

Psalm (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

[0 : 00] and appear before God. Psalm 42 and the second verse.

I wonder how many of you who are here before God in the attitude of worship can find in your hearts an amen to this petition which welled up in the Psalmist's breast long ago.

My soul thirsteth for God for the living God. And it means that the Psalmist wanted something which a man cannot receive except it be given him from heaven.

And it is well to have uppermost in our thoughts in journeying on through life that our religion must come from heaven. God must be the author of it if you and I at the end of life's journey are going to heaven.

Vain is all our best devotion if on false foundations built. True religions more than notion. something must be known and felt.

[1 : 41] And when it comes to the question of religion that is felt and that which out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh alas our little religion many of us seem to be the subject of judged according to that blessed necessary sure scriptural standard.

And now if that is how you feel in your soul's exercises this word of the Psalmist will be a help to you my soul thirsteth for God for the living God when shall I come and appear before God and ere I come to open up the subject as my mind runs let your consciences tell you whether you are concerned as you are hearing the attitude of worship to appear before God it will help you to come to a right conclusion as to your religion being that which God has wrought within which alone will do to live by and die by you are not here as a chapel goer only you are here if you have come a right with that concern what is the house to me unless the master

I can see you want to appear before God find in him all your salvation all your desire you want to appear before God because he alone can help you to feel as you want to feel that matters are right between your soul and God you want to appear before God that you might get this word fulfilled the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God assure my conscience of her part in the redeemer's blood and bear the witness with my heart that I am born of God oh it is a wonderful mercy to know what this thirst for God is in our souls experience and remember the nature of it is spiritual and this thirst for God can only be known where a new heart is given a new spirit implanted where there is a spiritual mind do you feel that you possess a spiritual mind let your consciences tell you dear friends the word of God is very searching and solemn examine yourselves and see whether ye be in the faith or know the word of God says and that was said to people with names on church rolls a very solemn consideration and the word of God tells us

God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth and there is another thought here that needs to be emphasized my soul thirsteth for God for the living God the psalmist could not be content with that which was but outside show he wanted that secret something which must be known and felt the living God he who declares because I live ye shall live also he who has made that wondrous proclamation I am the resurrection and the life whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die the living

God I am he that liveth and was dead and behold I am alive forevermore and have the keys of hell and of death and now I want as the Lord to help me to look at this subject from just two simple viewpoints first of all there is the psalmist case and then there is the psalmist concern the psalmist case was my soul thirsty for God for the living God and his concern was when shall I come and appear before God think of it like this when will that time come in my life you have been singing about it the time of love will come when each shall clearly see not only that Christ shed his blood but each shall save for me when shall I come and appear before God and feel my beloved is mine and I am his and his desire is toward me the opening word in the psalm is very suggestive

[8 : 30] I have been glad to look at it quite a few times as the heart panteth after the water books so panteth my soul after thee O God panteth is very helpful there are times when you cannot say much about what you feel in things divine and the psalmist says in another psalm I opened my mouth and panteth or do you ever get like that as you journey on through life I opened my mouth and panted panted for want of breath heavenly breath panted to breathe the atmosphere of heaven that my soul might be revived enlarged and comforted as the heart panteth after the water books so panteth my soul after thee

O God mark the word in here although it is not the text I make this comment on it you can think of the water books as the means of grace there is to be found living water but you have to realize a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven and while we in the means are found we still alone on thee depend to make the gospels joyful sound effectual to the promised end you will see that the psalmist says as the heart panteth after the water books so panteth my soul after thee O God and whatever means of grace you may be found in in your soul thirsting for living water you will have to be in this attitude my soul thirsteth for God he and he alone can help me to feel as I want to feel and looking at this thirst for God there are some characteristics of it my soul thirsted for God my soul

I think it would surprise you if you went through the Psalms of David and searched out how often he says my soul my soul my soul whatever changes he was going through and whatever troubles were beaten upon his head you will invariably find that his reaction was my soul oh that my soul may get some good thereby let my soul live and it shall praise thee and let thy judgments help me and here he is harping on that same string as the heart panteth after the water books so panteth my soul after thee oh

God my soul thirsteth for God for the living God what does that teach us whatever bodily comforts you may have as you journey on through life lawful comforts and they may be heaped upon you but they will never enable you to feel matters are right between your soul and God earthly comforts are bodily comforts things to do things to do with their everyday life and they are time things what alone would do your soul good must be eternal in its nature remember that I cannot hear contentedly with all the dainties earth can give the

God of spirits only can fill up the vast desires of man and it will be well if you are here before God and if you are saying I hope you are or the equivalent of it how stands the case my soul with thee for heaven are thy credentials clear oh that is one thing you will thirst for you will be waiting on God to obtain clear credentials not to be just a chapel goer and come with unfailing regularity and build your hope of heaven upon that for that will be to build upon the sand oh what you want is something from God my soul thirst for God something that will buoy up your soul in a good hope through grace yes and now do let your consciences tell you if you are here with a concern to get some good for your souls is that how you appear before

