

## Why Is My Soul Downcast Within Me?

4/16/18

### Psalm 42-43

Psalm 42 and 43 are obviously connected. Originally, they were one psalm. It is a psalm, or song, that expresses the universal experience of God seeming far away, and the internal battle between what our circumstances are telling us, and what we believe about God.

In a practical sense, I think it boils down to a battle between what we feel and what we believe to be true. We tend to be driven by our emotions. Even those of us who think of ourselves as “unemotional” tend to be driven by certain emotions including fear, anger, etc. Perhaps we have certain insecurities or even tend towards depression at times.

Psalm 42 and 43 appears to be the experience of just such a person. His circumstances are telling him or making him feel one way. His theology is calling him to believe another way. That is the constant battle that I face. I want to be driven by what I know (or at least think I know) what truth is rather than by what my circumstances are making me feel.

The ultimate choice comes at the point of my will. What I decide to do indicates what most controls me at the moment of my choice.

We sang a song yesterday entitled, “No Longer a Slave”. The first verse and chorus say,

You unravel me with a melody.  
You surround me with a song  
Of deliverance from my enemies  
Till all my fears are gone.

I’m no longer a slave to fear  
I am a child of God.  
I’m no longer a slave to fear.  
I am a child of God.

If I believe my circumstances, then I will be driven by fear—of failure, what people think, my past, the future, etc. There are a lot of “What if” questions created by circumstances and fear. If I believe what the Bible says about God and what He thinks about me, fears dissipate. If I believe what the Bible says about who I am as a child of God, I am no longer a slave to fear.

Think through what the psalmist says in Psalms 42-43 that alleviate the obvious angst in his soul. How can focusing on those same truths help us live by faith, not by sight? (2 Corinthians 5:7)

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. What truths do the psalmist call to his attention to refocus his attention?

