

SERMON: Waiting With Hope

December 10, 2017

SERIES: Thrill of Hope

SPEAKER: Pastor Mark

CONNECT (5-10 minutes): Help the members of the group grow in relationships with one another so all people in the group know they matter. Spend some time discovering what is happening in the lives of your group members. Share how God has been revealing himself in each other's lives.

REVIEW (15-20 minutes): Use this time to review the passage and the sermon outline (see below).

Note: this is a great opportunity to share leadership.

Use these simple questions to review the sermon/passage or for if you don't have much time:

1. What does this passage teach you about God? About us?
2. How does this passage point us to the gospel? How does it challenge you? Change you?

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 42 and 43.

¹ *As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.*

² *My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?*

³ *My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"*

⁴ *These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival.*

⁵ *Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?*

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation ⁶ and my God.

My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

⁷ *Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.*

⁸ *By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.*

⁹ *I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me?"*

Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

¹⁰ *As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me,*

while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

¹¹ *Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?*

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God. Send Out Your Light and Your Truth

^{43:1} *Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people, from the deceitful and unjust man deliver me!*

² *For you are the God in whom I take refuge; why have you rejected me?*

Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

³ *Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling!*

⁴ *Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.*

⁵ *Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?*

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

SERMON OUTLINE:

I. The Problem of Waiting.

- Every Christian will experience spiritual dryness or a feeling of distance from God at some point in their life. This Psalm is about that feeling, but doesn't simply connect this dryness to sin.

II. The Struggles of Waiting.

- Spiritual dryness brings with it several struggles: 1) a negative physical impact, 2) loss of community, 3) deep sorrow over life's circumstances.

III. Finding Hope in Waiting.

- 5 practices the Psalmist employs to find hope in the waiting: 1) He pours out his soul to God, 2) He analyzes his own soul, 3) He acknowledges God's sovereignty, 4) He remembers God's love, 5) He preaches to his own soul.

- Our assurance of hope is even greater and clearer than the Psalmists- the incarnation answers the question, "God have you forgotten me?"

- Jesus' death: he experienced the lament of Psalm 42-43 for you and me.

GROW (45-60 minutes): Use this time to go deeper with your group.

Use these questions to discuss the sermon/passage:

1. Have you ever experienced a season of spiritual dryness or feeling distant from God? Are you in such a season now? Can you relate to the struggles in the second point of the sermon outline?
2. Why is spiritual community so important in times of spiritual dryness and waiting? How has it helped you to find hope in waiting?
3. As a group talk through the 5 points Pastor Mark made concerning Hope in Waiting:
 - Pour out your soul to God (v.2,4). How do you do this? What makes this easy or difficult for you?
 - Analyze your soul (v.5,11, 43:5). Do you ask yourself the hard questions? Do you tend to focus on other people rather than your own soul?
 - Acknowledge God's sovereignty (v.7). Do you believe that God is in control of your specific circumstances?
 - Remember God's love (v.8). Do you struggle to believe that God loves you even in the hard times? How do you know that God loves you?
 - Preach to your own soul (v.5,11, 43:5). Do you preach to your own doubts? Do you listen to your soul more than you preach to your soul? What would it sound like to preach the gospel to your own soul?
4. How does the incarnation of Christ answer the question, "God have you forgotten me?"
5. Re-read Psalm 42-43 and think about it being spoken by Jesus on the cross. Jesus is the only one in history that could say "I have lost the presence of God" and it was true- how does this give you hope today?