[14 : 43] God this Sabbath morn the Lord bless you if that is your case and I may tell you you are blessed already and you will be blessed much more as you journey on through life blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled and now we look at this thirst for God it is a wonderful feeling to be the subject of and it can only be known as a miracle is wrought in a sinner's breast ye must be born again and while you may not have much that is definite and clear cut that you can tell out as to when you were born again you will have one sure evidence that you are see if you possess it you will have an aching void which this world cannot fill you will have this feeling

I hunger now for heavenly food and my poor soul cries out for God you will not be able to rejoice in the Lord only as he is pleased to smile upon you and put the great question out of question and you can say my Lord and my God it might be said when a sinner is born again and he begins to know this thirst for God it is a very mingled experience when you have this thirst for God first of all because when he the spirit of truth is come he shall convince the world of sin and when a sinner is being led into a gracious conviction of sin it is a very painful experience and it may be a very surprising one because it is the opening up to that sinner of what he is by nature which shall know every man the plague of his own heart and as that malady is revealed and he goes deeper down into it he feels more and more that he is a miserable sinner and as yet he is a sinner helpless and hopeless and he looks within and wonders can ever

God dwell here and yet under it all there is a thirst for God and while the malady do follow this along while the malady is being revealed in the poor sinner is learning the leprosy lies deep within underneath it all there is a thirst for the remedy as that word is made plain and the lepers are cleansed Jesus used blood through earth and skies mercy eternal mercy Christ and as those good tidings of great joy proclaimed in the gospel reach the poor sinner's ears and go down into his heart and he ponders them before

God it sets going this thirst thirst for God I'll to the gracious king approach who set to pardon gives perhaps he will command my touch and then the suppliant lives and how does that sinner thirst for God then the psalmist will tell you hey and some of you have said it many times maybe hundreds of times if you have lived long show me a token for good what does that mean a token for good such a token as God alone can communicate with thus saith the Lord say unto my soul I am thy salvation remember me O Lord with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people O you are glad sometimes to say show me some token

Lord for good some token of thy special love show me that I am born of God and that my treasure is above my soul thirst for God like that it can be said that it is a thirst for an interest in Calvary's cross what was done there on you want to behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world and nothing else will allay your fears nothing else will satisfy your soul nothing else will enable you to feel you have got sure support in your soul's experience all you want to realize on

[20 : 57] Christ the solid rock I stand all other ground is sinking sand my soul thirsteth for God you will thirst not so much for religion although you will want religion that is of God but you will thirst for God I do want you to weigh that up because there is quite a thirst for religion in the church of Christ professing nowadays but then so much of it is just religiosity it is not religion that God has wrought in poor sinners souls but folk are just religious either chapel goers or church goers and don't you call the preacher narrow-minded but you can look into the word of God and get it confirmed yes a solemn thing of saint to appear grow up with wheat and prove to be a tear and now you will have that feeling in your soul if you were taught of

God and that will be one thing that you will thirst for God that you might not be deceived or deceive other people amongst whom you live and move remember that it is not written without deep meaning having a form of godliness and no power having a name to live but dead there is a way that seemeth to be right unto a man but the end thereof is the way of death as you are led into the truth and you will be if God has begun his good work in you you will have to weigh all these things up and especially as you go down into life's evening time and it will astonish you sometimes when you're old and gray headed how very little religion you seem to possess at the end of a long profession of the name of

Jesus and to a great degree from the outside viewpoint one that is consistent before man whatever you may feel before God but in your thirst for God you will come to this my soul into thy arms I cast I trust I shall be saved at last and remember the hymn writer was old and gray headed when he said Lord decide the doubtful case thou who art thy people's son shine upon the work of grace if indeed it be begun there are these ifs and buts and hows and you thirst for God then and you thirst that your soul may be confirmed you remember that word in the Acts of the Apostles how they went about confirming the souls of the disciples and that would be one thing one characteristic of your thirst for

God whenever you hear the gospel priest whoever the preacher is as long as he has got divine authority to be a preacher you will thirst for confirmation in your soul that the good work is indeed a good work as you hope it is and you will be oh so glad when you can say the watchmen that go about the city they found me and your soul is confirmed but that will be one characteristic of your thirst for God if you are the subject of it I leave the if with you my soul thirsteth for God for the living God another thing you will thirst for and that is communion with God God I do not know how you feel about it but it means much more than to put our prayers together in words the words may be correct and they set forth our experience at the present time whatever that may be but you know if you tell the truth that often in your attempts to pray there is a great deal of repetition at least there is in the pastor's prayers it may be better with some of you

