

"Yet Have We Not Forgotten Thee"

Psalm 44

In churches like ours today, it's easy to forget that if it weren't for the grace of God, we wouldn't be where we are. We may look at our ministries, families, or spiritual progress and begin to think it's the result of our own strength or strategy. But Psalm 44 reminds us otherwise—it calls us to remember that every victory, every blessing, every step forward has always been by God's hand, not ours.

But this psalm also confronts a harder truth: that even when we are doing what is right – even when we are faithful – things can still go painfully wrong. Sometimes our suffering is not because we've wandered from God, but because we're walking with Him. And in those moments, it can feel like God is silent or distant.

Psalm 44 walks us through that tension. It begins by remembering when and how God delivered His people in the past. It shifts to remembering who God is, even when current circumstances don't seem to reflect His favor. Then, it wrestles with the "why" – why trials come despite obedience – and ends by remembering where our hope lies: in God's mercy, not our understanding.

This psalm is an invitation to remember. Remember what God has done. Remember who He is. Remember that even when you don't know why, or where He seems to be, He has not forgotten you.

I. REMEMBER WHEN – GOD'S PAST FAITHFULNESS – VS. 1-2

LOOKING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD

| Let's begin where the psalmist begins – with a call to

remember when God worked mightily in the past, not only for our forefathers in the faith but as a foundation for our trust today.

- The psalm begins by rehearsing history – Israel's deliverance and establishment in the land. (*"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us..."*)
- God's work was active (*"Thou didst drive out..."*) and personal.
- This is not just nostalgia – it's theological memory. It anchors the present in God's past acts.

Application questions:

- Am I building my faith on what God has done – or on what I see now?
- Do I take time to recall and retell the stories of God's faithfulness in my life?

Remembering when God moved in the past gives fuel for faith in the present.

II. REMEMBER HOW – GOD'S SOVEREIGN HAND – VS. 3

"IT WASN'T US"

But it's not just about what God did – it's about **how** He did it. The psalmist reminds us that it wasn't by Israel's might or wisdom, but by God's power and grace. That's still true for us today.

The psalmist highlights how victory came – not through human strength, but through:

- God's right hand – His power.
- God's arm – His activity.
- God's face ("countenance") – His favor and delight.

Application questions:

- Do I take credit for things God has done?
- How can I better acknowledge God's role in my success and survival?

God's people prosper not because of merit, but because of mercy.

III. REMEMBER WHO – GOD, OUR KING AND CONFIDENCE – vs. 4-8

“FAITH IN THE FACE OF FEAR”

Having recalled the “when” and the “how,” the psalmist now turns his eyes upward to **who** God is – the King, the Deliverer, the One in whom we boast. This is where confidence is renewed.

This section is a confession of trust:

- Verse 4 – Declaration of God's kingship.
- Verses 5-6 – Confidence is not in weaponry but in God.
- Verse 7 – God is the One who saves.
- Verse 8 – Their boast is in God and their praise is continual.

Application questions:

- Is my trust in God, or in my strategies, abilities, or resources?
- Can I still praise God *before* the victory comes?

It's easy to praise God in the victory. What about when the battle turns?

IV. REMEMBER WHY – THE PAIN OF FAITHFULNESS – vs. 9-22

But then comes the tension – life doesn't always feel like victory. The psalm takes a sharp turn, and we're forced to wrestle with the question, “Why are we

suffering when we've remained faithful?"

A. The confusion of rejection - vs. 9-12

The psalmist begins this section with the word "But" – signaling a dramatic contrast.

"But thou hast cast off, and put us to shame..." (v. 9)

- Despite their faith and heritage, God has allowed defeat, shame, and plunder.
- The verbs are stark: *cast off, go not forth, turnest us back, spoil for the enemy, scattered among the heathen.*
- These are not minor setbacks—they're signs of military defeat, national humiliation, and divine silence.

Application: Sometimes the faithful feel forsaken. Not because they've rebelled, but because God's providence includes suffering we don't understand.

Application Questions:

- Have I ever felt like God was "absent" in a moment of crisis?
- How do I typically respond when it seems like God is no longer fighting for me?

B. The depth of suffering - vs. 13-16

"Thou makest us a reproach... a byword among the heathen..."

- The suffering is public, shameful, and ongoing.
- Verse 15 says *"my confusion is continually before me"* – this is not momentary discouragement. It's deep, prolonged anguish.

Application: Faith doesn't always come with answers. But it *does* keep speaking to God – even when confused. The psalmist is still praying.

Application Questions:

- How do I handle public failure or mockery tied to my faith?
- Can I still praise God when others ridicule me for trusting Him?

