

**Leader's Community Group Study Guide**  
For the week of May 17, 2020

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**FOOD DROP OFF - Friday's 11:00am - 2:00pm**

*3 Ways to Give to the Food Drive:*

*Drop off donations at our Ballast Point Campus, 5101 Bayshore Blvd.*

*(Note: Hours have changed: 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., Fridays only)*

*Ship Items from Amazon or from a local Tampa business to the Ballast Point Campus, 5101 Bayshore Blvd. Tampa, FL 33611*

*Go to [stfchurch.com](http://stfchurch.com) to see list of needs. Contact [marc@stfchurch.com](mailto:marc@stfchurch.com) with any questions.*

**LIFEPATH HOSPICE**

LifePath Hospice cares for over 1000 Tampa residents in their homes. As a church, we have the opportunity to encourage these amazing essential workers by sending them hand-written cards of appreciation. You can mail your card to:

Liz Anderson  
3010 W Azeele St.  
Suite 120  
Tampa, FL 33609

**MY STORY**

1. The writer of Psalms was having an inner discussion with himself. We too have internal dialogs with ourselves. The things we say to ourselves are very important because they determine the things we desire, choose, say, and do. What have you been saying to you about yourself? What have you been saying to yourself about God?

2. Guest speaker, Tony said that as he was laying in the hospital, he asked God, "Why? What is my purpose in all of this?, How long will it be like this?" And yet, he also said that through the church and relationships that he had, such as he did with Pastor JJ, that he knew God loved him, had a plan for him, and will provide for him. When in your life that all seems to make no sense that God has placed people in your life to encourage you?

3. What part of the teaching did you find challenging to your thinking or living?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. From the descriptive words and phrases, what diagnosis best fits the psalmist's condition:

- A. Thirsty?
- B. Depressed?
- C. Excited?
- D. Homesick?
- E. Hopeful?
- F. Plagued by spiritual doubts?

2. Although the psalmist asks the same question in 42:9 that his foes ask in 42:3 and 42:10, what is the difference in how these questions are put? What does this say about the dark side of faith and the sunny side of doubt?

*In the verses leading up to the statement that “deep calls to deep,”(v7) the songwriter says he has been thirsting for the presence of God like a deer panting for streams of water (Psalm 42:1). The songwriter waffles between confidence that he would soon be able to praise the Lord as he had in the past, and despair over his present affliction.*

*The language of Psalm 42 is poetic and metaphorical. “Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; All Your waves and billows have gone over me” (Psalm 42:7, NKJV). The songwriter portrays his distress figuratively: it's as if waves and breakers are sweeping over him. Trouble was surging, with one overwhelming swell coming after another. The “deep” trials he faced kept coming, wave-like—deep after deep.*

*The psalmist calls out from his place of profound need for the unfathomable greatness of God. A deep need calls for a deep remedy.*

*Our wisdom is shallow, but His knowledge and judgments are unsearchable (Romans 11:33–34). God's thoughts are deep (Psalm 92:5). His love is as deep as His immense heart (Ephesians 3:18–19), as He proved when He gave His only begotten Son to die for us (John 3:16). The height, breadth, and depth of God's resources are without measure. From the depth of his despair, the psalmist found help in the depth of God's goodness, and he was able to say in conclusion, “Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!” (Psalm 42:11, NLT).*

3. What causes God to seem far away at times? Who moved, God or you? How might this Psalm help you in times when you wonder where God is?

## TAKING IT HOME

1. When adulting, parenting or your marriage seems difficult and overwhelming, who can you speak honestly with? Who speaks Godly truths back to you? Do you listen?

2. Today, when it feels as if no one understands, what gospel will you preach to you? What song will you sing to recall who God is in the midst of your suffering?

*(God uses suffering to take our eyes off this world and turn them to the next. The Bible continually exhorts us to not get caught up in the things of this world but to look forward to the world to come. The innocent suffer in this world, but this world and all that is in it will pass away; the kingdom of God is eternal. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36), and those who follow Him do not see the things of this life, good or bad, as the end of the story. Even the sufferings we endure, as terrible as they can be, "are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).*

*Could God prevent all suffering? Of course He could. But He assures us that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28, KJV). Suffering—even the suffering of the innocent—is part of the "all things" that God is using to accomplish His good purposes, ultimately. His plan is perfect, His character is flawless, and those who trust Him will not be disappointed.*

*We put our trust in the fact that God does not lie, He never changes, and His Word stands true forever (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Psalm 110:4; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 7:21; 13:8, James 1:17; 1 Peter 1:25). We do not lose heart over painful circumstances because we live by faith in every word that has proceeded from the mouth of God, not putting our hope in what is seen or perceived. We trust God that our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs all the suffering that we will endure on this earth. So, we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, because we know and believe that what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal (2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 5:7). We also trust God's Word, which says He is constantly working things together for the good of those who love Him and have been called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). Even though we do not always see the good ends to which God is working things out, we can be assured that a time will come when we will understand and see more clearly.*

*Our lives are like a quilt. If you look at the back side of a quilt, all you see is a mess of knots and loose ends hanging out all over. It is very unattractive, and there seems to be no rhyme or reason to the work. Yet when you turn the quilt over, you see how the maker has craftily woven together each strand to form a beautiful creation, much like the life of a believer (Isaiah 64:8). We live with a limited understanding of the things of God, yet a day is coming when we will know and understand all things (Job 37:5; Isaiah 40:28; Ecclesiastes 11:5; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 1 John 3:2). Where is God when it hurts? The message to take with you in hard times is that when you cannot see His hand, trust His heart, and know for certain that He has not forsaken you. When you seem to have no strength of your own, that is when you can most fully rest in His presence and know that His strength is made perfect in your weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).*

**Please take some time to open up another zoom call with men only/women only, and spend time in sharing and praying Psalm 42:11 over one another. As we listen to one another, may we breathe Godly truths into one another to encourage and be good listeners for those who are hurting.**

## **PRAYER REQUESTS**