not been answered:

(42:2) "When shall I come and appear before God"?

(42:5) "Why am I cast down in my soul"?

(42:5) "Why am I disquieted (or agitated) inside"?

(43:2) "Why does God cast me off"?

(43:2) "Why do I continually mourn"?

- ◆ 10 times David asks why? (And there is no record that God ever answered him).
- ◆ David just can't seem to get answers to all of his questions

Question: Do you have any questions without answers to them?

Question: Have you been looking at life from just your point of view"?

Question: Have you found yourself asking, "God, why this"? or "God, why that"?

(God Has Good News You Can Trust In)

(v. 8) "Yet the Lord will command His loving kindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me".

- ◆ Daytime represents times of prosperity and gladness.
- ◆ Nighttime represents times of sorrow and pain.

(And God Declares)

- ◆ That your challenges will become a window to see God instead of only a mirror to see yourself.
- ◆ That (whether daytime or nighttime) the Lord will be equal to the task and command His favor towards you.
- ◆ That God will reveal Himself to you, will sustain you and will point you “upward” instead of “outward”.

II. Quit Living In The Past And Start Looking To The Future

Fact: David’s answer to despair is to encourage himself in God.

Fact: Three times David cries out “Hope thou in God”

Fact: The Bible word hope is not “hope so”

- ◆ It’s a word that means “A guarantee that the future is secure” (Repeat)

Question: Does David have cause to be “cast down”?

Answer: Of course he does:

- #1. His son Absalom has gone astray and is in rebellion.
- #2. David’s desire to travel to Jerusalem is unfulfilled.

Question: What’s the cure for David’s downcast soul?

Answer: David gets his eyes off the past and on to the future guarantee of God.

Question: What does God reveal in the future that encourages David in spirit?

(4 Absolutes To Trust In)

#1. David is assured that God will defeat the enemy

(43:1) “Plead my cause” means, “God deliver me from every foe as I walk with you”.

Question: Is there anything in your life (any sin that is opposing you right now) that you need to be free from?

#2. David knows that God will be his strength

(43:2) “For thou art the God of my strength”

Question: Do you need for God to replace your weariness with his strength today?

#3. David is assured that God will lead and direct him

(43:3) “O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me”

Question: Do you need specific direction in any matters of life at this time?

#4. David believes that sorrow will give way to joy

(43:4) “I will go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy” means:

- ◆ David knows that his joy will be restored by God.
- ◆ David knows that (in God’s time) he will get back to Jerusalem, to the altar and to the harp of praise and joy once again.
- ◆ David knows that God will renew his hope, vision and passion to look ahead.

Question: Have you felt that the best days are behind you; but are willing to let God change your outlook to look forward?

“Yesterday God helped me, today He’ll do the same, How long will this continue? Forever, praise His name”.

III. Quit Asking Questions And Start Resting On The Promises

Fact: Everyone has questions without answers!

Fact: Everyone asks “why God”? at some time.

Fact: Everyone has times and seasons when they need to just pour out their heart to God in prayer.

Question: How can we rest assured in the promises of God?

(3 Unshakable Reasons)

#1. **We know that God is a living God**

(42:2) "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God".

◆ He lives and promises to meet our every need!

#2. **We know that God is a faithful God**

(42:8) "In the daytime (of prosperity) or the nighttime (of adversity) the Lord will prove to be faithful".

#3. **We know that God is willing to answer prayer:**

(42:4) "I went with them to the house of God" (43:4) "I will go to the altar of God"

Question: Why go to the house of God and the altar of God?

#1. Because the temple was the place where the people met God.

#2. Because the altar was the place where the Jew brought a sacrifice to have entrance to God.

(The Glorious Truth Is):

◆ That you and I have been invited to the altar of God (and)

◆ That you and I come into God's presence through our New Testament sacrifice of Jesus.

Question: How do we come to the altar of God?

"As the deer pants for water, so our soul panteth after God" (42:1)

◆ The Hebrew word "pant" means:

"To be intense"

"To be earnest about"

"To rise up and go after"

(It Means:)

How can we stay in our seat when we know that God will meet us at an altar of prayer?

Fact: In (43:3) God is drawing David to the altar. "...Let them bring me unto thy holy hill".

Fact: In (43:4) David is responding to the altar call of God:

"Then will I go unto the altar of God"

(It's One Of Two Choices)

#1. Sit in my seat and stew and sour (or) #2. Run to the altar and do business with God.

(What Do I Do At The Altar Of Prayer?)

What David Did

#1. Quit looking at yourself (and start looking at God).

#2. Quit looking back (and start looking at the future).

#3. Quit looking for reasons (and start standing on the promises).

(Altar Call)

AMEN!

Bill Kirk, Pastor

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