



# LIFEGROUPS

Message: *God's Answer in  
Uncertain Times*

Scripture: *Psalms 42-43*

Date: **March 14-15, 2020**

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—[ LET'S START ]—

We are living in uncertain times. It seems like everywhere we turn people are talking about COVID-19 and the effects of the Coronavirus. Think over the course of your life. What are some of the times that you have most had to lean on God to get you through? What has God taught you in those moments?

—[ LET'S TALK ]—

1. **GRATITUDE AND PRAYER:** This is normally a time that we share personal prayer requests and gratitude for what God has done in our lives. Let's not stop doing that. But, let's also take some time today in extended prayer for our world. Pray for God's intervention. Pray that God would give you opportunities to have deep spiritual conversations in the days and the weeks ahead. Pray that there would be an openness in people to talk about Christ. Pray for courage to live for Christ and to trust Him in the days ahead.
2. Pastor Dale chose to preach from Psalm 42-43 this week. What were some of the things that Pastor Dale said that the writers may have been going through when they wrote this Psalm?
3. Read Psalm 42:1-5. What are some of the emotions that are apparent to you as you read these verses? What are some of the solutions that the song writers suggest for their way that they are feeling? Can you think to a time that you experienced the emotions of verse 3? When?
4. Read Psalm 42:6-11. How are these verses similar to verses 1-5? How are they different? What hope do these verses give you in times like these?
5. Read Psalm 43:1-5. How is this chapter similar to Psalm 42? How is it different? How has God been a joy and delight in your life?
6. Read John 16:16-33. Jesus shared these words with His disciples shortly before the crucifixion. How can these words given to Jesus' First Century disciples give us joy and hope today?

—[ LET'S ACT ]—

We began our time today by praying for the world. Let's end our time by praying for each other. Let's pray that God would use this time to help us move you closer to God.

—[ SERMON REVIEW ]—

- When we lose control of life, uncertainty creeps in. When that happens our tendency is to do everything we can to fix the situation. When we cannot is usually when we begin pointing the finger and blaming others for the trouble we are facing.
  - Rev. Lloyd John Ogilve, who pastored and served as Chaplain of the United States senate wrote: "We all have one of three things in common: We have known the night of suffering, are in the night right now, or are deeply troubled about someone who is."
- Mark Mittleberg says that there are three biblical teachings that tend to confuse us when it comes to issues of uncertainty, suffering and evil in the world:
  - The biblical teaching that God is good and hates evil!
  - God is great and all-powerful!
  - Evil is real. There are things in rebellion against God.
- Mittleberg says this is a problem because as God, he certainly would know about the evil, and if he is really good, then He would condemn and want to do something about the evil and if He is truly great and all-powerful he would destroy evil!
- Why do bad things happen good people like you, your family or friends?
  - Mittleberg writes about four common misconceptions people have about God and evil:
    - Since there is evil in the world, then a good and great God must not exist!
      - The problem with this solution is that it flies in the face of all the evidence for the existence of God!
      - The fact that we know something is not right or fair means we do have a sense of what is right and just.
    - God is a mixture of evil and good.
      - This is the essence of some eastern religions like Hinduism and Buddhism and what we often refer to as New Age thinking. It is the idea of the force! The universe is made up of a force with a good and bad side to it. This kind of thinking doesn't pass the test of logic! God cannot contradict Himself!

- God isn't all-powerful!
      - This view suggests that the reason there is evil, sickness and suffering in the world is because God is not powerful enough to purge the world of it.
      - Such a view denies the very evidence of God's greatness!
    - God is good and great but He really doesn't care what happens to us!
      - This view affirms God's power but teaches that God is indifferent to human suffering and evil. Most people who have lived long enough to experience the evil and suffering that life has to offer have at least thought about this view!
- More than likely if this virus continues and takes a heavy toll on people physically and or economically, you will begin to hear these kinds of things said about God, the Bible and Christianity.
- Why does a good and great God allow suffering in the world?
  - Just because God is Good and Powerful does not mean that evil cannot exist and produce suffering!
  - Evil does not come from God but from the choice to reject God!
  - There are some situations and circumstances in life for which we may never have specific answers on this side of eternity. However, there is one thing that all suffering reveals and a gift it can bestow.
- Psalm 42-43 are separate Psalms. It appears by context that they may have originally been part of each other.
  - Scholars are not sure what the event was, but it is obvious that there was great personal suffering in this Psalm and a revelation about the why and gift of suffering:
  - It was out there in the desert of difficulties that he begins to seek God, to long for God with a passion unlike any he ever had in Jerusalem.
  - Here in the wilderness he wants God more than anything else!
  - Here in the wilderness of suffering he is forced to face himself and to ask why his soul is so troubled.
  - Here in his suffering he realizes that God may be more present than in Jerusalem.

