



Welcome to Blackburn Baptist Church, on August 15th 2021 at 10:45, meeting once more at Bethesda Chapel.

Now that lockdown restrictions have been lifted, we are able to meet in person at Bethesda Chapel. We realise that not everyone is, as yet, ready to come to the church, and so still plan to use our YouTube channel to show recordings of the services, and will continue to provide this written service sheet for those unable to attend Bethesda. We hope and pray that you will find this outline of our service helpful, as we all seek to worship God as a Church family, wherever we are.

We continue looking at the Psalms, and our worship today is led by **Tim, who, after playing the piano beforehand, welcomes us all**, saying how great it is to see everyone, that it is great we are able to come and worship God, and sharing that we have a great God, who is worthy of all the praise we can give him. Our first song reminds us of all that he has done for us, and what a wonderful God we have.

Tim then goes to the piano, whilst Ellie prepares to play the flute and Esther sings for us:

Praise to the Lord

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, now to His temple draw near;
praise Him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
shelters thee under His wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen how thy desires e'er have been
granted in what He ordaineth?

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
surely His goodness and mercy here daily attend thee;
ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
if with His love He befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord, oh, let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him;
let the amen sound from His people again,
gladly for aye we adore Him.

Tim leads us in prayer as we reflect on the words we have been singing:

"Thank you Father God that you are such a great God. Thank you that we can come to you this morning with our hearts full of praise and joy; even though we might have been having a bad week, even though things might not be going so well in our lives, we might be suffering all sorts of difficulties but we yet can come into your presence this morning and we can thank you and praise you because of the truths of who you are and what you have done for us. Thank you that you are the king of creation, the Lord, the Almighty one who can do everything and there is nothing too difficult for you. So there are no circumstances in our lives no matter how difficult, that you can't cope with. Lord we pray as we come to you this morning and spend spend time with you that we will be reminded afresh of how wonderful you are and of how much you have done for us. Thank you that you are a strength our help and our salvation, that you have made that way open for us through Jesus Christ to be part of your family, to know our sins forgiven and to know a future with you that's secure and beyond doubt. So Lord we thank you this morning for everything that you have done for us and for everything you are, and pray that you will be with us now as we continue in your presence, that we will learn more about you and how you would want to be involved in our lives day to day. Be with us now we pray, Amen."

Tim then talks to us about the weather! He notes that we are in Blackburn, so are used to the rain, and there are some days when it can feel as though the sun will never shine again. Tim is prepared though, and brings out his umbrella, which he opens, (yes, inside!) and tells us that if he always carries his umbrella above his head, he'll be ok, convinced as he is that the sun may never shine again!! (Some of the congregation agreed that this was a sensible option, causing some amusement!) Another option may be to move abroad, where he might see the sun more often, but the sun will shine eventually (tomorrow? - is there a song there?) - and Tim if he had a Mary Poppins umbrella, could fly above the clouds, to see the sunshine! The sun hasn't gone, it's always there but there are times when we can't see it. This happens to us in life as well, when during the sad and difficult times we may think that God has gone away, but he is always with us, even when we don't see or feel his presence. The Psalms can remind us of this, and at this point Tim puts the umbrella down, praying that God will help us through the sad times, knowing that he is always with us.

Tim invites Esther to come to the front to help with the actions of our next song. This reminds us that even Jesus came across difficult situations in his life, but he overcame them all, because:

Jesus is the King. (If you are at home, and are feeling energetic, you too can make up some actions - or dance - or read the words!)

Jesus is the King, ruler over everything
Jesus is the one, promised one the Son of God
Jesus is the Lord, he's the one you can't ignore
Jesus, Jesus, he is the King
He is the King

He commanded the fisherman
"Hey come follow me"
And they did, and they did,
and they did, because
Jesus is the King, ruler over everything...

He commanded the evil ones
"Hey come out of him"
And they did, and they did
and they did, because
Jesus is the King, ruler over everything...