I hope it is but it is not vain repetition and now what you will thirst for in your attempts to pray is that you may feel with Asap it is good for me to draw near unto God you will thirst for the spirit of prayer the grace of supplication and you will never be content with just words words put together though they be sound doctrine and state a correct experience you want God yes my soul thirsteth for God not all the good earth can afford is equal to thy presence Lord a fainting hearts to cheer abide with us Lord with us dwell then come what will it shall be well it is well if thou it me oh I do hope you know something of this thirst for God many of you my soul thirsteth for

[27 : 06] God you will thirst for this sweet communion which charms the soul and gives true peace and joy yes and you will thirst too for the love of God I do like that word of the apostles to the godly thessalonians the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God oh if he would only be pleased to do it for all of us who were sinners born again if he would only be pleased to do it in a wondrous outpouring of the spirit from on high in our own denominational life love all defects supplies yes makes great obstruction small tis prayer tis praise tis sacrifice tis holiness tis all the love of God which is in

Christ Jesus our Lord my soul thirsteth for God another thing you will be thirsting for in the dealings of God with you you will want to have dealings with him and that you may humble yourself under his mighty hand in his dealings with you is that how you feel when trouble comes into your life comes upon you comes upon yours how do you react to it go back to what I said about the psalmist do you meet trouble with that petition let my soul live and it shall praise thee let thy judgments help me let this trouble be overruled for my soul's eternal good let me know the sweets of sanctified trouble let but my faint in heart be blessed with thy sweet spirit for its guest oh God to thee

I leave the rest thy will be done it is a wonderful thing when you can find in your heart a thirst for God in a time of trouble I do like Job in many viewpoints of how we behaved in the dealings of God with him and he says I would seek unto God and unto God would I commit my cause oh my friends when trouble comes upon us or ours if you were taught of God you soon are brought down into that bedrock truth none but Jesus none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good and that brings you to thirst for God Lord help me oh Lord

I am oppressed undertake for me Lord save or I perish yes my soul thirsteth for God and the apostle Paul beautifully describes this thirst when he said that I may win Christ and be found in him not having on mine own righteousness which is of the law but the righteousness which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ and I might add that is what you will be thirsting for righteousness which will make you meet for the inheritance of the saints in life and you will sing the words and pray at the same time naked I come to thee for dress and helpless look to thee for grace my soul thirsteth for God for thee living

God another thing you will be thirsting for and that is heavenly teaching there is this word to ponder and they shall be all taught of God none teaches like him mark what I said heavenly teaching and do not forget there is earthly teaching in religion earthly teaching that will show you what is sound doctrine you can study up sound doctrine I remember when God began to deal with me in my late teenage life that my pastor who baptized me advised me to get one work the

[32 : 38] Elisha calls on divine sovereignty because I wanted to know what were the foundation truths of our most holy faith and I looked into Elisha calls on divine sovereignty and being of a studious frame of mind I soon got the outline of it but I have been all my lifetime ever since learning how to reduce it to practice and realize it as a right experience before God you can get the articles of faith memorized you might pass an examination in setting them forth but you must get deeper down the word of God says the house of Israel shall take route downward and bear fruit upward therefore you will never be content with having just what is the outline of truth the letter of it which you can gain by dint of study and earthly teaching you will thirst for

God lead me in thy truth and teach me heavenly teaching oh send out thy light in thy truth let them lead me let them bring me to thy holy hill and to thy tabernacles yes my soul thirst for God you might say I wish the pastor would tell us just what is heavenly teaching well it is just this I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all and Jesus Christ is my all in all and that is what you will find it to be when God leads you into it nothing in my hand I bring as having nothing and yet possessing all things go back to what

I hinted about the apostle Paul that I may win Christ and be found in him a guilty weak and helpless worm on thy kind arms I fall be thou my strength my righteousness my Jesus and my all do look down into your hearts and see if you have got this thirst for God if you are after some of these things I am aiming to set before you as characteristics of it my soul thirsteth for God another thing you will thirst for is not only Lord teach us to pray oh that is a good thirst to possess but there is something beyond that you will thirst for answers to prayer you think of godly Hannah a woman of a sorrowful spirit and her great exercise of mind that she should have a son for this child I prayed his name is

Samuel asked of god and it is a wonderful confession of faith that christ is god i can avouch and for his people cares since i have prayed to him as such and he has heard my prayers and now that is a thirst for god you want something from god you want to say as david did blessed be god for he hath heard my prayer and turned away his mercy from me and following this line of thought you will thirst to be spiritually minded you could tell us a great deal i have no doubt of what it is to be carnally minded is death you have a great proportion of that in your everyday life but there is that sweet blessed experience to be spiritually minded is life and peace and now that is what you thirst after not to be always saying my soul cleaveth to the dust but to ascend into heavenly places in

