

Playlist: Love in the Dark
Psalms 42-43
Small Group Discussion

Intro Questions:

- What were some good one-liners that your parents or other caregivers used, which you have found yourself repeating?
- Today we're looking at Lament Psalms—songs written to be useful in seasons of struggle or disappointment. Where are you today with respect to that kind of season?
- Reminder: As a collection, the Psalms offer us *language to communicate with God, to have life-long friendship with God, in any circumstance that life could bring.*

Psalms 42-43

1. As you open your Bible to Psalm 42, what do you notice about the heading to this Psalm? (It is written with the intent of being used in public worship.) What is the significance of that intent for our life as people of God?
 - Note: The Sons of Korah were musicians, appointed by King David as worship leaders in the Tabernacle.
 - How do you feel about the fact that God expects all of his people to go through seasons of difficulty?
2. On Sunday we learned that ***lament leads to worship***, and that in the Lament Psalms, we see at least three components which are crucial aspects of that process. Those three components are listed below. Take some time, and Read Psalms 42-43. As you read them, try to identify every instance of one of these elements (don't rely on the bulletin printing in the process, but use it at the end to check yourselves). Going from lament to worship requires:
 - Pouring it all out (pouring out your emotions before God)
 - Pondering the facts (intentionally calling to mind what God has done in the past)
 - Preaching the good news to yourself (telling yourself all the reasons that you have to be hopeful, and responding rationally to them).
3. How do you feel about the idea that God invites us to pour out our raw, unfiltered emotions to him? Are you comfortable doing that? Do you have a trusted friend or two with whom you can do this?
4. What events in your own history can you intentionally recall to be reminded of God's faithfulness in the past?
 - When have you relied on this kind of recollection and experienced encouragement through it?
 - How could you help someone else to go through this process of remembering?
5. How do you preach the good news to yourself?
 - With your knowledge of the Big Story of the Bible, what aspects of "good news" can you always preach to yourself?
 - How does this good news give you the ability to endure whatever you are experiencing?

6. Pastor Josh referenced a statement by commentator Michael Wilcock, as follows. Read it and discuss the subsequent question.

'We are never helpless victims of our emotions' (quoting Clements). 'Don't let your feelings dictate to you; you do the dictating.' Ask yourself why you are downcast, ... and give yourself a rational answer. Remind yourself that hope means a patient but expectant waiting for God to act. Tell yourself that your day of praise will certainly come, though in God's time, not yours.

- What does it mean that "you do the dictating" to your emotions? How do you feel about doing this?
 - Is this claim true to what you read in Psalms 42-43?
 - Have you ever experienced this act working in your life?
7. If you have time, choose another one of the Lament Psalms (a few are listed below), and explore the following questions: A) How do you see these three principles that we've studied showing up in this other Lament Psalm? B) Do you see other themes that are helpful for us in seasons of lament?
- Individual Laments: Psalm 3, 22, 31, 39, 42, 57, 71, 88, 12, 139, 142
 - Corporate Laments: 12, 44, 80, 94

Prayer and sharing:

- Pray for one another based on what has been shared throughout your meeting.
- Spend some time praying for our missionary partners who spoke on Sunday—Jeff and Krista Parrett—for their children, their parents, their financial support, and their protection as they go into dangerous places.