



DIGGING DEEPER

WHERE WERE YOU WHEN...?

APRIL 30

Whether or not you believe in prayer and whether or not you feel like you know how to pray, during this series, you will discover the power of and the path to connecting with God which can bring comfort, hope, and healing. In the midst of your deepest pain, biggest regret, and hardest loss, you can still talk to God.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own or get together with your group, spiritual running partners, or family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you talk to God about your emotions? If so, which emotions are you most comfortable expressing with Him and why?
2. What stood out to you from the message?
3. Lament is the expression of sorrow or grief. In prayer, it's bringing our complaint before the Lord and calling out for Him to act. In lament, we join with the heart of God that groans that the world isn't the way it's supposed to be.
 - What is your experience with practicing lament?
5. Lament is not something our Western culture is very comfortable with. Do you agree? If so, why do you think that is?
6. Read **John 11:1-44**
 - What do you learn from this story about the importance of lament, being sad, or mourning in prayer?
 - What do you learn about Jesus' heart through this story? What does this show us about God's nature and how He feels about pain and suffering in our world?
7. Lament is a process we see displayed throughout the Bible, especially in the Psalms. Read through **Psalms 13** and discuss where you see each stage of lament displayed:

Stage 1 - **Direct** our discussion to God: He is the one who hears and wants to respond.

Stage 2 - **Describe** our pain/ doubt/ fear: Don't hold back; God can handle it. Like a parent asking their child what is wrong when they are mad or sad, God wants to hear from us.

Stage 3 - **Depend** on God: this is where a prayer of lament shifts from complaint to request. Ask God for His help. What do you want Him to do? Remember He is the One who can do something about the situation, so cry out to Him. In this part of prayer we ask for God's comfort, perspective, and help knowing he will respond and has made a day where all wrongs will be made right for us in the future.

Stage 4 - **Dwell** on God's faithfulness and Character: Express your trust in God. No matter our circumstances we lean on God's faithfulness, grace and love. He demonstrated this ultimately in the death and resurrection of His beloved son. His character is true and we can lean into Him when our lives are hard. Our hope can be secure because he is secure.

KEY SCRIPTURE

Psalm 13 How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall. But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.

PRAYER

Although the following Psalm is an individual prayer of lament, if you are doing this as a group, please pray through this out loud together. Feel free to address personal complaints or complaints on behalf of the church at large. There are examples of how to put each part in your own words. There is a level of vulnerability required for this that you may not be used to. Resist the urge to filter or hold back. This is a powerful way we worship God in community.

For the choir director. A Psalm of David.

1 How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?

How long will You hide Your face from me?

(I feel like you aren't doing anything about _____)

2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul,

Having sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

(You know how I worry about _____, I feel so hopeless.)

3 Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;

Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

(Hear me, Lord, and DO something about this!)

4 And my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"

And my adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.

(It seems like evil is winning and I'm weary of this battle.)

5 But I have trusted in Your lovingkindness;

My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.

(But, know you are good. I've experienced your goodness and kindness. If all else fails, I will rejoice that Jesus' death is sufficient for this. He is Lord and He will one day make all things right.)

6 I will sing to the Lord,

Because He has dealt bountifully with me.

(I will choose to trust you and lean on your character, even when I can't see what you're up to. You are good and worthy of my praise.)

TAKE A NEXT STEP

- Using the 4 D's of lament above, write your own psalm of lament to God.
- Meditate on Jesus' own lament to the Father in the garden before facing His death in Luke 22:40-46. What elements of lament do you see? How does the Father respond? In light of what we see here, what is the hope for us when God says "No" to our prayers?
- Read and pray through these individual psalms of lament: 3, 6, 22, 28, 44, 56, 57, 72, 77, 142. Or, these communal Psalms of lament: 12, 44, 60, 74, 79, 80, 85, 90.

FOR THE PARENTS

Hey, families! Here's a look at what we're covering with your kids so you can help them continue to grow at home during the week.

THIS WEEK

This week, kids hear about the time Jesus restored Peter.

- **THE BIBLE: I can share God's love every day.**
- **THE BIG IDEA: John 21:1-17**

ASK THIS

Because sometimes you and your kid need a conversation-starter that isn't, "So . . . how was church?"

- **What is one way you can share God's love with someone?**
- **When we share God's love, God's love spreads. Where is a place you can spread God's love?**

REMEMBER THIS

This month, your kids are memorizing the Bible verse

Luke 24:6a (NIV), in case you want to work on them together.

EC & Elem: "He is not here; he has risen!" Luke 24:6

NEXT WEEK

Next week, we're starting a new series! Check your email for next month's monthly view of what's coming up.