

# while we wait

## Dealing with Loss & Finding Hope

### Part 1: Dealing with Loss

For many people right now, our best memories feel like relics of a past that is never coming back. It feels like all of life has changed and we're just sitting here waiting as the dreams, relationships, and investments we spent years building crumble into the unknown, as loved ones struggle through financial hardships or seasons of sickness and even death. But what should we be doing *while we wait*? How would God have us deal with what we've lost? What attitudes now might best prepare us for the future?

#### Start Talking

1. There's that old cliché, "our greatest fears/pleasures lie in anticipation." Do you think this is true? Why or why not?
2. Who do you know who seems to have a healthy response to loss? How do they deal with it?

#### Looking Back

1. Were you able to, "count it as joy," when you faced, "all kinds of trials" this past week? What did your implementation of James's advice look like?
2. What did you do to remind yourself to ask for wisdom last week when circumstances felt insurmountable?
3. Were there times when you felt unable to fathom how God could be using your circumstances to help you grow? How did you respond?

#### What About You?

1. When have you found yourself wondering about the presence or reality of God? What was it like?
2. What losses have you suffered during the past month or two? What about the people you know?



3. Do you feel free to tell God exactly what you're feeling? Do you feel pressure to "clean up" your prayers?
4. How do you feel from day to day as the global health crisis continues? What is your emotional state like throughout the week? Have you noticed any patterns or struggles?
5. Why do you think so many of us were raised to believe that it's wrong to reveal our real feelings to God in prayer?
6. Have you ever found yourself playing the "hardship Olympics," comparing your problems to those of others? How did it make you feel?

### **Look It Up**

*Read the Following Passages: Psalm 13: 1–6.*

1. What's happening in this lyric? How would you describe David's emotional state? Where do you resonate with what he says?
2. What words would you use to describe David's conversation with God in this passage?
3. Why do you think David exhibits such confidence in speaking honestly with God in his poems and prayers? (For example, he goes so far as to aggressively tell God to "pay attention" to him.)
4. Which of David's questions do you find most relatable right now?
5. Do you believe God cares about your pain? Does David seem to believe this?
6. What marks the "turning point" in David's wrestling match with sorrow, here? Why does he hold out for some hope?

### **Putting It All Together**

1. How can you avoid the temptation to "clean up" your prayers this week? What can you do to remind yourself that God welcomes you to engage Him with your deepest, most honest expressions of self?
2. What steps can you take to fully "feel" your loss this week? How does the prospect of facing that grief in prayer make you feel?
3. What words or concepts can you pull from today's passages when you find yourself tempted to compare your suffering to that of other people this week?
4. What would it look like for you to begin to "pivot to trust" in God's love this week? What are some small steps you can take, intellectually, practically, or in prayer to begin that process?
5. Can you think of times you've experienced deliverance from a problem or a deeper sense of maturity due to hardship in the past? How can you keep these examples of God's faithfulness front of mind this week?

