

Finding God in Loss and Suffering Lamentations 3:22-28

Lamentations 3

- ¹⁹ I remember my affliction and my wandering,
the bitterness and the gall.
- ²⁰ I well remember them,
and my soul is downcast within me.
- ²¹ Yet this I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:
- ²² Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
- ²³ They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
- ²⁴ I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."
- ²⁵ The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him,
to the one who seeks him;
- ²⁶ it is good to wait quietly
for the salvation of the LORD.
- ²⁷ It is good for a man to bear the yoke
while he is young.
- ²⁸ Let him sit alone in silence,
for the LORD has laid it on him.
- ²⁹ Let him bury his face in the dust—
there may yet be hope.

Message Translation

- ¹⁹⁻²¹ I'll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness,
the taste of ashes, the poison I've swallowed.
I remember it all—oh, how well I remember—
the feeling of hitting the bottom.
But there's one other thing I remember,
and remembering, I keep a grip on hope:
- ²²⁻²⁴ God's loyal love couldn't have run out,
his merciful love couldn't have dried up.

Finding God in Loss and Suffering **Lamentations 3:22-28**

They're created new every morning.
How great your faithfulness!
I'm sticking with God (I say it over and over).
He's all I've got left.

²⁵⁻²⁷ God proves to be good to the man who passionately waits,
to the woman who diligently seeks.
It's a good thing to quietly hope,
quietly hope for help from God.
It's a good thing when you're young
to stick it out through the hard times.

²⁸⁻³⁰ When life is heavy and hard to take,
go off by yourself. Enter the silence.
Bow in prayer. Don't ask questions:
Wait for hope to appear.
Don't run from trouble. Take it full-face.
The "worst" is never the worst.

Sermon Outline

- I. Background
 - a. Jerusalem has just been conquered by Babylon.
 - b. Famine hits the land
 - c. The temple has been destroyed.
- II. Jeremiah laments the loss
 - a. His words are rooted in the pain of the situation
 - b. Yet, he is hopeful in the mercy of God.
- III. Suffering and Loss
 - a. Suffering is a primary way that God forms us
 - b. It opens us to God, ourselves and people, if we don't push it away.
- IV. Three movements of our response to loss
 - a. Paying attention
 - b. Waiting in the "confusing in-between"
 - c. Letting the Old birth the New

Small Group Questions:

1. Read the passage above from the NIV and the Message translations. Which words or phrases stand out to you? Why?
2. What thoughts, feelings, or questions did you have as you read this passage or listened to the sermon?

Finding God in Loss and Suffering

Lamentations 3:22-28

3. Pete mentioned that we experience major losses and minor losses. What have been some of the major and/or minor losses in your life?

4. Pete mentioned that we deal with loss in different ways (Medicate ourselves, keep busy, fix everything, lie to ourselves, addictions). How have you dealt with losses in the past?

5. There were three movements of a life that experiences loss (paying attention to loss, waiting in the confusing “in-between”, and letting the old birth the new). Which of these movements speak most to you in your current season?

6. Think about a present or past loss in your life. How might God be coming to you through that loss?

7. What might he be saying to you?

8. What might he be trying to show you about yourself? About himself?

9. What about the changes he is inviting you to make in your life?

10. Take time to share some of the losses that you have experienced and pray for one another.