

## Connect Group Discussion Guide – 11/26/2023

### Psalm 42 Loyal and True: HOPE

**Video Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvR0S5fB8AzraGYts4eQfg> (Posted on Monday)

**Audio Only:** On Spotify or Apple Podcasts: Connection Point Podcast

#### Highlights

- **Advent** – to wait, to long for something, to be patient
  - The waiting the Israelites had for the promised Messiah
    - We reflect on that waiting as we approach Christmas
  - But we are waiting too – for his return.
  - Waiting is hard! **Share a story of your waiting that was hard.**
- The people who waited before us saw the coming – it really happened, so we can have the same: **Hope**, Peace, Joy, and Love
- We are going to learn how to grow in the waiting.
  - We grow when we reflect on what the baby in the manger signifies.
- To understand hope, we can look at Greek Mythology: Pandora's Box (Jar)
  - The first man and woman, he gave her a jar
  - Inside the jar were all the evils of the world
  - One day she opened the jar and let the evil out (this is the Greek way to explain what happened in the Garden!)
  - She let out all the evils, but one: Hope. Hope is evil????
  - **In the mind of many, hope is just an opportunity for heartache and disappointment.**
    - Often when you hope, you hurt. **Why? Have you ever hurt when hoping for something that didn't go the way you thought it would?**
- Psalm 42
  - Maskil: a deep insightful thought to process
  - Sons of Korah. Who was Korah
    - A Levite whose family was in charge of the Ark of the Covenant
    - His story is found in Numbers 16
    - A group of Levites stood up to Moses and asked, "who really put you in charge anyway? We don't think you should be in charge anymore."
    - Moses said he is going to let God speak to that question
    - The ground opened up and swallowed 250 Levites
    - Korah's sons were spared; likely because they repented; had a heart change.
    - Every generation after that who repented are considered the sons of Korah
      - They were saved by God, so we are sons of Korah
- **Verse 1** A deer is in the desert or wilderness if they're panting for water.
  - We pant when we're dying of thirst, not when we're thirsty
  - There is nothing more painful than being in a spiritual desert; panting for God.
    - **Have you ever panted for God; been in a spiritual desert?**
- **Verse 3** All you have is heartache
- **Verse 4** I remember the days when we were close God; the days of festivals and joy.
  - To keep myself sane, I remember when we were good, and you were close.
  - If you're struggling spiritually, one of your best tools is to remember what it's like when you were close to God. **Share a time when you were especially close to Him.**
- **Verse 5** When we wait, we get whiny and pathetic.

- The writer is saying about himself, “Why are you doing this to yourself. Put your HOPE in God!
- Keep your eyes on God instead of yourself (and your troubles).
- When I do, there will be a time in the future when I do praise God.
- **Verse 6** Sometimes we say, “I’m all in on Jesus. Everything is going to change. And then sometimes we still don’t feel like it.
  - All in, then not. All in, then not. It’s a vicious cycle. But if we fall forward, we can still grow.
  - The writer is on a roller coaster, but brings all his messiness directly to God.
    - Ever since the Garden we hide our messiness from God and pretend all is good.
      - And we can “get by” until we’re discovered!
    - Our messiness belongs to God. It becomes an offering to Him
- **Verse 7** Deep = tehôm = chaotic waters, no creation; the chaos in my life is overwhelming my spirit. I’m drowning here. **What does/has this looked like in your life?**
- **Verse 8** I know God has got me. He’s there with me – always.
- **Verse 9** Here’s the roller coaster again. God, you’re my rock and in the next breath, why have you forgotten me.
  - **We all reach a moment when we ask, “where are You, God?”**
    - **What was your moment?**
- **Verse 10** We will all reach a moment when OTHERS will ask, “Where is your God?”
  - We have to be prepared to answer. It’s hard when we have no hope.
- **Verse 11** Every generation wrestles with what it means to follow hard after the Lord.
  - When you do, it causes you to grow.
  - You are not the only one struggling – put your hope in God
- **In the mind of many, hope is just an opportunity for heartache and disappointment...unless where you place your hope has already proven true.**
  - That is why we celebrate hope in Advent; it’s proven true:
    - God promised the Messiah
    - They waited (sometimes impatiently)
    - Jesus came
    - The world was never the same
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    - God promised the Messiah
    - Now WE wait (sometimes impatiently) [NOW WHAT]
    - Jesus will come
    - The world will never be the same
- **We don’t blindly hope in the second coming. We put our hope in God who is loyal and true.** We rely on the proven character of God.
  - He always fulfills his promises

#### The Bottom Line:

- **Put your hope in God, today!**
  - God said it and it happened.
  - God did it and He will do it again!