



LEARNING TO LAMENT.

We live in a broken world which means there is always reason to lament... but boy oh boy do the reasons seem to be piling up. Sometimes it can feel like God has completely abandoned you/your situation/the world. And if you haven't learned to lament, this sadness, this loneliness, this crushing weight can easily spill over into unhealthy patterns and destructive behaviors.

But here's the good news: God invites us to lament. But lamenting isn't just complaining to our friends or venting on social media.

- First, we turn to God. Bring Him your cries. Speak with raw honesty, whatever the volume, whatever the words.
- Second, we ask Him for what we need. Is it direction? Peace? Understanding? Healing? Even a whole new world? Ask boldly!
- Finally, we confess our trust. Even when you feel abandoned, return to the truth that God is sovereign and present. He is with you, even when you feel otherwise.

Learning to be honest with our pain draws us closer to God, not only in the good times but *especially* in the hard ones. And lament is not a one-time practice. It's a rhythm to return to whenever you are hurting, confused, or alone.

Take comfort in this: God is faithful & he is near to the brokenhearted. Always.

PRACTICING THE WAY:

Lamenting is a form of honest prayer. This week, practice being honest with Jesus with every feeling even if it's ugly & messy. You can be reminded of the [Prayer Practice here.](#)

IN THE BIBLE.

PSALM 22

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Why are you so far away when I groan for help?

² Every day I call to you, my God, but you do not answer.

Every night I lift my voice, but I find no relief.

³ Yet you are holy,

enthroned on the praises of Israel.

⁴ Our ancestors trusted in you,

and you rescued them.

⁵ They cried out to you and were saved.

They trusted in you and were never disgraced.

⁶ But I am a worm and not a man.

I am scorned and despised by all!

⁷ Everyone who sees me mocks me.

They sneer and shake their heads, saying,

⁸ "Is this the one who relies on the Lord?

Then let the Lord save him!

If the Lord loves him so much,

let the Lord rescue him!"

⁹ Yet you brought me safely from my mother's womb

and led me to trust you at my mother's breast.

¹⁰ I was thrust into your arms at my birth.

You have been my God from the moment I was born.

¹¹ Do not stay so far from me,

for trouble is near,

and no one else can help me.

¹² My enemies surround me like a herd of bulls;

fierce bulls of Bashan have hemmed me in!

¹³ Like lions they open their jaws against me,

roaring and tearing into their prey.

¹⁴ My life is poured out like water,

and all my bones are out of joint.

My heart is like wax,

melting within me.

¹⁵ My strength has dried up like sunbaked clay.

My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.

You have laid me in the dust and left me for dead.

¹⁶ My enemies surround me like a pack of dogs;

an evil gang closes in on me.
They have pierced^[a] my hands and feet.
17 I can count all my bones.
My enemies stare at me and gloat.
18 They divide my garments among themselves
and throw dice^[b] for my clothing.
19 O Lord, do not stay far away!
You are my strength; come quickly to my aid!
20 Save me from the sword;
spare my precious life from these dogs.
21 Snatch me from the lion's jaws
and from the horns of these wild oxen.
22 I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters.^[c]
I will praise you among your assembled people.
23 Praise the Lord, all you who fear him!
Honor him, all you descendants of Jacob!
Show him reverence, all you descendants of Israel!
24 For he has not ignored or belittled the suffering of the needy.
He has not turned his back on them,
but has listened to their cries for help.
25 I will praise you in the great assembly.
I will fulfill my vows in the presence of those who worship you.
26 The poor will eat and be satisfied.
All who seek the Lord will praise him.
Their hearts will rejoice with everlasting joy.
27 The whole earth will acknowledge the Lord and return to him.
All the families of the nations will bow down before him.
28 For royal power belongs to the Lord.
He rules all the nations.
29 Let the rich of the earth feast and worship.
Bow before him, all who are mortal,
all whose lives will end as dust.
30 Our children will also serve him.
Future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord.
31 His righteous acts will be told to those not yet born.
They will hear about everything he has done.

QUESTIONS.

Feel free to talk through some or all of these questions

- 1.) What sticks out to you in the verses above? What encourages you? Challenges you?
- 2.) Have you ever felt like David in the first couple verses of Psalm 22? How did you respond?
- 3.) How does practicing lament differ from simply venting or complaining?
- 4.) Why do you think it's important to end a lament with confessing trust?

TAKE TEN:

- How did you see God work in your life this week?
- What has God been teaching you in His Word?
- What kind of conversations are you having with your pre-Christian friends?
- What good can you do around here? (in your life/circumstance)
- How can we help you in prayer and what do you want us to ask you about next week?

Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?