

# How Can I Feel God’s Presence?

Psalm 42:2-11

## INTRODUCTION:

A. **Psalm 42:1-11** – “As a deer longs for streams of water, so I long for You, God.  
<sup>2</sup> I thirst for God, the living God. When can I come and appear before God?”

<sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while all day long people say to me, “Where is your God?”

<sup>4</sup> I remember this as I pour out my heart: how I walked with many, leading the festive procession to the house of God, with joyful and thankful shouts.

<sup>5</sup> Why am I so depressed? Why this turmoil within me? Put your hope in God, for I will still praise Him, my Savior and my God.

<sup>6</sup> I am deeply depressed; therefore I remember You from the land of Jordan and the peaks of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

<sup>7</sup> Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all Your billows have swept over me.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD will send His faithful love by day; His song will be with me in the night— a prayer to the God of my life.

<sup>9</sup> I will say to God, my rock, “Why have You forgotten me? Why must I go about in sorrow because of the enemy’s oppression?”

<sup>10</sup> My adversaries taunt me, as if crushing my bones, while all day long they say to me, “Where is your God?”

<sup>11</sup> Why am I so depressed? Why this turmoil within me? Put your hope in God, for I will still praise Him, my Savior and my God.

B. Psalm 42 teaches us how to deal with the stresses and strains of life.

1. The psalmist David was going through horrific depression.

2. In this passage he describes how God seemed so distant to him.

a. Three times he asked “Why am I so depressed? 5, 6, 11

b. Two times he asked, “Why is this turmoil within me? 5, 11

c. Two times it was asked, “Where is your God? 3, 10

d. 1 time he asked, “Why have you forgotten me? 9

e. Two times he remembered earlier and better times. 4, 6

f. Two times he expressed his continuing faith. 8, 9

g. Two times an excellent conclusion and direction for life is stated. 5, 11

3. Listening friends . . . Hear me!

a. No Child of God can get so far down that God no longer wants them.

b. No child of God can sink so low that God does not continue to love them. You may have trouble loving yourself, but God doesn’t.

c. No child of God can wander so far that God will not take him back again.

4. People can overcome and feel’s God’s presence, closeness, and forgiveness again . . . If, they truly want to.

## **EVERYONE EXPERIENCES TIMES WHEN GOD SEEMS FAR AWAY**

- A. **Psalm 43:2** – “You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?”
- B. In Psalm 43:2 David felt like he had been tossed aside by God. Four things cause us to feel spiritually withdrawn.
  1. **A loss of feeling.**
    - a. Indicates that something is wrong.
    - b. Numbness is not a good thing.
      1. Numbness in our physical bodies requires a visit to a physician.
      2. Numbness in our spiritual condition requires a visit to the Great Physician.
    - c. Feeling is no longer present where numbness resides.
  2. **A loss of concentration.**
    - a. Indicates that distractions have moved in.
    - b. “A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.” **James 1:8**
  3. **A Loss of fellowship.**
    - a. Deprives us of a great source of spiritual strength.
    - b. Brethren are here to help us reach Heaven.
    - c. We are here to help other brethren reach Heaven.
  4. **A lack of practice.**
    - a. Interrupts our walk in faithfulness.
    - b. Takes our focus off of what is really important in this life . . . The things of God.
- C. Someone defined worship as “being preoccupied with God.”

## **EVERYONE GOES THROUGH PERIODS WHEN HE OR SHE QUESTIONS GOD**

- A. **Psalm 43:5** – “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.
- B. David is asking two important questions:
  1. David asked “Why?” Psalm 42:5, 9, 11
  2. David asked “For what may I hope?” Psalm 43:1
    - a. **Psalm 43:1** – “Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; rescue me from deceitful and wicked men.”
    - b. When we are struggling, and when we have distanced ourselves from God, we don’t feel we have much to work with, do we?

- c. Herein we see the importance of remaining close to God.
  - 1. We remain close to God by remaining faithful to God.
  - 2. We remain faithful to God by remaining faithful to His written Word.
  - 3. We remain faithful to God by meeting with Him in worship.
  - 4. We remain close to God through careful study of His word . . . The Bible.
  - 5. We remain close to God through heart-felt prayers.
  - 6. We remain close to God through daily obedience and faithful service to His divine will.
  - 7. We remain close to God by keeping the world out of our hearts.
  - 8. We remain close to God by walking in the footsteps of Jesus.
- C. **Psalm 34:8-9** – “Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing.”

## **WHEN GOD SEEMS ABSENT, IT’S TIME FOR CHARACTER-BUILDING**

- A. **Psalm 46:10** – “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”
  - 1. Another translations says: “Be silent, and know I am God . . .”
    - a. Oh, how often self wants to get in the way of God.
    - b. Oh, how often the world wants to get in the way of God.
    - c. Oh, how often the business of our daily schedules get in the way of God.
    - d. Oh, how often we allow others to get in the way of God.
      - 1. Married? . . . Don’t let your spouse distance you from God.
      - 2. Parent? . . . Don’t let your growing children distance you from God.
      - 3. Employed? . . . Don’t let your employer and job distance you from God.
      - 4. Retired? . . . Don’t let that change in your life distance you form God.
    - e. Oh, how often we choose these and other things over God . . . And then we wonder why God seems so distant to our daily lives.
- B. When it appears that God seems absent . . . . .
  - 1. **It gives us an opportunity to grow.**
  - 2. **It gives us an opportunity to increase our faith.**
  - 3. **It gives us an opportunity to be generous.**
    - a. Generous with our time to seek God.
    - b. Generous with our petitions for Him to return to closeness.
    - c. Generous with our thoughts about Him and to Him.
    - d. Generous with our resources to please Him.
  - 4. **It gives us an opportunity to know God better.**

- a. “Be still and know that I am God.” **Psalm 46:10**
- b. The time we take away from God is time we can never make up.
- c. The time we take away from God is time we can never replace.
- d. The time we take away from God is time lost in our relationship with Him.
- e. The time we take away from God is time lost to God being able to work through us.
- f. Everyday seek to know God better . . . and better . . . and better . . . . and better . . . . and better . . . . and even better yet.

## CONCLUSION:

- A. Look into the heart of God’s Word and find God more.
  1. David said: “Be still, and know that I am God . . .” **Psalm 46:10**
  2. Paul said: “That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection . . . “**Philippians 3:10**
- B. Listening friends . . . Two Thoughts:
  1. Thought #1 – If God seems distant to where you are, ask yourself, “Who moved?” Move closer, for He has always been there for His people.
  2. Thought #2 – **Just knowing God is there makes where you are better!**
  3. May David’s conclusion be your conclusion as well: **Psalm 42:11** – “Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.”
- C. Make today a moving day . . . A day in which you begin to move closer to God . . . Begin to close the distance you have allowed to exist between you and God.
  1. Any distance between you and God was put there by you . . . not God.
  2. Close the gap . . . Your Father wants you home!
- D. **God Plan for Man’s Salvation**