

AWAKE IN PRAYERS OF LAMENT

Lament = “feeling or expressing sorrow or grief”. In Scripture, we see people falling before God, sitting in ash heaps, mourning, wailing. That’s a very Eastern response to sorrow.

We Midwesterners have our own way of expressing sorrow that’s much more private. When we’re with others we pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, soldier forward, press on. Open lament is going to feel uncomfortable but let’s give it a try anyway.

Because haven’t we all taken in a lot of sorrow of the past week, or months or years? Like me, you might be wondering if this time of uncertainty and cultural reactivity will become a new normal. I don’t know, but I do know that God has given us a model for expressing sorrow.

1. ***Crying out.*** Honest questions and sorrow of the soul. What sorrows might you need to express to Jesus right now?

Psalm 13:1-2

How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
²How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?

2. ***Asking*** in humility of spirit. Sometimes we ask for guidance or beg for rescue. Other times we might ask for strength to endure. These questions always seek something from God that we can’t supply ourselves.

Psalm 13:3-4

³Look on me and answer, LORD my God.
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,
⁴and my enemy will say, “I have overcome him,”
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

3. ***Remembering.*** Regardless of what’s going on now, we choose to remember what God has done in the past. This is different from wrapping up a hard situation with a happy bow. It acknowledges the difficulty AND God’s trustworthiness.

Psalm 13:5-6

But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
⁶I will sing the LORD’s praise,
for he has been good to me.