

THE FIRST 15

Monday, November 4, 2024

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Today is Monday, November 4, 2024 and we are studying Psalm 42 – praying that God would move our hearts from despair to hope.

OPENING PRAYER

In this season, we pray together:

May the cornerstone of my life, and of our life together, be Christ and Christ alone. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE

*As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?
Psalm 42:1-2*

REFLECTION

Do you remember drinking from a water hose during the summer as a kid? If you dodged the initial blast of hot water, hose water was some of the best water you could find after playing outside all day. A close second was being first in line to the school water fountain with the coldest water after recess. Now we keep our water close, carrying it with us everywhere we go in our stainless steel Stanleys or Yetis that keep ice cold for a week. Hydration is good – but have we lost something in becoming strangers to thirst?

I can't help but imagine a Bob Ross painting when I hear these verses. It's a fair temptation if we were to stop here in verse two. I won't spoil the rest of the Psalm for you (don't worry – we'll work our way through the full chapter this week) but as we begin today, I don't want us to miss the sense of desperation just beneath the surface here in these opening lines. It's this deep despair that will lead to great hope later in the week...

The Psalmist says he's like that panting deer but that his thirst is *deep*. His soul thirsts for *living water*. He feels distant from his God and tells God how deeply he desires to come back to His presence. He's desperate to not only communicate with God (notice he trusts that God is near enough to hear his prayer) but to *meet* with Him and to be in his presence. *His soul thirsts for God and the life of the Living God.*

Thirst is a helpful thing. It awakens us to our deep need and desire to be replenished. Importantly, it's the alarm that goes off to remind us that replenishment must come from a source outside ourselves. The deer knows it, the Psalmist knows it – do *you*?

Do you find yourself feeling distant from God today? What streams have you been drinking from? Have you relied on your own strength? Maybe you're curious like the writer of Psalm 42

and asking, “when can I go and meet with God?” Now is a great time. You’ve already come to the edge of the water. Tell him what your soul needs and drink deep.

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you are our living water. We thirst for you. We confess and release our false sources of strength and sustenance. We are desperate to meet with you – to return to your presence. Now is the time. As our songs say, let us become more aware of your presence now. Let us experience the glory of your goodness now. Flood our souls with your presence that we might drink deep your peace. Amen.