

## AEMMC Life Groups Week 6 - Psalm 42/43

"Commanding Your Soul When the  
Darkness Will Not Lift"



### Psalm 42:1-6

*As a deer pants for flowing streams,  
so pants my soul for you, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God,  
for the living God.  
When shall I come and appear before God?  
My tears have been my food  
day and night,  
while they say to me all the day long,  
"Where is your God?"  
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.  
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.*

### Read

These two Psalms (42/43) together are a song in a traditional verse-chorus structure. Have a different person read each verse and chorus:

Verse 1 – 42:1-4      Chorus – 42:5-6a  
Verse 2 – 42:6b-10      Chorus – 42:11  
Verse 3 – 43:1-4      Chorus – 43:5

### Discuss

1. Six possible causes of depression or downheartedness were listed: (1) isolation, (2) God's loving discipline, (3) personal attacks, (4) listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself, (5) sin, and (6) chemical imbalance. Which of these have you experienced? Are there other potential causes that you can think of?
2. What do you think of the idea of commanding or controlling your emotions? Are they controllable?
3. Five suggested "cures" or "remedies" were given: (1) Seek fellowship with other believers, (2) endure God's loving discipline, (3) see yourself through God's eyes, (4) speak confidently to your own soul, and (5) confess and repent of your sin. In your experience, which of these do you need to practice most often? Are there others you could list?

### Share Stories

We often avoid talking about or even mentioning the word "depression". There seems to be a stigma or negative association with the word. And yet there is biblical evidence that many servants of God have often experienced it. Have you ever experienced a prolonged period of darkness or depression? What was the cause? How did you eventually come out of it?

### PRAY Together

C.H. Spurgeon said: "To search out the cause of our sorrow is often the best surgery for grief." Depression is not always caused by sin, but sometimes it is. Spend some time in quiet reflection examining yourself for unconfessed sin. If any is revealed, confess it and accept God's forgiveness!

Ask if anyone needs prayer for dryness, distance from God or depression right now. Pray for anyone who is experiencing this.