

LENT DEVOTIONAL



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LENT DEVOTIONAL APRIL 5, 2025

SCRIPTURE

PSALM 43

1 Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause
against an ungodly people;
from those who are deceitful and unjust
deliver me!

2 For you are the God in whom I take refuge;
why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because of the oppression of the enemy?

3 O send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling.

4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy;
and I will praise you with the harp,
O God, my God.
5 Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.

DEVOTION

The Rev. Dr. Lee David Kricher '20/'22

There are many reasons that we understandably “walk about mournfully.” It is wise during those times to ask God to send light into our darkness. But the psalmist does not just speak to God. He also speaks to himself. “Why are you cast down, O my soul?”

God never calls us to ignore or bury our feelings. Godly counselors and caring friends can help us acknowledge and process our feelings. Yet there is an important insight found in the words of the psalmist. While openly acknowledging the reality and impact of his feelings, he made a choice to not surrender to those feelings.

Clinical Psychologist Dr. Gail Brenner writes, “Shining the spotlight of awareness on emotions changes everything. Instead of avoiding or trying to change your feelings, you become aware of them. Then, amazingly, you realize you don’t need to follow them into chaos and confusion. They don’t have to guide and define you.”

The scriptures are filled with stories of people who became world changers, at least in part, because they did not let their feelings master them. Moses, despite his fears, chose to do what God called him to do. Elijah, despite his despair, chose to do what God called him to do. Peter, James, and John chose to follow Jesus despite their deep feelings of unworthiness and inadequacy. All were guests on the Mount of Transfiguration, just before Jesus made the ultimate choice to go to the cross.

God created us to experience a wide range of emotions. But it is encouraging to learn from the examples of so many that the impact of our lives is not defined and determined by the rise and fall of our feelings, but rather by our choices.

PRAYER

Lord, you know the depths of my feelings. During this Lenten season, please send Your light into my darkness. And help me to say with the psalmist, “Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.”

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