



**Walking as Children of Light
in an Age of Mounting
Despair...**

Walking as Children of Light...

- ▶ What tempts me to despair?
- ▶ What circumstances are hard for me personally?
- ▶ What situations easily snuff out my joy?



Challenge Your Depressed Self: Psalm 42

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- ▶ Condition of the Psalmist
- ▶ Circumstances that led to his condition
- ▶ The psalmist's response to his circumstances and his condition.

The Psalmist's Response

- ▶ “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance” (Psa. 42:5).
- ▶ He finds his solution in God and “takes himself in hand,” as Martyn Lloyd-Jones put it in his book *Spiritual Depression*.

Self-Talk that “takes yourself in hand”

In a world where people instinctively trust their inner mind and feelings, to the point at which they judge others without real evidence and even override their own reason by appealing to the “truth” of their feelings, the psalmist’s response is revolutionary. He acknowledges the intensity of his feelings (“My tears...day and night”), but **insists that his feelings be led by his theology, not vice versa.**

Carl Trueman “Strange New World”

“The modern self finds himself in the midst of ... a culture of ‘expressive individualism’ where each of us seeks to give expression to our individual inner lives rather than seeing ourselves as embedded in communities and bound by natural and supernatural laws.

Authenticity to inner feelings, rather than adherence to transcendent truths, becomes the norm” (p. 13).

The Psalmist “Takes Himself in Hand”

- ▶ He sees God as his answer: “as the deer pants for the water...”
- ▶ The Psalmist dwells on God. If God is the answer to misery, if He’s the way to snatch joy out of gloom, then the psalmist’s thoughts about Him have much to teach us. Here are five takeaways:

God is present no matter where he
finds himself.

“I will remember You from the land
of the Jordan, and from the heights
of Hermon” (Psa. 42:6).

His troubles come from God.

**“Deep calls unto deep at the noise
of Your waterfalls; all Your waves
and billows have gone over me”**
(Psa. 42:7).

God cares for him daily.

“The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me” (Psa. 42:8)

God is open to hearing his darker thoughts.

“I will say to God my Rock, ‘Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?’” (Psa. 42:9).

God will renew His tokens of love.

“Why are you cast down, O my soul?.... Hope in God; For I **shall yet praise Him**, the help of my countenance and my God” (Psa. 42:11).

Carl Trueman “Strange New World”

- ▶ “The Psalms present a view of the Christian life that is marked by joy but that also knows sorrow and loss. They set the struggles of the present in the context of God’s great actions in times past and promises for the future...”

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- ▶ “They help us to understand our status as strangers in a strange land. By setting forth a grand picture of God and the promise of future rest, they help us to keep perspective, theological and emotional, on the events of the present, whether personal,

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- ▶ “... such as illness, or social, such as the disturbing transformations outlined in this book. We are creatures of emotions and sentiments, and we are fallen. Therefore, we need songs of redemption to help restore them to their proper context.” (p. 182).