

Monday

Read Psalm 80

Did you know that the Bible contained Psalms and other passages that express anger and frustration with God and that it is ok – the people didn't get zapped by God or anything? I'm not sure it is all that common for us to know that Scripture expresses "negative" emotions towards God and that it is all right. I think most of us try really hard to pretend that we are not angry with God or we feel really guilty when we do feel angry with God.

If you are lamenting in this season, it is all right. Whether you are lamenting over something related to COVID-19 or something else horrific. It is all right. Your lament might last longer than you would choose. It might take you to thoughts or feelings towards God or others that surprise you. If you are lamenting, then really lament. Don't pretend that you are not lamenting. Conversely, don't pretend or force lament if you aren't really lamenting. That won't really do anyone any good.

God loves you more than your performance. God loves you more than your anger at Him. God loves you more than your guilt. God loves you more than your ignorance. God loves you more than you can not love God. As you start out this new week, use the space below to get you going on one of two things. Either start writing down your lament so that you can admit that it is real and exists or, if you are not lamenting, start prayerfully identifying who you need to be walking beside right now and how you can go about doing that. Prayers for you on this journey.

Tuesday

Read Luke 24:28-35

This scene has six elements in common with two other scenes in Luke: the feeding of the five thousand in Luke 9 and the celebration of the Passover meal (the Lord's Supper) in Luke 22. Each meal follows the same sequence: Jesus (1) took (2) bread, (3) blessed/gave thanks, (4) broke it, and (5) gave it (6) to them. The feeding of the five thousand satisfies the people. The Passover meal instructs Jesus' followers to remember Jesus and his sacrifice. The meal at Emmaus is the revelation of the resurrected Jesus.

Satisfaction. Remembrance. Revelation. The meals of Jesus have consequence. How does this passage about the Road to Emmaus satisfy you? How do you remember Jesus in this passage? What is revealed to you about Jesus, yourself, and your world in this passage?

Wednesday

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

This passage does not say not to grieve (and by extension, not to lament). It says that Christians grieve/lament in a different way. At the core of the Christian is the hope of the resurrected Jesus Christ. So, we lament, but not without hope. Lament is not a fruitless cry of anguish without any possibility of a brighter future. It feels like that when you are lamenting, but as a follower of Jesus (or one who wants to be a follower of Jesus) that hope and joy are at the core of Creation and at the core of your mind, body, and spirit. Although hope and joy might seem far off, God is above you to guide your path, Jesus is beside you comforting you, and the Holy Spirit remains within you and within the Body of Christ, the Church.

Thursday

Read Psalm 80

What is the Psalmist hoping for in this psalm? What are you hoping for today? What is the shape of your hope? How will you pray and wait on God to deliver?

Friday

Please read and reflect upon Luke 24:36-39 as we prepare for worship this weekend.