



Learning to Lament

Lament means to grieve. It's a form of prayer where you are being fully VULNERABLE to God. In lamenting you express, "God, here's what's REALLY going on with me..." The Bible is filled with examples of lamenting (the book of Lamentations, one-third of all the Psalms, as well as large sections of books in the bible that are referred to as major and minor prophets). Lamenting was seen as an ESSENTIAL practice for inviting God into the pain and loss we are experiencing.

Examples:

- **Psalm 6:1-3:** *Please, GOD, no more yelling, no more trips to the woodshed. Treat me nice for a change; I'm so starved for affection. Can't you see I'm black-and-blue, beat up badly in bones and soul? GOD, how long will it take for you to let up?*
- **Psalm 10:1:** *GOD, are you avoiding me? Where are you when I need you?*
- **Psalm 13:1:** *Long enough, GOD—you've ignored me long enough. I've looked at the back of your head long enough.*

Take some time and reflect on how the last week (or a time frame of your choice) has been for you. Make note of the predominant emotions you have been feeling during this time, in particular the more negative ones. Reflect on a particular situation or recurring theme that you know has been causing you distress, pain or anxiety and that you feel is beyond your control. Imagine that God is with you and that He has given you complete freedom to lay it all out, to complain fearlessly without judgment, in order to get it all off your chest.

With a piece of paper and pen, invite God's presence and follow the steps outlined below.

1. Tell God what's wrong
 - a. Describe what your storm is
2. Tell God how you are really feeling
 - a. Talk about the pain and the emotions....anger/frustration
3. Tell God you need His help
 - a. You might not get here right away



- b. But eventually....God, I need You...
- 4. Tell God you aren't leaving....
 - a. Even though you might feel like leaving
 - b. I'm going to KEEP trusting You