

Covid Lament

No matter how you view it, the COVID-19 crisis has affected all of us deeply. We know the Biblical command to “rejoice in all circumstances” (1 Thess 5:19) but often we struggle with knowing how to do just that. It can feel impossible to “rejoice always” when our circumstances are hard and confusing.

How do we rejoice when we still have so many unresolved questions? How do we have joy when we’re angry over personal losses or weary with so much change? The Bible gives us a language to express our raw emotions, a way to move past the pain and through to the other side of hope and trust so that we can *actually* rejoice. This is the language of lament, and we find these cries of despair, anger, protest and doubt all throughout the psalms. A psalm of lament is an address to God that usually entails three parts:

1. A Complaint - Honestly expressing your pain and hurt to God.
2. A Request - Asking God for help; asking God to change your situation.
3. An Expression Of Trust - Reaffirming your dependence on God; remembering God’s goodness

We want to encourage you to make space to process the pain of the past year with the Lord, to process your “Covid story” and to do so in a particular way- by writing your own psalm of lament and then sharing with someone. While it’s important to have space to lament alone with God, it’s equally important for us to grieve in community. We hope you’ll take the time to come before God in this way, and then find someone to share your experience with in one of these ways:

- 1.) **Share with your small group** - If you’re comfortable, share your experience of writing out your lament with a friend or in your small group.
- 2.) **Share 1x1** - If you don’t have someone to process this experience with, we invite you to reach out to one of the staff directly or contact info@rhchurches.com. We would love to talk with you and to pray with you.
- 3.) **Ask For Help** - If you are struggling with grief and would like additional help for how to process, please reach out to info@rhchurches.com and we would love to direct you to additional resources that can help.

Getting started: Read Psalm 139:1-4 and quiet your heart before the Lord. Ask God to help you be honest with what is really going on inside and for you to see your heart with clarity as you consider the questions on the other side of this page. Invite God’s presence and follow the steps outlined as you attempt to write your own psalm of lament.

A Guide to Lamenting

Turn to God: Identify the Lord as the person to whom you are coming. Laments are not simply general venting but a specific cry to God for help. Acknowledge him.

Express Your Complaint or Lament: Articulate the problem you are wrestling with. Detail how it is affecting you, the pain it is causing, and ask the Lord for His help. Describe the adjustments, the losses, the grief, and the frustrations that you've experienced over the past year. Feel free to express your raw emotions to the Lord: How are you hurting? What are you struggling to believe right now? What do you honestly believe about God's heart toward you today? What do you want to ask but are afraid to ask?

Ask Boldly: Request deliverance, or God's intervention in the problem. What do you want God to do for you? How do you want God to change your situation?

Choose to Trust: Verbalize your trust in the Lord. Remember his proven character. Share your hopes that He will come to your aid, that He will be present with you in your situation. Rehearse how the Lord has come to your aid in the past and remember his faithfulness. How has God provided in the midst of pain in the past? How has God loved you in previous hardship?

Praise: Offer praise and thanksgiving to God for his many blessings and faithfulness. Express praise for how God has already shown himself faithful to you during this difficult time, and thank him, in faith, for the ways he will continue to do so.