He commanded the wind and waves
"Hey be still, be still"
And they did, and they did
and they did, because
Jesus is the King, ruler over everything...

He promised that three days after death
He'd rise again:
And He did, and He did
and He did, because
Jesus is the King, ruler over everything...

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Tim now shares the notices for this week, firstly the funeral service for Donald Booth tomorrow at 11.30am, (we continue to remember Joyce and the family in our prayers), Tuesday we have our drop-in coffee morning, anytime from 10am to 12 noon, and then on Thursday we have our regular get-together here at 7.30pm. Last week we had a prayer meeting which was really encouraging, including some singing and hearing about what has been going on in our building last week - a "hang-out" organised by St Lukes, who have had up to 35 young people here. Alec is hoping to have some photographs of this to show us this Thursday, when we will be looking at God's word, and also be spending some time in song and prayer - 7.30-8.30pm. Finally we are arranging some safeguarding training, for those working with children and vulnerable adults, which will be held on Saturday Sept 4th in the afternoon. We need to confirm how many places we require for that training, so please let Jane if you will be attending.

Tim now invites Ellie to come to read for us: Psalm 42 and 43:

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?
My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me all day long,
'Where is your God?'
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.
Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Saviour and my God.
My soul is downcast within me;
therefore I will remember you
from the land of the Jordan,
the heights of Hermon – from Mount Mizar.
Deep calls to deep
in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers
have swept over me.
By day the Lord directs his love,
at night his song is with me –
a prayer to the God of my life.
I say to God my Rock,
'Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?'
My bones suffer mortal agony
as my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long,
'Where is your God?'
Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Saviour and my God.

Psalm 43

Vindicate me, my God,
and plead my cause
against an unfaithful nation.

Rescue me from those who are
deceitful and wicked.
You are God my stronghold.
Why have you rejected me?
Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?
Send me your light and your faithful care,
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy mountain,
to the place where you dwell.
Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God, my joy and my delight.
I will praise you with the lyre,
O God, my God.
Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Saviour and my God.

Tim shares his thoughts on these Psalms - "Singing the blues"

(Tim has shared his powerpoint presentation, I have tried to give a flavour of his talk based on these slides)

He begins by telling us that he likes all sorts of music - including "the blues".

The Psalms may be viewed as the songbooks of the Bible, with whoever wrote them really struggling at times, which is part of being human. The bible is honest about everything, but these psalms are also about hope and deliverance. Psalms can be divided into 5 books - which some compare to the first five books of the bible - today's Psalms mark the start at book 2 - like Exodus - which is the story of people really struggling, in hard times, yet ultimately delivered by God, and rescued from Egypt.

Psalms 42 and 43 are really one psalm or song - and rather like a contemporary song have a format resembling verses and chorus.

Tim now displays the psalms on the screen, with words and phrases highlighted to show what Tim wishes to draw out as the important relevant points.

At the start of Psalm 42, a word comes to Tim's mind -

Verse 1 **Dryness** - so thirsty, a horrible experience - yet when we look the chorus - hope is in middle of it. There may be spiritual dryness, yet still there is hope.

Verse 1**Dryness****Chorus**

As the deer pants for streams of water,
 So my soul pants for you, O God.
 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
 When can I go and meet with God?
 My tears have been my food day and night,
 While people say to me all day long,
 "Where is your God?"
 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.

Why, my soul, are you downcast?
 Why so disturbed within me?
 Put your **hope** in God,
 For I will yet praise him,
 My Saviour and my God.

Verse 2 – talks about an excess of water- **drowning** springs to mind – too much going on, but again, chorus – with hope in the middle.

Verse 2**Drowning****Chorus**

My soul is downcast within me;
 Therefore I will remember you
 From the land of the Jordan,
 The heights of Hermon - from Mount Mizar.
 Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls;
 All your waves and breakers have swept over me.
 By day the Lord directs his love,
 At night his song is with me -
 A prayer to the God of my life.
 I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me?
 Why must I go about mourning,
 Oppressed by the enemy?"
 My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me,
 Saying to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

Why, my soul, are you downcast?
 Why so disturbed within me?
 Put your **hope** in God,
 For I will yet praise him,
 My Saviour and my God.

