

3-WEEK STUDY

LAMENT IS THE PATHWAY TO INTIMACY WITH GOD AND OTHERS

WEEK 1

"LEARNING TO COMPLAIN THE RIGHT WAY"



WEEKLY READING

Primary text from this week: Psalm 13

Secondary text from this week: Matthew 26:36-45

GETTING STARTED

Goals for this session: To better understand and practice the movements of Biblical lament

Missed the sermon? Watch it at www.youtube.com/venturamissionary

Break the Ice: On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you to cry during a sad movie?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Pastor Doug talked about the idea that the American church is often unfamiliar and uncomfortable with the idea of lament. Why do you think that is? What do you think needs to change?
- 2. What is your experience with emotional pain and suffering? What painful events in your life have shaped your soul and your understanding of God?
- 3. Do you have any favorite Bible passages that you have turned to in your own seasons of pain and struggle? Share one with your group and describe why it was meaningful to you.
- 4. When a friend or a family member has encouraged you through the pain of suffering, what are some things you have found helpful or unhelpful?
- 5. Pastor Doug gave us a pathway to help us complain the right way, including (1) directing your complaint towards God, (2) coming humble, (3) praying the Bible, (4) being honest, and (5) not just complaining. Which of those steps is the most difficult for you and why?
- 6. Pastor Doug explained the movements of lament as complain, ask, and praise. Have someone read **Psalm 13** and as a group, trace the movement from complain to ask to praise.
- 7. Have someone in the group read **Matthew 26:36-42**. Trace the movement of *complain*, ask, and praise in Jesus' prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- 8. As you think back on God's faithfulness in your own life, where has He proven Himself to be trustworthy?



PRAY

Pray for each other: Pray that each member of the group would experience a new freedom in their prayer life and a new intimacy with God as they learn the powerful practice of lament.

Pray for yourself: Ask the Lord to show you areas (past or present) where you need to spend time in lament in order to move forward.

Pray for your four: Identify four people who don't know Jesus (friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers/classmates), and commit to pray for them consistently Pray that (1) God would reveal Jesus to them, (2) that God would turn their hearts towards Him, (3) that God would put Christians in their path to represent Christ, and (4) that God would give you an opportunity to share what Christ has done in your life.

ACTION STEPS

Write a complaint letter to God. Spend time this week writing a raw and honest letter of complaint to God about your experiences this past year. Remember to "complain the right way:" (1) direct your lament towards God, (2) come humbly, (3) pray the Bible, (4) be honest, and (5) don't just complain. End the letter with a word of praise.

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