

Worship Behaviors: Lament

Psalm 13 (For the director of music. A psalm of David.)

- 1 How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?
- 2 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?
- 3 Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,
- 4 and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall.
- 5 But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.
- 6 I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.

Definitions

Lament in the Hebrew Bible is an expression of _____, distress, or a protest about injustice.

"Grief is the _____ and _____ reaction to significant emotional loss of any kind."
(from "The Grief Recovery Handbook")

Lament can help us to _____ our grief.

The Elements of Lament in Psalm 13

- 1. An _____ to God. (verses 1 - 3)
- 2. The _____ (verses 1 - 4)
- 3. A specific _____ (verse 3)
- 4. Expressions of _____, _____, and _____. (verses 5, 6)

Lament in Worship

Praying the psalms in worship gives us a healthy way to deal with feelings.
People often give _____ to those who are grieving.
_____ lament in worship depends on trust, vulnerability, humility.

The psalms help us to find _____ with others who are grieving.
Learning to lament is an important part of our spiritual _____.
Lament in times of crisis will lead to _____ praise.

Application

- 1. Read Psalm 13 aloud and reflect on the feelings that arise in you.
- 2. Pray a psalm. (Psalm 69 for a crisis of shame, 51 for a crisis of guilt, 38 or 41 for medical crises, 88 for times of utter despair, 71 for the afflictions of old age, and 143 for occasions of oppression or victimization.) Pray the psalm as it is, or improvise on the psalm text, speaking the words of the psalm, followed by your own very specific application.
- 3. List three things in the news this week that reflect the brokenness of people and our world systems. Write a short note to God telling Him how you feel about each of these three things.

Study Questions

1. Read Psalms 13, 22, 39, 51, 56, and 92.
What are some of the thoughts and feelings that arise as you read?
2. What are some things happening in the world that need to be lamented?
3. What are some things happening in your life that need to be lamented?
4. Write a psalm of lament about something personal or communal using the four basic parts or elements listed in the message notes.

Resources

James, John W. and Friedman, Russell P. The Grief Recovery Handbook, 20th Anniversary Expanded Edition. New York: Harper-Collins, 2009.

Grief Recovery Groups

Individual Grief Counseling