

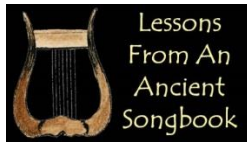
# Vying For Vindication

## May 13, 2018

### OPEN

Can you think of a time when a minor misunderstanding caused a chuckle?

How do you usually respond when you are the victim of misunderstanding?



We are examining selected Psalms written by the sons of Korah, who were temple musicians. In Psalm 43 we learn about the pain of misunderstanding.

### DIG

Psalm 43 offers three steps for managing misunderstanding by God's grace.

#### **Step One - identify injustice - vv. 1-2**

The first misunderstanding mentioned in Psalm 43 is from an "ungodly nation." What examples can you give of ways that our society at large misunderstands or misrepresents the Church?

Why is there opposition to the Gospel from our society? Consider what Jesus said to His disciples in John 15:18-23.

When it comes to protecting religious liberty, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada is a great resource. They are involved in a number of national issues on behalf of churches across Canada – click below for more info



The second way which the psalmist was misunderstood was from an "unjust man". This does bring up the experience of personal misunderstandings.

Why is it so painful to be misunderstood in our inter-personal relationships?

How does being misunderstood add to spiritual despair, even when we know God is our Rock and Refuge? (see Psalm 42:9 and 43:2)

In what ways does Satan tempt us with the false notion that God is not present or aware of our experience of being misunderstood?

#### **Step Two - learn leaning - v. 3**

Is leaning on Jesus something that we do naturally?

How do we get to the point where we can cling to God and His presence even in devastating and difficult times? See verse 3

What does it mean to lean into God's light? See Psalm 36:9, Isaiah 60:1-3

*I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.*

- C. S. Lewis

What does it mean to lean into God's truth? Consider the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego found in Daniel 3. To what lengths were they prepared to go in order to trust in the truth of God's character?

#### **Step Three - readily recommit - vv. 4-5**

After the impact of light and truth upon one's life there has to be ongoing, meaningful engagement with God - recommitting to Him readily and willingly.

Why is joy such an important quality in the life of the believer? See verse 4

Review the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Could the use of "joy" in Psalm 43:4 suggest that all the fruit of the Holy Spirit reveals that we are one trusting God in a time of misunderstanding?

The refrain in verse 5 is the same as in 42:5 and 11. What is the choice that the psalm writer presents to himself...and to us?

### REFLECT

When there is misunderstanding, deep hurt can result. If that hurt is left unresolved, what can develop in the heart of a person?

How did Jesus respond when He was misrepresented? See I Peter 2:21-23. What can we learn from His example?

Managing misunderstanding is not simple, but by God's grace it is possible.

Can you identify a recent misunderstanding that you need to release to God right now? Why not go through the above steps, prayerfully, and let God change your heart from hurt to hope...

For some further reading, click [here](#) for what Leon F. Seltzer writes about the nine reasons why people misunderstand one another. Do you agree or disagree with his conclusions?