C. The innocence of the people - vs. 17-21

Here the psalmist declares their integrity:

"All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee..."

- They had not broken the covenant.
- Their hearts had not turned back.
- If they had secretly harbored idolatry, God would know (v. 21), for He knows the secrets of the heart.

Key Insight: This is not the suffering of the wicked. It's the *unexplained suffering of the righteous* – and the psalm admits that mystery.

Application Questions:

- Am I willing to remain faithful to God even when I don't understand what He's doing?
- Do I maintain integrity before God even when it doesn't seem to "pay off"?

D. The purpose in the suffering - vs. 22

This is a stunning verse. It acknowledges that the suffering is not accidental, nor the result of sin, but is somehow for God's sake – on account of their faithfulness to Him.

- “Killed all the day long” – continual, systemic suffering.
- “Counted as sheep for the slaughter” – treated as expendable, vulnerable.

Quoted in Romans 8:36:

“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

Paul uses this verse in Romans 8:36 to reinforce that even suffering, persecution, or death does not separate us from God’s love.

Paul’s point is: Don’t be surprised when faith brings suffering. In fact, being “more than conquerors” (v. 37) doesn’t mean we escape pain – it means we endure it through Christ’s love, which never fails us.

In Context:

- In Psalm 44, the verse expresses pain and confusion—but also loyalty. They are suffering *because they belong to God*.
- In Romans 8, the verse becomes a demonstration of faithfulness – our suffering does not prove abandonment but affirms allegiance. And through Christ, we have ultimate victory, even when the world counts us as sheep to be slaughtered.

Application Questions:

- Do I accept that faith may lead to suffering?
- How does the truth of Romans 8:37 help me persevere when I feel like verse 22?

V. REMEMBER WHERE – THE PLEA FOR GOD’S PRESENCE – vs. 23-26

And in the middle of unanswered questions, the

psalmist lifts his voice in a final plea – not just for answers, but for God's presence. He's asking, "Where are You, Lord?" – not in doubt, but in desperate dependence.

A. An urgent awakening - vs. 23

"Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever."

- The psalmist speaks boldly but reverently, as if God were asleep.
- It's not a theological claim that God sleeps – it's an emotional expression of divine silence.
- "Cast us not off for ever" reveals fear – not of punishment, but of permanent abandonment.

Application Questions:

- Have I ever felt like heaven was silent?
- Do I still cry out to God when I feel ignored, or have I grown distant?

B. A burdened appeal - vs. 24

"Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?"

- The "hiding of God's face" is a poetic way of describing His perceived absence.
- The psalmist doesn't accuse – he pleads. This is honest, relational prayer.
- The question isn't, "Are You real?" but "Where are You in this?"

Application Questions:

- When I don't sense God's presence, do I lean into prayer or withdraw in discouragement?
- How can I model honest lament without losing

reverence?

C. A humble acknowledgment - vs. 25

"For our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth."

- They confess their helplessness and brokenness.
- This is language of humiliation and desperation – laid out before God, spiritually and emotionally crushed.
- It's a posture of full surrender, not pride or defiance.

Application Questions:

- Do I approach God in humility during hardship, or do I demand answers?
- What might God be shaping in me during my lowest moments?

D. A hopeful request - vs. 26

"Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake."

- This final verse returns to hope, but it's a hope grounded in God's mercy, not their merit.
- The word "redeem" reflects covenant language—they are appealing to the God who has promised to rescue.
- Not "because we deserve it," but *"for thy mercies' sake."*

Bridge to Christ:

This is the language of the Gospel – we don't come based on worthiness, but through the mercy of God. And in Christ, we know this mercy has already

been secured.

Application Questions:

- Do I rest in the mercy of God even when I don't understand His methods?
- Is my faith anchored in His character, or in what I think He should do?

Conclusion: Psalm 44 leaves us in a place many of us know well – caught between what we know about God and what we feel in our circumstances. The psalmist teaches us that faith doesn't always look like answers – sometimes it looks like remembering, lamenting, waiting, and clinging. He remembers when God moved, how He worked, and who He is – but he also remembers that there are times when faith hurts.

And yet, he doesn't stop praying. He doesn't stop trusting. He doesn't stop hoping. Because God's past faithfulness is still the foundation for present trust – even when we don't understand the “why” or “where.”

Romans 8 reminds us that even when we feel like sheep headed for the slaughter, nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Our cry of “*Awake, O Lord*” finds its answer in “*It is finished.*”

So today, remember. Remember what God has done. Remember who He is. Remember that He is still working – even in silence – and that His mercy never fails.