Christ Jesus yes it is a wonderful mercy to be sometimes spiritually minded the things of god to be uppermost in our thoughts and to be as it were our meat and drink yes my soul thirsteth for god and one characteristic of this thirst will be that you will thirst for a thankful heart you see if you are taught of god if you are a heaven bound pilgrim you will be aware how many mercies attend you along life's way and you will have a concern not to let them lie forgotten in unthankfulness and without praises die but there you will learn your utter helplessness your inability to do good but you will not rest there in that knowledge and that painful experience you will thirst for god that he will give you what he alone can bestow a thankful heart that you might render unto him again for the benefits conferred upon you and you will be like the hymn writer oh bless the lord my soul nor let his mercies lie forgotten in unthankfulness and without praises die much might be said along that line of thought my soul thirsteth for god and you will thirst for this see if you do to live right in your everyday life to show whose you are and whom you serve to be looking for grace to help in time of need wisdom to handle life's matters wisely to thirst like the psalmist sets forth in another psalm let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight oh lord my strength and my redeemer oh you will have that thirst for god that god may be in your life your lips and you let your life and acts express the holy gospel you profess my soul thirst for god for the living god and now this is an outline as i view it of the psalmist case but then there is the second viewpoint i named the psalmist concerned when shall i come and appear before god did you ever do it look back over your life the way matters up is you were here before god and see if at any special time it was given to you to appear before god regarding your soul and it's eternal welfare i can tell you how you felt when you first of all appeared before god you felt although you could not describe it a wonderful fellow feeling

[41 : 43] with the publican when he appeared before god god be merciful to me a sinner you felt to be a sinner you could not say much about it but it was to you a reality you felt to be a real sinner and you felt at length no sinner needed mercy more than ever saw god's face and especially if you had to appear before god under his holy law and be taught your sinnership by terrible things in righteousness and remember godly david did appear before god like that because he says in one psalm the pains of hell got hold upon me i found trouble and sorrow then cried i o lord god i beseech thee deliver my soul when shall i come and appear before god and now that is one appearing we may say it is the earliest appearing before god that a sinner being led into the truth realizes he appears before god as a sinner lost and he is made to know none but jesus can do helpless sinners good neither is their salvation in any other there is given under heaven among men none other name whereby we can be saved can you remember i do stress this in my ministry and i shall continue to stress it you should remember when you did appear before god first of all to pray behold he pray behold she pray there is a beginning to appear in before god and to knock at mercy's door then you should be able to search out something in your life that will help you as to when you did appear before god first of all to knock at mercy's door then began men to call on the name of the lord and that word i will make that plain as the lord should help me to call on the name of the lord means not only to pray but it is all to do with the worship of god in every aspect of it and you should remember when you did first of all appear before god concerned to be a true worshipper and you wanted to participate in the things of god as they were set forth and you were no more just a chapel goer but you were concerned to appear before god do weigh it up dear friends preacher and people alike are dying people with never dying souls and some of those who were young may yet die before those of us who are old when i appeal to you dear young people to search out whether you have ever yet appeared before god to beg a blessing indeed like

jabez of old whether you have ever yet gone aside in secret and asked god to give you some religion like he has given your godly father your godly mother and to lead you into his truth and to fit you for eternity or we do want you to weigh these things up when shall I come and appear before god there is an appearing before god in a time of trouble at first when trouble comes your reaction to it may be that you are not in a proper frame of mind you may resent it you may be fretful you may be rebellious and you may be ready to argue with god as to why it should come to you or yours but when you are brought at length to appear before god oh how different you feel lord i would indeed submit gladly yield my all to thee what thy wisdom sees most fit must be surely best for me and it is it is the lord let him do what seemeth him good when shall i come and appear before god there is one more thought as i come to the amen you think of the returning prodigal and that is how a returning prodigal feels when shall i come and appear before god i will arise go on to my father and say unto him father i have sinned against heaven and before thee oh what a wonderful welcome the returning prodigal received while he was yet a long way off his father saw him and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him and had compassion on him and god is just like that to returning prodigals return unto me i will return unto you and you might keep this thought before your minds when shall i come and appear before god and now if you and i know what it is to appear before god at the throne of grace and to be made welcome there and sometimes to go on our way in able to say i love the lord because he has heard the voice of my supplications and therefore i will call upon him as long as i live if you have appeared before god at the throne of grace and been made welcome there when you appear before the throne of god when time shall be no more you will be made welcome there you will hear come ye blessed of my father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world much might be said under that head end my soul thirsteth for god for the living god do remember it is a thirst arising from a new heart a new nature a spiritual mind it

is not like the man in the street i thirst but not as once i did the vain delights of earth to share thy wounds emmanuel all forbid that i should seek my pleasure there my soul thirsteth for god for the living god when shall i come and appear before god amen