

SESSION
2

THE CONVERSATION STARTER

“Escape the Quagmire”

Launch your study with this
CONVERSATION STARTER
Watch the video or read it below.



READ

Before the study, take a moment to read Matt. 14:30-32; Ps. 42-43



HEAR US USE THIS
STUDY GUIDE

Check out our podcast episode #176, “With Feeling!,” as an example of a conversation led by this study guide.

biblegeeks.fm/176



Quicksand looks solid until you step into it. Suddenly, you find yourself stuck and sinking. To escape the quagmire, you have to avoid flailing, shed excess weight, and grab a helping hand. Desperation can lead to abrupt movements, but it makes you sink even further!

We can react to the constant noise in our heads and our feelings of despair in the same way — by busying ourselves and flailing about. But that just digs us deeper! In these moments, we have to “*lay aside every burden*” (Heb. 12:1) and point ourselves toward God, who always stands on firm ground.



THE BIG IDEA

God can calm our fears, anxieties, and crippling uncertainties.

When the storm rages “*in turmoil within*” you (Psalm 42:11), remember how Peter reached out to Jesus and cried out, “Lord, save me,” as he began to sink (Matt. 14:30-32).

The Psalms often mirror our sense of drowning in a chaotic sea. Thankfully, they don’t leave us there. Consider the identical endings of Psalm 42 and 43:

*“Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation and my God”*

— Psalm 42:11 and Psalm 43:5

“*Why are you cast down, O my soul,*” he asks. He wants to understand his “despair” (NASB). The word “cast down” can suggest sinking or melting away. That sinking feeling. If you’ve felt “troubled” (YLT) or “down in the dumps” (MSG), you get it.

The psalmist takes responsibility for himself. He says to himself, “Hey, you’ve forgotten the one fact that could get you through this. You’ve forgotten who God is.” When we have this kind of conversation with ourselves, we learn to lift our downcast chins and force our eyes upward. Wishing can’t do much, but when we *hope* in the One we *know* is able to save us, it can pull us back onto solid ground (Rom. 8:28; Gen. 50:20).



THE BIG QUESTION

What concerns rage inside you, and have you reached out to God for rescue?

Finding Hope

POINT YOURSELF TOWARD GOD

INTRODUCTION



Launch the study with a **CONVERSATION STARTER** on the Big Idea.

Read, listen, or watch “Almost Ancient” – biblegeeks.fm/daily-275 ▶▶▶



ICE BREAKER — Get everyone engaged and talking.

What comfort food do you reach for when you’re down in the dumps?

ACT I



JESUS SAID — Matt. 14:31

What’s the main point of this passage?

What do you learn about truth here?

What insights and applications do you take from these words of Christ? What do we need to get from these words that – if understood and applied – has the power to bless and strengthen us?

How can reflecting on and applying this passage draw us closer to Christ and help us find hope when we’re “sinking” in our troubles?

Is there anything else here you find helpful or interesting? Anything you’ve never noticed before – or have always loved about these words?

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2

STUDY GUIDE

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ACT II



POETRY IN MOTION — Psalm 42 & 43

These psalms are designed to go together, as you can see from the recurring refrain (42:5,11; 43:5). Prepare to move through them quickly, drawing out an insight from each section. When studying in a group, consider having one person assigned to each section, and then having a brief group discussion for that section.

Psalm 42:1-2

Main Point:

Key Word:

Insight/Application:

Psalm 42:3-6

Main Point:

Key Word:

Insight/Application:

Psalm 42:7-8

Main Point:

Key Word:

Insight/Application:

Psalm 42:9-11

Main Point:

Key Word:

Insight/Application:

Psalm 43:1-2

Main Point:

Key Word:

Insight/Application:

Psalm 43:3-5

Main Point:

Key Word:

Insight/Application:

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ACT III



REACH OUT — Connect with each other with this question.

What's your quicksand that leaves you feeling stuck?

WRAP UP



THE CHALLENGE — Ready to put it into practice?

Lift someone up by offering them an encouraging word.



REQUEST — Go to God in a closing prayer.

For example: "Lord, fill me with abounding hope and peace" (cf. Rom 15:13).



NEXT SESSION — Hearing God

Prepare by reading Luke 12:13-21; Ps. 19:7-14; James 4:14-16