

Psalm 43:1-5 – God of refuge

Written by Crystal Zook, GC sophomore

¹Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people; from those who are deceitful and unjust deliver me! ²For 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? ³O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. ⁴Then 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. ⁵Why 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.

Today's passage comes from Psalm 43. I have always felt that it should be connected with Psalm 42. In fact, they are two of my favorite psalms. I turn to them at the times I feel God is so far away and has forgotten about me. With the psalmist I say "Why have you forgotten me? (Psalm 42:9). We ask him to send us his light and his truth in the midst of our pain, in the midst of feeling lost and alone so that we know he is there. We want to praise him, but we don't always know how.

It helps me to know that the writers of these psalms felt far from God at times. I know others have gone through hard times and have come through. God has not forgotten me just as he had not forgotten them. These psalms resonate with my pain but remind me that there is much more to life. There is always hope even if we can't seem to find it.

I find this assurance in verse 5 which is repeated three times in 16 verses. "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." Because of this verse, I have written in my Bible that God is someone we can always hope in even when we think he has forgotten us.

One of my favorite songs is "Praise You In This Storm" by Casting Crowns, which reminds us that God will never leave us; we can turn to him to seek refuge in any storm. Even if the storm around us does not stop, we will not be on our own. "And I'll praise you in this storm and I will lift my hands, for You are who You are no matter where I am, and every tear I've cried You hold in your hand, You never left my side and though my heart is torn, I will praise You in this storm." Can we do the same?

Can we continue to place our hope in God even in the midst of a storm?