

PRAYER

Lecture 3: Sad Psalm Prayers.

Pause

Purpose: to learn from Scripture how to pray, so that we might pray, so that God might be seen as He works.

Goals: To learn from biblical prayers what, why, and how, to pray. To de-fang praying. To help us love Jesus more deeply and serve others more effectively. To be led to wonder.

[Themes: God always hears and listens and that's a good thing; God died so we could pray; prayer is our relationship with God.]

Pause End

SAD PSALM PRAYERS

- I. Problems.
 - A. Faith in Jesus has to be “Positive and Encouraging” or it’s sinful.
 - B. If we let God know how we really feel, He’ll stop being nice to us. We must keep up appearances and talk to God in a way we think He likes.
 - C. A “stiff upper lip” is the best, and holiest, approach to life’s difficulties; we can’t be bothering God with everything, after all!
 - D. Reality: life is difficult (“solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” --Thomas Hobbes, who, humorously, argued that government was the solution to this situation!). And in response to this we prefer appearance to substance and dishonesty, or limited honesty, to honesty. This is part of a healthy, implicit, social contract, but a part of an unhealthy relationship with our Hebrews 4 God: we are known, we are loved; we needn’t fear, we must come.
- II. Solution. Learn from the Sad Psalm Prayers healthy ways to talk about our discomfort, anger, and fear with God.
- III. What does this passage teach us about prayer? @self: Psalm 13, 88; @group: Psalm 79, 74.
 - A. What is the passage saying?
 1. What does the pray-er feel? Why does he feel that way?
 2. What is he asking for? Why does he expect God to answer?
 - B. @God.

1. What does this prayer assume about God?
2. What does it say about God that is surprising? How does that challenge our natural assumptions about God?

C. @us

1. What kind of attitude should we have?
2. What kind of logic should our prayers have? On what basis do we offer prayers?
3. What kind of requests should we have? For what purpose should we pray?

D. @practical: What practical helps does this passage offer? Ex. words to say; other practices; body positions.

E. Sad Psalms: **6, 13**, 22, 44, 51, 59, **60**, 69, 71, **74, 79**, 80, **88**, 109.

IV. Summary: God knows our sadness and loves us; He wants us to bring our sadness to Him. He doesn't need pretty words or positive, uplifting conclusions; He just wants us to look to Him.

A. Point: to learn from Scripture to how to pray in our sadness and frustration so that we will look to and see God's work.

V. Homework: write out your own lamentation. Try to incorporate your favorite phrases and concepts from these Psalms. Keep it general or make it specific. *not to hand in.