Verse 3 – (which is actually Psalm 43) – talks about the need to be rescued – "rescue me" – oppressed by enemy, **dejected** – but again, the chorus has hope is in the centre.

Verse 3**Dejected****Chorus**

Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause
 Against an ungodly nation.
Rescue me from those who are
 Deceitful and wicked.
 You are God my stronghold.
 Why have you rejected me?
 Why must I go about mourning,
Oppressed by the enemy?
 Send me your light and your truth,
 Let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain,
 To the place where you dwell.
 Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight.
 I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.

Why, my soul, are you downcast?
 Why so disturbed within me?
 Put your **hope** in God,
 For I will yet praise him,
 My Saviour and my God.

We all experience real struggles, as did the Psalmist, we are not exempt, we know reality – “blues,” “dark night of the soul” – these are all real and true. So where is God in the midst of this? The Psalmist knows God – so where is he?

Verse 1 – talks about God being far away

Verse 1	God's hard to reach	Chorus
As the deer pants for streams of water, So my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. <u>When can I go and meet with God?</u> My tears have been my food day and night, While <u>people say to me all day long,</u> <u>"Where is your God?"</u> 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.		Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, For I will yet praise him, My Saviour and my God.

Verse 2, shows the Psalmist believing he has been forgotten by God

Verse 2	God's forgotten me	Chorus
My soul is downcast within me; Therefore I will remember you From the land of the Jordan, The heights of Hermon – from Mount Mizar. Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; All your waves and breakers have swept over me. By day the Lord directs his love, At night his song is with me – A prayer to the God of my life. I say to God my Rock, <u>"Why have you forgotten me?</u> Why must I go about mourning, Oppressed by the enemy?" My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, Saying to me all day long, "Where is your God?"		Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, For I will yet praise him, My Saviour and my God.

Verse 3 – God has rejected me says writer.

Bouncing about , feelings of despair, yet coming back to feelings of hope – like us, up and down, honest psalm.

Verse 3	God's rejected me	Chorus
Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause Against an Ungodly nation. Rescue me from those who are Deceitful and wicked. You are God my stronghold. <u>Why have you rejected me?</u> Why must I go about mourning, Oppressed by the enemy? Send me your light and your truth, Let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, To the place where you dwell. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.		Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, For I will yet praise him, My Saviour and my God.

We may have to accept the reality of our situation, look at the the reasons for it and then seek a remedy

Psalms 42 and 43

Singing the Blues

Reality

Reasons

Remedies

Reality:

Firstly: We might be told lies – things like christians should never be sad or down – no such promise in either the bible or our own experience, and Jesus himself said that in this world we will have trouble but take heart,

We live in a fallen world so we will experience difficult situations.

Secondly; if we are down, its not spiritual!! Its not a lack of trust or a sign of spiritual immaturity – look at for example David, Elijah – almost suicidal, Job – apostle Paul in New Testament times. These were all mature people with a strong relationship with God yet they suffered with what we may term depression or worldly struggles.

Psalms 42 and 43

Reality

Lies:

- Christians should never be down
- If you are down, you're not mature



Reasons:

These could be physical or physiological, bodies can go wrong – they are very complicated!

We may want life to be a certain way, we may feel life is not as good as it used to be,

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.

We may be facing criticism

Psalms 42 and 43

Reasons

- Unfulfilled expectations
- Criticism / being laughed at
- Lots of troubles
- Getting too focused on me

We may have lots of troubles in our lives – waves and waterfalls, accumulation

We may be focussing on ourselves – me, mine, I.

Remedy

Psalms 42 and 43

Remedies


- Remember
- Replace
 - Yourself... with your God
 - Your present... with your future

Remember – Psalmist remembers that God loves us, that God is God of his life, is in control, Sovereign.

