
Sermon Text Discussion 7/30/17

Psalm 42 - "What Do You Do with the Sad That You Feel?" by Taylor Sutton

Overview

In a time of great sorrow in which he feels he is distant from God due to his inability to be with God's people in the temple, the psalmist cries out to God. As he feasts on his tears day and night, the psalmist hears others say to him, "Where is your God?" The psalmist, in his deep sorrow, writes this song as a means to address his emotions with the truths of God's Word. The song is laid out as follows:

- 1) The sorrowful soul pours out its longing to God 1 (v.1-4)
- 2) The sorrowful soul preaches God to itself (v.5)
- 3) The sorrowful soul pours out its wrestling with God (v.6-10)
- 4) The sorrowful soul preaches God to itself (v.11)

The psalmist is able to wrestle with these feelings by talking to himself about the one true God. He gives himself the command to hope in God, who is the author of his salvation, even when he may not be feeling an overwhelming sense of hope.

Quotations

"Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?" -*Spiritual Depression*, Martyn Lloyd-Jones

"I have been accustomed to call this book... 'An Anatomy of all the Parts of the Soul,' for there is not an emotion of which any one can be conscious that is not here represented as in a mirror." -John Calvin

Understanding & Application

- 1) Why is the psalmist feeling such acute sorrow? Provide some cultural context about why his circumstances (from v.2b) might have him feeling this way.
- 2) Upon seeing his great sorrow, someone asks the psalmist, "Where is your God?" How would you respond if you were in his situation? Provide a response, backed by Scripture, about why being a Christ-follower doesn't mean we won't face difficulty.
- 3) The "chorus" of this Psalm is repeated in verses 5 and 11, and it highlights the psalmist speaking truths to himself about God. When you are facing great sorrow, what are the things you are saying to yourself? How does your self-talk need to be challenged or improved by the words of this Psalm (or other texts)?
- 4) The world tells us that the highest value should be placed on finding what our true selves are thinking or feeling and to make our reality match. How does this contrast to the actions taken by the psalmist in verses 5 and 11?
- 5) When you face great sorrow, what do you do?
- 6) What solace can we take in Christ's work on the cross? How is Jesus the better (and true) temple of God? What are the implications of that truth for us today?