



Week 8: From Loss to Lament to New Life

FACILITATOR'S NOTE:

- ✓ Start your group discussion with the “Check-in” question to help your members reflect back on their week and follow up on last week’s application challenge.
- ✓ Review the “Big Idea” to help you gain clarity around the heart of this week’s message and focus your group’s discussion towards a clear direction.
- ✓ Read this week’s scripture passages together and guide your group through the “Discuss” questions to initiate meaningful dialogue around key concepts or insights from this week’s message.
- ✓ Move your group discussion to a deeper level by leading them through questions in “Apply”. Use discernment to customize these application questions to meet the needs & dynamics of your group.
NOTE: You do not have to cover all the questions provided in “Apply”.
- ✓ Connect with God together as a group through this week’s “prayer practice”, which can be in the form of a prayer exercise or some guidance on what to pray for in relation to the message or application.

UPDATED NOTES TO FACILITATORS RE: COVID-19

During this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the primary focus of your group should shift to the immediate needs and mental health of your members. We are adopting a **C.P.R.** approach during this season, which stands for the following:

- **Care** refers to the love and support that we offer in our groups, from helping one another with tangible needs, rejoicing in celebrations together, and supporting personal struggles with encouragement and empathy
- **Prayer** refers to offering our gratitude and praise to God, bringing our worries to Him, and praying for our community and world
- **Remembering** refers to reflecting on God for who He is, what He has personally done in our lives, and what He is capable of doing

DQs will continue to be provided for our sermon series, but will be shortened and simplified since your group’s attention and time should be devoted more towards CPR. For more resources on care and prayer, check out the Slack channels.

CHECK-IN

What landed with you from this week’s message, especially during this monumental time in history as we are hearing stories of unimaginable loss, pain and racial injustice in our society?

<p>BIG IDEA</p>	<p>When life is hard and losses mount, lament is an appropriate response. More than an expression of sorrow or the venting of emotions, lament is a form of prayer where we pour out our fears, frustrations, and sorrows before God for the purpose of renewing our trust and confidence in Him. It enables us to live out our reality honestly before the God who loves us.</p>
<p>DISCUSS</p>	<p>Read Ruth 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What part of Naomi’s experience or response in this story can you relate to? 2. Do you feel comfortable to cry out to God and bring your honest questions, negative feelings and raw emotions before him? Why?
<p>APPLY How do we respond to God’s teaching in meaningful ways? What might God ask of us in mind, spirit, or actions?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When we experience loss and pain, or as we contemplate on the suffering and injustices experienced by our black brothers and sisters, how do we keep ourselves from falling into bitterness and resentment? 2. During challenging times in your life, have you ever wondered, “God, seriously... how much more of this would you have me endure?” How might an honest prayer or complaint like this be helpful in your relationship with God?
<p>PRAYER PRACTICE (15 minutes)</p>	<p>In his book, <i>A Praying Life</i>, Paul Miller writes:</p> <p>“To love is to lament, to let your heart be broken by something. If you don’t lament over the broken things in your world, then your heart shuts down. Your living, vital relationship with God dies a slow death because you open the door to unseen doubt and become quietly cynical. Cynicism moves you away from God; laments push you into his presence.”</p> <p>This week, take some time to practice lamenting through scripture. The books of Lamentations and Habakkuk have many examples of lament. Or meditate on Psalm 13 to see how David cried out to God in his time of distress and how he concludes by declaring his trust in God’s unfailing love.</p>