God is our stronghold – this may be said ironically in this Psalm, but true nonetheless. God is the source of light and truth.– we should go to his word, the more immersed we are in the Bible, the more it will help us in those situations and hard times, when we take on board the word of God, truth and light.

Replace – instead of me my, focus on God instead – put hope in God.

Corrie ten Boom – who belonged to a Dutch family who hid during the war but were eventually imprisoned, whose experience would have recognised buy the writers of the Psalms, is quoted as saying “if you look at world you’ll be distressed, if you look at self you will be depressed, **Look at God you’ll be at rest**”



Corrie ten Boom

Chorus

Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
For I will yet praise him,
My Saviour and my God.

Our outlook depends on our uplook!

If you look at the world, you'll be distressed.
If you look within, you'll be depressed.
If you look at God, you'll be at rest.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

Hebrews 6 verse 19

Chorus
Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
For I will yet praise him,
My Saviour and my God.

I will yet praise him- and as Colin said last week, we have hope, Jesus was raised from the dead so that we will know life with God, our anchor, firm and secure, On that day, God will wipe away every tear.

We can replace present difficulties with future hope.

We now have an opportunity to listen to Don Francisco singing (well, more talking!):

Tim heard him sing this at a concert at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester when he came to the UK from America some years ago:

It ain't no sin to get the blues.

Now some people
When you walk up and talk to 'em
They wear this manufactured smile
You can't tell if they're really happy
Or just tryin' to be in style

Ya know it's like somebody told 'em
Only sinners have a frown
Hey, but when you're really hurtin'
It ain't no crime for bein' down

Now, obedience
That means sufferin'
And to some, that maybe news
Jesus paid our lifetime membership
But ya still gotta pay some dues

So when all Job's comforters
Are standin' round you
And your prayers just seem refused
Don't ya lie about your troubles
It ain't no sin, to get the blues

Now, some folks they really dig self pity
But others make it clear
That if it were possible
They'd rewrite the epistles and the apostles
So that, nobody, nobody, nobody ever had to shed a tear

But everybody gotta suffer sometimes
We all gotta work out our salvation on our own
Jesus never told ya
He'd a-never got a hold o' you
He said, I'll never leave ya, never leave you all alone

So when you feel those tears start rollin'
Don't you go and get yourself all confused
Cause He'll dry those tears if you just go ahead and cry 'em
It ain't no sin, to get the blues

Now, you can say you're doin' fine
Say there's nothin' on your mind
Denounce it and deny it
Stick your hand out into sin
Try to make out like you're some kind o' superman

But ain't nobody, nobody, nobody really gonna buy it
Cause everybody gotta suffer sometimes
We all got to work out, to work out, to work out our salvation on our own
Jesus never told ya
He'd a-never got a hold o' you
He said, I'll never, never leave you all alone

So when you feel those tears start rollin'
Don't you go and get yourself all confused
Cause He'll dry those tears if you just go ahead and cry 'em
It ain't no sin, to get the blues
Dry those tears, if you just go ahead and cry 'em
It ain't no sin, to get the blues.

“Keep calm and lets pray together” is shown on the screen, and Tim asks the congregation what is on their hearts this morning, that can be included in prayers that Tim will lead:

Plymouth, Afghanistan, Japan, Haiti, shootings in London last night.

Our last hymn was chosen by Gwynneth at the prayer meeting on Thursday, and again, is sung by Esther with Ellie playing the flute and Tim the piano.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
in a believer's ear!
It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds,
and drives away our fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole
and calms the troubled breast;
'tis manna to the hungry soul,
and to the weary, rest.

O Jesus, shepherd, guardian, friend,
my Prophet, Priest, and King,
my Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
accept the praise I bring.

How weak the effort of my heart,
how cold my warmest thought;
but when I see you as you are,
I'll praise you as I ought.

Till then I would your love proclaim
with every fleeting breath;
and may the music of your name
refresh my soul in death.

John Newton
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Tim leads us as we share The Grace together:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore, Amen.