



## PRAYER SERVICE WEDNESDAY, JULY 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2021

Join us at 7pm in the Sanctuary or on [Facebook](#) and use this guide to pray along with us.

### • INTRO

Welcome to Prayer Service! Psalm 42 begins with one of the more well-known passages from the Psalms: *“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for God. My soul thirsts for God...”* The imagery here is so powerful, it’s no wonder these words have made their way into lots of songs. Hunger and thirst are powerful instincts that are essential to our life: while the experience is unpleasant, it helps us get what our bodies need to survive. In the same way, our souls were made for God. We were created to live in communion with him. Augustine said, *“Thou hast made us for thyself, oh Lord; our hearts are restless until we find our rest in thee.”* C.S. Lewis said, *“If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”* *Everyone thirsts for God, but not everyone knows that they thirst for God.* We go around trying to fill this void, to satisfy this deep longing for connection, for unconditional love, and we often come up short, because our souls were designed for God to be the ultimate satisfaction. It’s the reason we form unhealthy attachments, destructive addictions, jump from job to job or relationship to relationship; it’s the reason we make idols. Therefore, one of the most important things we can do is become aware of this longing, this thirst within us, and then attach to its proper source: *the living God.* Praying the Psalms can help. There’s a lot to dig into. *Let’s pray.*

### • PAUSE

“As I enter prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center my scattered senses upon the presence of God.” (Pete Greig, Lectio365)

“Jesus, I give everything and everyone to you. I give everything and everyone to you, God.”  
(John Eldredge, Daily Pause)

*Pause and pray.*

As we read **Psalm 42** together, be open with the parts that confuse or challenge you; meditate on the parts that stand out to you:

***<sup>1</sup> As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? <sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, “Where is your God?” <sup>4</sup> These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. <sup>5</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. <sup>6</sup> My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar. <sup>7</sup> Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. <sup>8</sup> By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me—a prayer to the God of my life. <sup>9</sup> I say to God my Rock, “Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?” <sup>10</sup> My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, “Where is your God?” <sup>11</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.***

- **SONGS**

**“Waiting Here for You”**

**VERSE 1**

If faith can move the mountains  
Let the mountains move  
We come with expectation  
Waiting here for You  
Waiting here for You

**VERSE 2**

You're the Lord of all creation  
And still You know my heart  
The Author of salvation  
You've loved us from the start

**CHORUS**

Waiting here for You with our hands  
Lifted high in praise  
And it's You we adore  
Singing alleluia

**VERSE 3**

You are ev'rything You've promised  
Your faithfulness is true  
We're desp'rate for Your presence  
All we need is You

**BRIDGE**

Singing alleluia alleluia

CCLI Song # 5925663 Chris Tomlin | Jesse Reeves | Martin Smith © 2011 sixsteps Music CCLI License # 870332

**“As The Deer”**

**VERSE 1**

As the deer panteth for the water  
So my soul longeth after Thee  
You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship Thee

**CHORUS**

You alone are my strength my shield  
To You alone may my spirit yield  
You alone are my heart's desire  
And I long to worship Thee

**VERSE 2**

You're my friend and You are my brother  
Even though You are a King  
I love You more than any other  
So much more than anything

**VERSE 3**

I want You more than gold or silver  
Only You can satisfy  
You alone are the real joy-giver  
And the apple of my eye

CCLI Song # 1431 Martin Nystrom © 1984 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing

- **PSALM 42:1-4**

***<sup>1</sup> As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? <sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, “Where is your God?” <sup>4</sup> These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng.***

This Psalm describes the experience of God's people being oppressed by their enemies. It was possibly during their exile, when they lived away from their homeland and apart from the Temple, where at the time God's people experienced the greatest connection to his presence. In a season of disorientation, distress, and despair, it's fascinating that this prayer focuses not on the different afflictions associated with that trial, but on something else: *the thirst for God's presence*. Perhaps underneath all our pain, our distress, our longings and needs, there's something even deeper: *our need for God*. “*My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.*” What a profound statement.

Think about your life. See if you can quiet down enough to come in touch with what's in your heart right now, your deepest desires and longings. *What do you thirst for?* How would you fill in the blank: *"My soul thirsts for \_\_\_\_\_,"*?

It's been said that more than anything else—more than our beliefs, more than our actions—what shapes us most is *what we love, what we desire*. *"My soul thirsts for \_\_\_\_\_."* Would we dare to acknowledge that underneath all our wants and yearnings is a desire *for God*, a need only he can satisfy? Do we thirst for God, or want to thirst for God more? Ask God to search your heart, to give you insight about yourself and respond accordingly. *Pause and Pray.*

- **PSALM 42:5-7**

***<sup>5</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. <sup>6</sup> My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar. <sup>7</sup> Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.***

*"My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you..."* Again, the Psalmist's reaction to their current state is a bit surprising compared with how humans often respond to distress. *"My soul is downcast...therefore I will remember you..."* When you feel downcast, when you're in distress, do you tend to move *towards* God or *away* from God? Do you reach for things to satisfy you which ultimately bring *life*, or things that leave you just as empty, or worse? How often do we try to comfort ourselves in ways that don't help, or cause greater harm? *"My soul is downcast...therefore I will \_\_\_\_\_."* Given your normal patterns of life, how would you fill in this blank? *"Therefore I will..."* *worry? eat? drink? binge Netflix? go for a walk? talk to a friend? read? get in the Word? talk to God?* For most of us, when we reach for comfort, it's probably a mixture of positives and negatives, healthy and unhealthy habits. God has provided us with wonderful gifts to bless, comfort, and strengthen us—things that can be real conduits of his grace—but it's possible, in our idolatrous hearts, to push things too far or forget that our deepest need is for God. What would it be like for us to become so connected, so attached to God as our source of life and comfort, that in any circumstance our *first* instinct was to "remember" God, reach for him, thirst for him? Maybe right now is just such an opportunity: to thirst for God, to reach for God, to *remember* God and be renewed. *Pause and Pray.*

- **PSALM 42:8-11**

***<sup>8</sup> By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me—a prayer to the God of my life. <sup>9</sup> I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?" <sup>10</sup> My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, "Where is your God?" <sup>11</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.***

Do you know what it feels like to be "oppressed by the enemy"? Have you ever felt "forgotten" by God, disturbed within, downcast in your soul? Are you there right now, or do you know someone who is? The repeated refrain of this Psalm is, *"Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God."* If you're experiencing any of these things, or know someone who is, pour out your heart to God and seek his hope, peace, and life. Consider the prayer of Romans 15:13 in the New Testament: *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."* *Pause and Pray.*

- **SONG**

**"All Who Are Thirsty"**

## VERSE

All who are thirsty  
All who are weak  
Come to the fountain  
Dip your heart in the stream of life  
Let the pain and the sorrow  
Be washed away  
In the waves of His mercy  
As deep cries out to deep  
(We sing)

## CHORUS 1

Come Lord Jesus come  
Come Lord Jesus come

## INTERLUDE

As deep cries out to deep  
As deep cries out to deep  
As deep cries out to deep  
(We sing)

## CHORUS 2

Holy Spirit come  
Holy Spirit come

CCLI Song # 2489542 Brenton Brown | Glenn Robertson © 1998 Vineyard Songs

- **Closing**

***“Father, help me to live this day to the full, being true to you in every way. Jesus, help me to give myself away to others, being kind to everyone I meet. Spirit, help me to love the lost, proclaiming Christ in all I do and say. Amen.”*** (Pete Greig, Lectio365)