

The Power of Lament
Core Group Discussion Guide
July 16, 2017

Message Overview:

More than 40% of the Psalms are psalms of lament. When people lament, it means they express sorrow, grief, regret, mourning, or even hatred or anger. We don't like these feelings and often seek to distance ourselves from them as fast as possible. But this doesn't seem to be the advice of scripture. As we look at Psalm 126 today, we will begin to understand why. The irony is that the faster we run from helpful lament, the less joy and peace we experience. I believe this message from scripture has the power to set people free to experience joy and peace as we learn to embrace lamentation.

Text:

- (Message) Psalm 126:5-6
- (Reading in Service) Psalm 88

Questions for Discussion:

1. How would you summarize the message this morning? What was the primary point?
2. Would anyone care to share what God was saying to you specifically?
3. Read Psalm 126:5-6 – Jeremy talked this morning about sowing our tears. He also talked about the fact that most of us tend to stuff our tears or dump them. Why do you think we often resort to one of these two ways of dealing with our tears?
4. Is it difficult to believe that God is ok hearing our real frustrations? Why or why not?
5. In the Old Testament, God was not impressed when his people grumbled, but he encouraged lament? How would you distinguish between grumbling and lamenting?

Change of Direction: (extra discussion)

1. The Psalms exist to be a prayer and worship book for God's people. 40% of the Psalms are psalms of lament. How would you feel if we incorporated more of these kinds of Psalms into our regular worship times?
 - a. Is there something about laments that makes them uncomfortable in a public worship setting?
 - b. Do you think if we were more comfortable with lament privately, we would grow more comfortable with laments together?
2. (one last question) Would there be any ideas for helpfully incorporating more space for lament in our services? (Group leaders: feel free to email any helpful responses on to Jeremy. jmiller@mcachurch.org)