



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC	A Prayer for the Valleys	SPEAKER	Bishop Emeritus Gordon Wong
THEME	A Disciple-Making Church	DATE	18 & 19 Jul 2026

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Bishop Emeritus Gordon Wong shares about Psalms 42-43 as a guide to how we should pray to God when we are in the deep dark valleys of life. Firstly, Psalm 42:1-5 talks about spiritual dryness and the Psalmist yearning for God, who seems to be very far from him and his struggles. Secondly, Psalm 42:6-11 talks about how the Psalmist feels drowned by sorrow and forgotten by God, yet he deliberately turns to memory and truth. By day, God commands his steadfast love, and in the night, his song is with him. Lastly, Psalms 43:1-5 talks about how he laments to God that he feels deserted, holding both his confidence and his confusion before God at once.

This honest prayer of lamenting to God in this Psalm serves as a lesson to us that even as we struggle in our lives, we can still lament to God and be in communion with Him, as compared to turning away from God. The call to action from this sermon is to keep praying for God's light and truth even in the difficult situations of life.

KEY THEMES – PSALM of LAMENT

1) God welcomes our honest laments, not just our polished praise

The Psalmist did not hide his despair. Instead, he tells God plainly that he feels far away, drowned by sorrow, and even deserted. Bishop Wong reminds us that this raw honesty is prayer. We do not need to clean ourselves up before coming to God; the deep dark valleys of life are exactly where we can pour out our confusion and pain directly to him. Lamenting is not a lack of faith but it's an act of trust that keeps the relationship open.

2) Hold onto memory and truth when your feelings say God has forgotten you

In Psalm 42:6–11, the Psalmist feels overwhelmed, yet he deliberately turns his mind to what he knows is true: that by day God commands His steadfast love, and by night, His song is with him. The lesson is that feelings are real but not always reliable. When God seems distant, we anchor

ourselves not in how we feel but in what God has already shown us of His faithfulness, choosing to remember His character over trusting our circumstances.

3) Stay in communion with God rather than turning away, keep praying for His light and truth.

The great temptation in suffering is to withdraw from God. But Psalms 42–43 show us the better path: to keep talking to God, holding both our confidence and our confusion before Him at once. The sermon's call to action is to keep praying for God's light and truth even in our hardest situations, trusting that He will lead us back into His presence, which is our exceeding joy.

CONCLUSION

Psalms 42–43 remind us that the deep, dark valleys of life are not places where faith goes silent, but places where honest prayer is born. Bishop Emeritus Gordon Wong shows us a Psalmist who feels dry, drowned, and deserted — and yet never stops speaking to God. He holds his confidence and his confusion together, lamenting freely while still hoping deeply. This is the heart of the lesson: our struggles are not a reason to turn away from God, but an invitation to draw nearer to Him, pouring out our pain and clinging to what we know of His steadfast love.

The call to action is simple but demanding: keep praying. When life feels overwhelming and God seems far off, don't retreat into silence or self-reliance. Instead, bring your honest laments before God, remember His faithfulness by day and night, and keep asking Him to send out His light and His truth to lead you home.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you find it easy or hard to be this honest with God when you're struggling? Why?

2. What truths about God, or past experiences of His faithfulness, help you hold on when your feelings say He's far away?

3. What is one situation in your life right now where you need to keep praying instead of withdrawing? How can this group support you?