



Summer Sermon Series



CL 2469



SIMON & GARFUNKEL

SOUNDS OF SILENCE



This Week's Sermon

"Learning to Lament"

Psalm 88

Psalm 88

1 Lord, you are the God who saves me;
day and night I cry out to you.

2 May my prayer come before you;
turn your ear to my cry.

3 I am overwhelmed with troubles
and my life draws near to death.

4 I am counted among those who go down to the pit;
I am like one without strength.

5 I am set apart with the dead,
like the slain who lie in the grave,
whom you remember no more,
who are cut off from your care.

6 You have put me in the lowest pit,
in the darkest depths.

7 Your wrath lies heavily on me;
you have overwhelmed me with all your waves.

8 You have taken from me my closest friends
and have made me repulsive to them.

I am confined and cannot escape;

9 my eyes are dim with grief.

I call to you, Lord, every day;

I spread out my hands to you.

10 Do you show your wonders to the dead?

Do their spirits rise up and praise you?

11 Is your love declared in the grave,
your faithfulness in Destruction?

12 Are your wonders known in the place of darkness,
or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?

13 But I cry to you for help, Lord;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.

14 Why, Lord, do you reject me
and hide your face from me?

15 From my youth I have suffered and been close to death;

I have borne your terrors and am in despair.

16 Your wrath has swept over me;

your terrors have destroyed me.

17 All day long they surround me like a flood;

they have completely engulfed me.

18 You have taken from me friend and neighbor —

darkness is my closest friend.

1. Between Pain and Promise

2. Learning to Lament

3. God is on the Bathroom Floor

Psalm 88:14

14 Why, Lord, do you reject me
and hide your face from me?

The Laments of Psalm 88

- Overwhelmed with troubles
 - Close to death
- Feeling forgotten, unheard by God
 - Darkness = only friend
 - Waves of wrath
- Alone, abandoned by even closest friends
 - Strength Failing
 - Rejection / Hiddenness of God

Understanding Lament

A song of mourning or sorrow. Laments may be occasioned by bereavement, personal trouble, national disaster or the judgment of God.

~Martin H. Manser, *Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies* (London: Martin Manser, 2009).

“A lament honestly and specifically names a situation or circumstance that is painful, wrong, or unjust – in other words, a circumstance that does not align with God’s character and therefore does not make sense within God’s kingdom. The emotional tone of the complaint varies, depending on the type of lament psalm. It may express sorrow, remorse, weariness, anger, disappointment, or doubt.”

~Stacey Gleddiesmith, "My God, My God, Why?"

<https://www.reformedworship.org/article/june-2010/my-god-my-god-why>

The Pattern of Individual Lament

1. Cry of Abandonment
2. Lament / Complaint
3. Confession of Trust
4. Cry for Deliverance
5. Assurance
6. Vow of Praise

Psalm 13

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,

Psalm 13

4 and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

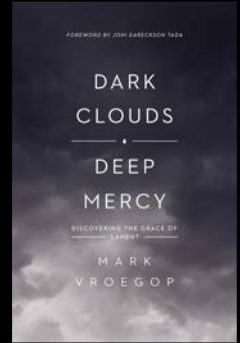
5 But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.

6 I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me.

“Belief in God’s mercy, redemption, and sovereignty create lament. Without hope in God’s deliverance and the conviction that he is all-powerful, there would be no reason to lament when pain invaded our lives. Todd Billings, in his book Rejoicing in Lament, helps us understand this foundational point: **“It is precisely out of trust that God is sovereign that the psalmist repeatedly brings laments and petitions to the Lord. . . . If the psalmists had already decided the verdict—that God is indeed unfaithful—they would not continue to offer their complaint.”**”

Therefore, lament is rooted in what we believe. It is a prayer loaded with theology. Christians affirm that the world is broken, God is powerful, and he will be faithful. Therefore, lament stands in the gap between pain and promise.

To cry is human, but to lament is Christian.”



~Excerpt From Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy, Mark Vroegop

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whom you remember no more,
who are cut off from your care.



“Your pain can be a path toward God if you’ll allow lament to be your new language.

If you don’t have the words, read one of the psalms of lament out loud. Linger over it. Let it open your heart. Let lament do its work in your life...No one taught you how to cry. Tears are part of what it means to be human. But to lament is Christian. It is a prayer of faith for the journey between a hard life and God’s goodness. We need to learn to lament.”

~Excerpt From Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy, Mark Vroegop

A gravel path runs straight through a lush green field, flanked by two narrow blue canals. The path leads towards a line of trees in the distance under a clear blue sky. In the background, several power line towers are visible on the horizon.

DESPAIR

DENIAL

LAMENT

4 Ways to Lament

1. Lay It All Out
2. Let God Hear It!
3. Choose to Trust
4. Ask for Help

Psalm 22:1-2

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me,

so far from my cries of anguish?

2 My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,

by night, but I find no rest.

Psalm 22:19-22

19 But you, Lord, do not be far from me.

You are my strength; come quickly to help me.

20 Deliver me from the sword,

my precious life from the power of the dogs.

21 Rescue me from the mouth of the lions;

save me from the horns of the wild oxen.

22 I will declare your name to my people;

in the assembly I will praise you.

1. Between Pain and Promise

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3. God is on the Bathroom Floor

Pattern of Lament vs. Psalm 88

1. Cry of Abandonment
2. Lament / Complaint
- ~~3. Confession of Trust~~
4. Cry for Deliverance
- ~~5. Assurance~~
- ~~6. Vow of Praise~~

- First...its witness to the possibility of unrelieved suffering as a believer's earthly lot.
- Secondly, the psalm adds its voice to the 'groaning in travail' which forbids us to accept the present order as final.
- Thirdly, this author, like Job, does not give up. He completes his prayer, still in the dark and totally unrewarded.
- Fourthly...[We] see that his rejection was only apparent...His existence was no mistake; there was a divine plan bigger than he knew, and a place in it reserved most carefully for him.

~Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73–150: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 16, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 350–351.

John 11:32-35

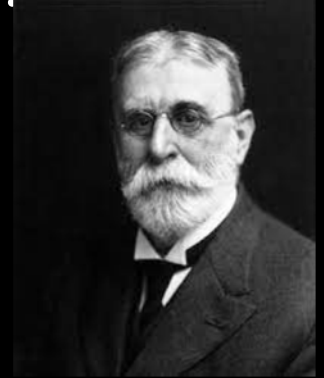
32 When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. 34 “Where have you laid him?” he asked.

“Come and see, Lord,” they replied.

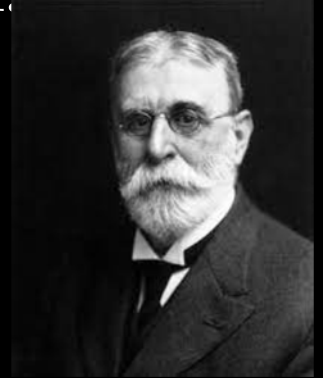
35 Jesus wept.

“Inextinguishable fury seizes upon him...It is death that is the object of his wrath, and behind death him who has the power of death, and whom he has come into the world to destroy. Tears of sympathy may hold his eyes, but this is incidental. His soul is held by rage.”



~ B.B. Warfield, *Person and Work of Christ*, 117.

“Not in cold unconcern, but in flaming wrath against the foe, Jesus smites in our behalf. He has not only saved us from the evils which oppress us; he has felt for and with us in our oppression and under the impulse of these feelings he has wrought our redemption.”



~ B.B. Warfield, *Person and Work of Christ*, 117.

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Jesus & Psalm 88

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Gospel Response

God is on the Bathroom Floor

Choose to Trust God