

7 Reasons Christians Should Lament More

But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weaknesses, for we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:25-28).

I remember a stormy season of life when I realized I'm guilty of one of Western culture's most unhelpful habits: celebrating victories publicly and mourning defeats privately. This results in very few of us knowing how to lament. We isolate ourselves when we hurt the most, whereas Bible guys, including fierce warriors like David, knew how to lament like men.

Here are some benefits of God-centered, tear-soaked, Spirit-filled, Bible-based, gut-level lamenting.

When you lament, you allow yourself to feel. Numbing yourself to the hurt means you stop feeling everything else in life. Lamenting helps you feel life's full range of normal emotions.

When you lament, you process pain. Lamenting helps you work through your heartaches. You have to feel so you can heal.

When you lament, you grieve your involvement and shed your victim mindset. Lamenting allows you to evaluate what you have done, where you must change and how you can act differently in the future.

When you lament, you don't lash out in vengeance at others.

Lamenting helps you work out with God the energy and frustration that naturally comes from pain.

When you lament, you empathize with others who are hurting. After you have lamented your pain with the Lord and experienced healing in your soul, you can invite people who have experienced similar pains to share those with you.

When you lament, you feel hope for the future. Failing to lament leaves you forever circling the drain of the past, never escaping the toxicity that surrounds. Lamenting allows you to look up from your tears to see what God might have on the horizon.

When you lament, you escape anger and depression. Some people stuck in a spiral of grief are prone to depression. Lamenting allows you to avoid depression—as well as depression masked by anger.

How did Jesus deal with His suffering? By Spirit-led lamenting. Isaiah 53:3 calls Him our suffering servant, a “man of sorrows,” and “acquainted with grief.” Emotional and tear-filled New Testament scenes let us see the Lord Jesus weep over Jerusalem, mourn the death of His dear friend Lazarus and agonize on the cross. Jesus worked through His suffering by lamenting, and He helps us do the same. {eoa}

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