



Sermon Discussion Guide

The Paradox of Lament

March 28, 2021

Leader Preparation

1. Take some time to look over these questions ahead of time. Choose the ones that you want to make sure you cover with your group. We have highlighted what we think are **key questions by bolding them**.
2. Pray for your group and your time together as you prepare. This is so helpful!
3. When meeting online you as the leader will need to be more directive than in person. Don't be afraid to invite everyone to answer a question, invite them to share by name, and thank them when they finish. The online format requires a little more intentional orchestrating than an in-person group.
4. Try to start the gathering by getting everyone talking at least once to begin. The Hook section is great for this. When in doubt, have people share stories about their past. (How the week was, favorite memories about the topic for the day, etc). This is a great way to help your group continue to get to know one another.
5. Next, look at the Scripture and what it means. We believe Jesus is discipling people through this Word. Get people into the Scriptures and the Scriptures into people!
6. Finally, end with what God is saying to people and how God is inviting them to respond. These aren't just ideas to know but realities to live in!



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Hook - Getting to know one another

- How is everyone doing this week? This could also be an icebreaker question related to the topic for discussion.
- 1. “Even so, take heart” was a phrase Pastor Christian used near the beginning and then throughout the message today. This week did you need to “take heart” or were you in a place of “shoulder to cry on” or “listening ear”?
- 2. Have you uttered a “Howling prayer”? Take a moment to remember the circumstances and deep feelings and utterances. Give a time of silence and an opening to share if anyone wants to.

Book - Scripture

- Read the scripture, and discuss a few questions to understand **what the text is saying**.
 - **Hebrews 12:2**
 - **Luke 22:42-43**
 - **Matthew 21:1-11**
 - **Luke 19:28-44**
 - **Psalms 22, 34:1-11, 39:12, and 103**
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 - **Habakkuk 3:17**
 - **Job 13:15**
 - **Acts 16:25-26**
- 3. Reread the Triumphal Entry from either Matthew 21:1-11 or Luke 19:28-44. Choose a person or group from these tellings and talk about their thoughts, hopes, feelings, and compare them with Jesus’.



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- a. Add Hebrews 12:2 to the triumphal entry, the paradox of the “Joy set before him, enduring the cross...” How does this change Jesus’
4. Choose one, or many of the Psalms of Lament, and read them aloud. Take one and map out the ups and downs, the praises and laments, in the Psalm. Write down phrases or words that emphasize lament.
 - a. If you have time, choose another Psalm and see how it compares.

Look - Connections to our world today

- This section focuses on implications about **what this text means** about what’s wrong in the world, about trusting God, about who God is, etc.
- 5. Pastor Christian said in Sunday’s message: “We are broken. The world is broken. Hard things are still going on. This is not the finished creation. It’s lamentable.” How to we as the church reflect this reality to each other without focusing on “Take Heart.”
- 6. What would it look like for the church to lament? How could lament drastically alter our relationship with our community, city, state, world?

Took - Personal Application

- This application focuses on **how God is calling us to respond**. This could be personally, as a family, small group, or church. It could be something to believe, to meditate on, to say or do this week.
- 7. Read Habakkuk 3:17-18. A lament within a prayer by the prophet Habakkuk. Write your own in this style. List your personal laments, frustrations, howling prayers, and end it with the paradoxical reminder of the character of God in the midst of it all.



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8. What does “lament” look like for you? Poetry, painting, gardening, chopping wood, walking, etc. How can we praise God through our laments?
9. In your life right now, are you noticing more Joy or more Lament? Are you seeing or feeling the both/and... or more of just one? How does God want to enter into these sometimes dark pathways with you?

Time of Prayer