



SOUTHSIDE MIDWEEK NEWSLETTER 9.16.20

Why a Series on Lament? – Barrett

I am going to preach a six-week sermon series on lament beginning this coming Sunday. Now, you may be thinking, “Why a series on lament? Isn’t that going to be sort of a downer? I don’t necessarily want to gather with my church family to talk about being sad. Instead, I would rather be uplifted and encouraged.” Well, ultimately the purpose of lament is to find hope. In fact, lament is the process that God has given his people to lead them on the pathway from pain to praise.

As we transition from summer to fall and begin to think about this calendar year coming to a close, I want us to spend time as a community of faith in lament. The year 2020 has given us plenty of reasons to lament. We have lost family members to death and have been unable to host normal funerals to grieve their absence. We have changed important plans and cancelled meaningful activities due to a worldwide pandemic. We have experienced the pain and unrest of racial and political tension in our country. There are many other reasons as well. Each of us could create our own personal list of reasons. And with all of the difficulty this year has presented us, I did not want to miss the opportunity as a church family to spend some time in lament.

At the bottom of this page, I have included the entire text from Psalm 13. I would like to encourage everyone in our church family to memorize these six verses over the next six weeks. Put them to memory. Plant them into your heart. Find time as a family to say these verses to one another. Recite these verses to one another in your life groups. This short psalm of David is a psalm of lament. It follows a pattern that I hope becomes familiar to us over the next six weeks. May God use this time to reveal to us how lament is a “minor-key song that is vital to the life of God’s people.”

Psalm 13 (NIV 1984)

1 How long, O 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 every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?
3 Look on me and answer, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death;
4 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 to the LORD, for he has been good to us.



Daddy and a Rainbow – Jeremy

The other day my 3-year-old son drew a picture of a person, on his own, for the very first time. It's a blue blob of a person with various other colors streaking across the page above it. And he told me the title: "Daddy and a Rainbow."

Now I'll grant that it isn't perfect. The proportions are off, one of the legs looks broken, and he completely left out my hair spike. The whole thing has a Picasso-esque flavor to it. But despite its imperfections, I completely love it. It went straight to our fridge, I made it my profile picture, and I've been showing it to as many people as I can, even when I know they don't care. I've honestly never felt as moved by any work of art as I was when I realized that my son had drawn a picture of me.



There are a lot of things he is into that he could've drawn. He loves Cat Boy from the PJ Masks, and runs around the house yelling "Super Cat Speed!" His favorite drink is chocolate milk. He has a recently acquired mouse stuffed animal that is a current favorite. But he didn't draw Cat Boy, chocolate milk, his mouse, or anything else. He drew me.

It is a wonderful feeling to know that you are wanted. To know that someone chose you and loves you. And that's why my son's drawing meant so much to me. He didn't get to choose to have me as his father, but when he created that drawing, I knew he was glad I'm his father. I felt wanted, chosen, and loved. And as much as my son loves my wife and I, and we love him, our love pales in comparison to the love God has for us. His love is greater than we can grasp or imagine, made manifest in Jesus' redeeming work. And if my son's crayon picture can bring me a joy that I can't stop talking about, then how can I ever stop sharing about what Jesus did for me?

"This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:9-11

A Shepherd's Prayer – Hunter

Change is inevitable. Following God's Holy Word allows us to deal with change and be better equipped to work in God's Kingdom! One constant in the life we live on this Earth is change. That doesn't mean we ever get used to it or can ever learn to fully embrace it! However, just like in every challenge we face, the Holy Word of God gives us the roadmap for dealing with change and how to use it for spiritual growth and to help in the growing of God's Kingdom!

While it's almost impossible to ignore that things change, we can follow the guidance given us in scripture to help you through those difficult times. In Philippians 4, verses 6 and 7, we are advised, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Those of you that know me personally, know that I struggle with change as much as any person, so this message starts with me and I hope gives you guidance and comfort as well! Regardless of how the events of 2020 unfold, we have to recognize there are some positives that have resulted from the changes we have all experienced this year. However, even change that is good for us can cause stress! In Corinthians 4, verse 16, we are encouraged:

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

God's Holy Scriptures mean more to me with each passing year. It's never fails in times of trouble or change to provide great wisdom and insight into the nature of God and how we are to live!

Our Heavenly Father, we offer all glory and honor and praise to you. Lord, help us to live this life in a way to prepare us for the next life. We know change is part of this life, but knowing that Jesus Christ is the unchanging Cornerstone that paid the ultimate price for our salvation gives us direction, hope, and the strength to live for you until we can be united with you in Glory! We pray for forgiveness for sins of omission and commission and the ability to deal with changes in this life in a way that brings honor and glory to you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen