



MIXTAPE, PART 4: BLUE CHRISTMAS

Life isn't easy. We experience problems and setbacks everyday. But during the hardest parts of life, when the bottom seems to fall out, where do we turn? Although God doesn't offer any easy solutions, he does offer himself and his presence as an anchor of hope.

BIG IDEA: God uses blue times to get your attention and draw you closer to Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you find best quenches your thirst after a long Saturday afternoon?
2. When were you homesick? What would your correspondence from that time reveal about your innermost yearnings and fears?
3. How should people today find happiness, according to TV, music, and advertisements?
4. *With your Bible or your Bible App, read Psalm 42.*

As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for God, the living God. When can I go and stand before him? Day and night I have only tears for food, while my enemies continually taunt me, saying, "Where is this God of yours?" My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be: I walked among the crowds of worshipers, leading a great procession to the house of God, singing for joy and giving thanks amid the sound of a great celebration! Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God! Now I am deeply discouraged, but I will remember you— even from distant Mount Hermon, the source of the Jordan, from the land of Mount Mizar. Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. But each day the Lord pours his unfailing love upon me, and through each night I sing his songs, praying to God who gives me life. "O God my rock," I cry, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I wander around in grief, oppressed by my enemies?" Their taunts break my bones. They scoff, "Where is this God of yours?" Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!

Psalms 42:1-11

5. From these descriptive words and phrases, what diagnosis best fits the psalmists condition?

a. Thirsty?	d. Homesick?
b. Depressed?	e. Hopeful?
c. Exiled?	f. Plagued by spiritual doubts?
6. What prescription does the psalmist recommends? (*verses 5 & 11*)?
7. Is this a realistic way to handle the blues? Why or why not?
8. Although the psalmist asks the same question in 42:9 that his enemies ask in 42:3 and 42:10, what is the difference in how these questions are put? What does this say about the dark side of faith and the sunny side of doubt?
9. He wants to be back in God's house in Jerusalem, but what is he learning about God from where he is right now? (What does the difference between what's happening 'day and night' in 42:3 and 42:8 tell you?)
10. What progression of faith or mood swings do you see in Psalm 42?
11. In dealing with depression and the blues, the psalmist freely cried (42:3), talked to himself (42:5, 11), reminded himself of God's nature (42:6, 8), and prayed honestly (42:9). By comparison, how do you deal with dark times? What from this writer's example might help you face times of spiritual dryness in your life?
12. Chris said, "We may never know why tragedy happens, but when we understand who God is? Tragedy becomes triumph." How can God change tragedy to triumph in what you're going through right now?





WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Sometimes God seems so far away from us. What causes God to seem far away at times? Who moved—God or you? How might this psalm help you in times when you wonder where God is?

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.
Psalms 42:11