

⇒ Sermon Notes – November 15, 2020

Review

- Today we conclude our fall preaching series, “Thinking Christianly About All of Life,” emphasizing both _____ and a _____.
- Last week we looked at James 3 and thought together about “Talking Christianly in a Divided World.” We remembered the power of words, both for good and for ill, and were challenged to speak with gospel-kindness in a world that runs quickly toward verbal insults and injuries. Our words matter!

Today’s Topic

As we conclude our fall preaching series, we want to focus on ONE final issue that is central to “Thinking Christianly About All of Life,” specifically, “A life of faith can be expressed both in joy AND in sorrow.” As life brings regular occasions for grief and sorrow, the Bible teaches us to walk these well-worn paths with faithfulness and a God-ward focus. The biblical language of lament is not simply “complaining to God,” nor should it be “getting mad at God” because (as people often crudely say) “God is a big boy, and He can handle our anger.” So, what is “Godly Lament” and how is it a legitimate expression of faith?

Godly Lament Acknowledges the Sorrows of Life

Text: II Corinthians 1:3-11

- ⇒ A life of faith is attended by _____ of both sorrow and joy (READ 6:4-10). Pain and sadness are not necessarily evidence of God’s displeasure or lack of trust. (Job 37:13–NAS; John 9:3)
- ⇒ A life of faith does not need to _____ sadness, nor should sadness be “shamed” by other well-meaning Christians. (8-9a)
- ⇒ A life of faith is a life turned _____ God, our true Deliverer, the One on Whom we set our hope! (9-10)
- ⇒ A life of faith is lived in _____, both in sorrow and in giving thanks. (11)

Godly Lament is NOT Simply “Getting Mad at God”

Trusting God in a World Afame: The Gospel Necessity of both Sorrow and Joy
II Corinthians 1; Psalms 13, 42-43, 142, 143 Pastor Jay Mosser

Texts: Psalms 13, 42-43, 142, 143

- ⇒ In godly lament, we turn toward God, not away from Him! Well-known Pastor Charles Spurgeon struggled with bouts of severe depression. He said that it taught him to “*Kiss the wave that throws me against the Rock of Ages.*” Godly lament at its best is a form of praise.
- ⇒ In godly lament, we _____ God; we do not accuse Him of evil or shake our fist at heaven. We do not put ourselves in God’s place or demand things.
- ⇒ In godly lament, we express our emotions, ask questions (“How long? Why?”) and pour out our hearts. Godly lament can increase our _____ with God as we better grasp our desperation for His care & intervention.
- ⇒ In godly lament, we hold onto hope by _____ God’s goodness in the past. We push back against despair and overwhelming darkness by calling to mind His past deliverance. **Nowhere is this more evident than through the gospel story of Jesus!**

Hearing & Responding to God’s Word

- ⇒ What text did we look at today that you’ll return to this coming week for additional reflection?
- ⇒ Are you walking through a season of sorrow or grief? Choose to do so in faith, that is, with a Godward focus!
- ⇒ Read & meditate on the Psalms! Perhaps the psalms we read today would be a place to start. Read the book of Lamentations and walk with Jeremiah, the “weeping prophet.” Look for evidence of faith in these texts.
- ⇒ Walk through seasons of sorrow in community, not alone. Whether with a Community Group or a few friends, find those who will support you in prayer and walk with you, refusing to shame you.
- ⇒ View a season of lament as a season, not a long-term lifestyle. Know that the same God who brings seasons of lament also restores and heals and brings new life. Think of the way that the four seasons of our weather cycle represent various seasons of life, not only chronologically, but emotionally.

Community Group Notes

Getting Started

What have you appreciated about your Community Group this fall? Are there ways you've been encouraged or supported or enriched? What difference has your involvement made in your life?

Talking It Through

1. Review the sermon from Sunday: READ II Corinthians 1:3-11 and remember the main points from Sunday. What was this week's sermon about?
2. Take a few minutes to review and remember the various psalms we looked at on Sunday. Which of them caught your attention the most? What common themes did you see in the five psalms we briefly considered? Were there certain phrases that you appreciated?
3. Sometimes Christians equate a life of faith with feeling happy. That is, when I'm REALLY trusting God, I'll feel happy, and when my faith is weak, then I feel unhappy. Talk about this with your group! Does "trusting God" affect how we feel? Does a "lamenting Christian" just need to knock it off and trust God more? (Was Paul just having a bad day when he wrote II Corinthians 1?)
4. We quickly and correctly identify the death of a loved one or close friend as an occasion for grief and lament. What other life circumstances might provoke an appropriate response of lament? How about a pandemic or post-election blues?

Thinking Deeper & Taking It Home

READ Psalms 42-43, clearly intended to be viewed as a pair. Read carefully and make a list of how the writer describes God. In the midst of his sorrow, what does he know to be true about God? How does he describe God?

Author Jerry Bridges wrote, *"Trust is not a passive state of mind. It is a vigorous act of the soul by which we choose to lay hold of the promises of God and cling to them despite the adversity that at times seeks to overwhelm us."*

Which statement about God from Psalms 42-43 would you find to be a source of strength and balance in the midst of a season of lament? Is there ONE phrase or description that speaks most to you?

Time to PRAY

(Or do this at the beginning of your group time)

Take time to share prayer requests that relate to the people in your group, and then pray for those needs. Here's a place to list specific prayer needs:

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Next Sunday: November 22, 2020

Thanksgiving Sermon!

Pastor Ben McCardell

Answer Key: • biblical content • Christ-honoring attitude • seasons • hide • toward • community • honor • intimacy • remembering