

TAKEAWAY

Roadmap

Finding Joy When Life is Tough

FROM SADNESS TO LAMENT SUNDAY 24TH MAY 2021

INTRODUCTION

One Sunday, a number of us returned to in-person church, while others attended church online. With the return to in-person church now possible, we began a short series looking at the move from lament to action in the Bible.

DISCUSS

1. What is the saddest thing you have experienced in life (that you feel willing to share)?
2. What has been the saddest part of the last year – for you and for those around you?
3. How do you generally deal with sadness?

EXPLAIN

The Bible is full of something called lament. To lament is to bring our sadness to God, to tell Him what we are sad about and to unpack how we feel with Him. Someone once said that sadness is human but to lament is Christian. Everyone feels sad at times, but the acting of inviting God into our sadness is a particularly Christian thing.

Laments are common in the Psalms, and often follow a 4-part structure:

1. Turning to God
2. Expressing our sadness
3. Asking for help
4. Trusting God with the future

We don't have to do these things in a rigid order, but they are good to be aware of as an example.

READ

Psalm 13

What is the 'complaint' of the Psalmist, in your own words?

DISCUSS

4. What is the 'complaint' of the Psalmist, in your own words?
5. What does the Psalmist want God to do?

6. How does the Psalmist take responsibility for their own actions and response to the situation?

7. What might cause us to trust God even when difficult circumstances don't change as we'd like?

8. How is a lament, as seen here, different from complaining/whining?

EXPLAIN

One startling thing about this and other Psalms is the 'audacity' the Psalmists have to be so open about their struggles and emotions with God. People of many religions and cultures would be taken aback that a person could presume to approach God like this, but the Psalms show us that God is happy to be spoken to in this way.

DISCUSS

Have you ever spoken to God in the way of this Psalm? Why or why not?

How far do you feel able to be honest with God about how you feel in tough times? How far are you honest with those around you?

THIS WEEK...

We all have things happening in our lives that raise feelings of sadness, anger over injustice, or inadequacy in relationships (including ours with God).

This week, try writing a lament (you don't have to share it!) about what you know grieves you right now.

PRAY