

Week Two: *I'm At The End of My Rope?*
Psalm 42

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. Has it always been easy for you to believe, or was there a time (perhaps even now) when your trust in God seemed to make no difference in the quality of your life? Explain.
2. Have you ever heard the song “More Than Words”? It’s a love song that describes a love that doesn’t need to be expressed in words because our actions make it clear how we feel. How are you feeling towards God at this time of your life: close, distant, routine? When was the last time you felt especially close to Him?
3. David’s Psalms reveal his own close and distant feelings towards God. Read Psalm 42. What phrase best expresses his feelings towards God at that time?
4. Most believe this period of David’s life was when he was on the run from King Saul, who was jealous of his popularity and was trying to kill him. What had David done to cause Saul’s anger?
5. Read Psalm 42:6. Where was David at the time he wrote this psalm?
6. David was not only banished from his home. According to verse 4, what else did David miss?
7. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for those who feel far from God.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

8. Why do you attend worship services?
9. What would you miss most if you were not allowed or discontinued your regular practice of worship?
10. Read Psalm 42:2. During this period in David’s life, how did he describe the attitudes of his friends who were aware of his hardship?
11. Read 1 Samuel 22:1-2. How would you describe the kinds of people that gathered to follow David during his exile from Jerusalem?
12. How important is the company you keep?

13. Read 1 Corinthians 15:33. What does the verse mean to you? How have you applied it in your life?
14. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for those closest to you, that your friends and family would be a blessing rather than a hindrance to your faith.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

15. Whom do you know in your circle of friends and family that feels alienated from God by His apparent failure to help in their time of need?
16. Without lecturing them, quoting scripture, or making them feel unfaithful, what are some things you could do to show love and compassion towards them?
17. What are some possible reasons why God allows Christians to suffer hardships and setbacks?
18. Read the following Scriptures to guide your thinking: John 9:1-4; John 15:1-2; Hebrews 12:5-6 and 1 Corinthians 10:11-15.
19. Read Romans 8:35-39. How does this passage help Christians face times of hardship?
20. Despite the hard times David was suffering, as related in Psalm 42, what phrase keeps reoccurring? See verses 5, 8 and 11. What insight does that give us into the heart of David?
21. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for the person you thought of in point #1 above. Pray for insight and blessing to be used by God to bring love into their life.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

22. Read James 5:10-11. What does this passage teach us about the correlation of faithfulness to suffering?
23. Why do so many people believe that hardship in a person's life is a sign of God's punishment?
24. Do you think Jesus paid the price for all sin or only part of our sin and therefore we must suffer some ourselves for the mistakes we make? Explain.
25. If God does not cause hardship, suffering and pain in life, who is responsible?

26. Why do you think people blame God rather than the Devil, their own behavior or the behavior of others?
27. According to Psalm 42:9-10, where did David place the blame for his troubles?
28. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Pray for Christian leaders who often suffer the attacks and hardships Satan uses to discourage them in their work.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

29. How would you describe the attitude of David in Psalm 42?
30. Is it healthy for Christians to vocalize their frustrations? Was David being unfaithful by acknowledging his confusion over the difficulties of life?
31. According to Psalm 42:4, what sustained David in the midst of hardship? How does that apply to us?
32. Is it wrong or healthy to be like David in Psalm 42:6 and admit despair?
33. How did he feel towards God in Psalm 42:9? Have you ever felt this way?
34. What happens to a child who is overly protected by his parents from every hardship and difficulty in life? What spiritual lesson can we learn from that observation?
35. Finish your FIFTEEN in prayer. Read Psalm 42 aloud and make it your prayer today.