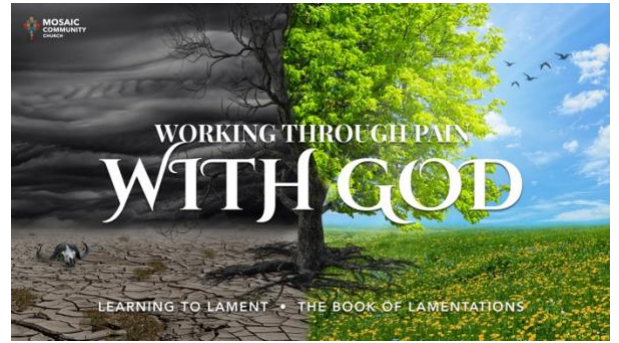


Part 1: Suffering, Repentance, and Grace

Lamentations 1



1. Lamenting is working through our pain with God. A lament “is a prayer. A statement of faith...the honest cry of a hurting heart wrestling with the paradox of pain and the promise of God’s goodness. (Vroegop, Mark).
 - a. A fallen, sin-filled world will naturally produce pain and suffering. To lament is to pray in the midst of your pain to trust God. How does lamenting point us to God’s love for us? _____

2. In the sermon, we learned when a follower of Christ suffers intensely and presses into God intensely, he will deal with his sins and experience great measures of God’s grace. Why should suffering should provoke us to turn to God? _____

3. Read **Lamentations 1:1-4**.
 - a. What city is being talked about in these verses? _____
 - b. What happened to the city? _____
 - c. Why was this so devastating to the Jewish people? _____

4. Read **Lamentations 1:5-9a**.
 - a. Why has this happened to Jerusalem? _____

 - b. Why is it important to understand that not all suffering is the result of major sin? _____

 - c. Why is it also important to understand that suffering often is connected to our sin or the sin of others? _____

 - d. How does this passage help us understand that a moral God created right and wrong and the sooner we embrace the moral authority of God over our lives, the sooner we will avoid UNNECESSARY suffering? _____

5. Suffering can be invaluable in leading us to think clearly about God and how our lives are lining up with His commands. Don't waste your suffering. Has God been wanting to get your attention through your suffering lately? If so, list the specific ways you may be suffering right now. _____

a. Take some time to bring your pain to God right now through LAMENT. Your LAMENT may sound like, "God – I don't understand why I am in so much pain right now. I feel alone and miserable. Why is this happening to me? Is there ANY sin You're wanting to address in my life? Show me. Give me strength to face it. Help me to believe that all sin is destructive and help me to trust that you are a gracious God because of Jesus. Amen."

b. How do prayers of lament like this remind you of your need for God and His help? _____

6. Read **Lamentations 1:9a-22**.

a. What do you learn from these verses about how you can talk to God when you lament? _____

b. Why is the humility expressed in verses 18 and 20 important when we lament? _____

7. Learning to lament is learning to bring honest prayers of pain to God. God already knows what you are feeling and thinking but He wants you to tell Him about it so you can work through the pain WITH HIM.

a. How specifically can this change your prayers going forward? _____

8. In the sermon, we learned that having boundaries to our laments is appropriate. We don't scream and tell God we hate Him in irrational anger because God is always loving, and never does wrong. What is the difference in screaming irrational hate toward God and expressing how we FEEL? _____

9. When we lament, it is important to move from saying what you FEEL is true to what you KNOW is true. (i.e. "God, I FEEL like you don't care but I KNOW that You do care for me because of Jesus.") How can this help you to be real with God but also lead you in a productive direction to work through your pain with God? _____
