

**“Encourage Yourself!”**

**7/7/19**

**Psalms 42:5 “Why are you cast down, O my soul? And *why* are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him *for* the help of His countenance.” NKJV**

**These same words are repeated two more times—once more in this Psalm, and again in the next one, Psalm 43, so that they really could have been combined to make one Psalm.**

**David is struggling with negative emotions, so he pens this psalm and turns it over to the sons of Korah to put to music.**

**The sons of Korah were a group of musicians appointed by David that played a central role in the worship of the OT sanctuary.**

**David likely wrote it during the time he was fleeing from his son, Absalom, who sought to overthrow his father and steal the kingdom.**

**David is hiding in the wilderness and is sorely missing his regular times of worship in the sanctuary—we would say today he was missing church.**

**So he confesses that he’s like a deer, panting for the spiritual water brooks of God’s presence...He is thirsting and longing to encounter God with other worshipers.**

**His emotions have collapsed and sleep has left him, “My tears have been my food day and night” (verse 3).**

**And he’s being needled by critics who are saying, “Where is your God?”**

**Due to all of this, David spirals into the blues—he is “cast down” within himself—discouraged and feeling defeated.**

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**Now what we’re about to see is how David pulled himself out of this dark place by how he talks to himself...**

**We will see that he does three things—He first CONFRONTS himself, then ENCOURAGES himself, and finally PROPHESES to himself.**

**Now, before looking at this, I want to point out how important the way you talk to yourself really is.**

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**FACT: No one is more influential in your life than you are, because no one talks to you more than you do.**

**From the moment we get up in the morning to when we go to bed at night, we never stop talking to ourselves...**

**Even our dreams are manifestations of talking to ourselves.**

**The things you say to you about you, about God, and about others are extremely important because they decide the way you respond to adversity.**

**In trying times you can talk yourself into depression, despair, hopelessness, unbelief, and defeat.**

**Or you can talk yourself into encouragement, hope, and victory.**

**In the midst of highly stressful circumstances, David decided to talk himself out of the blues and into a place of victory.**

**So how did he do it?**

**FIRST, we see that he...**

**I. Confronted himself**

**“Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me?”**

**Negative thoughts were flooding his soul and he was listening to them, entertaining them, agreeing with them.**

**Suddenly he realizes what’s going on and confronts his own soul!**

**He says, “Soul, why are you so down? You’re acting like you have no God, like He doesn’t know or care.**

**What are you doing?**

**Hasn’t God been good to you? Hasn’t he helped you before?**

**Hasn’t he come through for you over and over again?**

**“Why, O soul, would you be disquieted, unsettled, and uncertain?”**

**“Why have you lost your peace? God’s a mighty God.**

**He’s faithful. Trust Him!”**

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**Most of us never stop to think of confronting ourselves....of talking straight to our own soul, of literally facing down our own thoughts and saying,**

**“What’s up with you? Why are you thinking this way?”**

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**I'm not just suggesting you look in a mirror and give yourself a pep talk.**

**The Bible says be careful how you think because thoughts have consequences.**

**Paul the Apostle wrote about inner conversations we have with ourselves and said,**

**"Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely, and dwell on the fine, good things in others. Think about all you can praise God for and be glad about" (Phil 4:8 LB).**

**We're to fix our thoughts around good things, because our thoughts are where our inner conversations come from.**

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**In his book on *Spiritual Depression*, Martin Lloyd-Jones writes,**

**"You have to take yourself in hand, you have to address yourself, preach to yourself, question yourself.**

**You must say to your soul: 'Why are you cast down—what business have you to be disquieted?'**

**You must exhort yourself...instead of muttering in this depressed, unhappy way."**

**This is just what David did!**

**So first, David CONFRONTED himself.**

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**The SECOND thing he did was to...**

## **II. Encourage himself**

**"Hope in God..."**

***Self, hope in God!***

**Don't hope in men, don't hope in fate, don't hope in circumstances, don't hope in your own strength, put your HOPE IN GOD!**

**People can fail you, but God will never fail you...**

**In another psalm, David wrote: "Give us help from trouble, For the help of man is useless. 13 Through God we will do valiantly, For *it is* He *who* shall tread down our enemies" (Ps. 108:12-13 NKJV).**

**Ps 31:24 says, "Be strong and let your heart take courage, All you who hope in the LORD."**

**Ps. 62:5 "My soul, wait in silence for God only, For my hope is from Him."**

**Ps. 71:14 "But as for me, I will hope continually, And will praise You yet more and more."**

**ILLUS: There were once two identical twins. They were alike in every way but one. One was a hope-filled optimist who only ever saw the bright side of life. The other was a dark pessimist, who only ever saw the down side in every situation.**

**The parents were so worried about the extremes of optimism and pessimism in their boys they took them to the Doctor. He suggested a plan.**

**"On their next birthday give the pessimist a shiny new bike, but give the optimist only a pile of manure."**

**It seemed a fairly extreme thing to do. After all the parents had always treated their boys equally. But in this instance they decided to try the Doctor's advice.**

**So when the twins birthday came around they gave the pessimist the most expensive, top of the range, racing bike a child has ever owned. When he saw the bike his first words were, "I'll probably crash and break my leg."**

**To the optimist they gave a carefully wrapped box of manure. He opened it, looked puzzled for a moment, then ran outside screaming,**

**"You can't fool me! Where there's this much manure, there's a pony out here somewhere!"**

**Hope encourages us saying, "There's a pony in all this somewhere."**

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**David confronted himself, encouraged himself, and finally, David...**

**III. Prophesied to himself**

**"For I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance."**

**I love the word "yet" here, because it means today doesn't tell the whole story....things can change on a dime when God is at work!**

**It may look bad today.**

**In David's case, his own son was seeking his life. He'd lost his kingdom and didn't know if he'd ever get it back.**

**Half his people had turned against him.**

**He's running for his life like a fugitive.**

**His circumstances could hardly be worse.**

**And that's when he prophesies to himself saying, "I shall yet praise Him for His help!"**

**He says to himself, David—"Weeping endures for a night, but I know that joy is coming in the morning!"**

**God won't leave me like this.**

**I serve the God of breakthrough—the same God who carried Israel across the mighty sea,**

**the same God who saved Daniel in the lion's den,**

**the same God who delivered the 3 Hebrew children from the burning fiery oven.**

**So I know I will YET praise him!**

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**Any moment now, He's going to show up.**

**I may not know how or when, but I know He's coming.**

**I know I'm his child.**

**I know He's in control.**

**I know He's greater than my problems.**

**I know that He that began a good work in me will finish it.**

***And he PROPHESED to himself* that God was going to act on his behalf!**

**And of course, we know from Scripture that God did indeed deliver him, and restored him to his kingdom.**

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**In a dark hour of inner struggle, David CONFRONTED himself, ENCOURAGED himself, and PROPHESED to himself!**

**Are you in a dark hour?**

**Are your thoughts going south?**

**Why not try the same thing David did!**

