

Mountains and Lakes

Week 9: Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem

Luke 19:41

I always say that one of the things I love most about ministry is getting a front row seat into what the Lord is doing in people's lives. And, it's especially cool when someone comes up and says, "That sermon was exactly what I needed to hear today."

We plan out our sermon series and Scriptures we're preaching months in advance and just trust that God's Word is living and active. He's going to use it when and how He wants to use it, to do what He wants to do. And so, when I hear someone say, "That text was for me, today," it just makes me grateful for a Heavenly Father who loves us and still speaks to us through His Word.

I've been thinking about that a lot because today's text kinda feels like it's for me and this sermon is exactly what I need to hear today. And, it makes me grateful that my Heavenly Father loves me enough that He had **this** text for **this** day.

On Friday, I was with my friend and brother, David Lee, as he took his last breath and passed from this life into the next. David was the minister at Clear Creek Christian Church, and I can honestly say he was one of the best men I've ever known, and friend I've ever had.

My heart just hurts today for Kelly and the boys. For Clear Creek, this church that means so much in our community that David loved and served faithfully for decades. For the countless people who were impacted by his life and love for Jesus.

So, as we get started today, I just want to take few moments of silence for David and for us to pray for his family, his Church, and for those of us who loved him and are going to miss him. (Pray)

We live in a world that gives us plenty of things to grieve. War, injustices that people face, sicknesses, broken relationships, divisions in our own country. You can probably think of something right now in your life, or the life of someone you love, that just makes you feel overwhelmed and sad. I think our culture carries around the weight of a lot of **unresolved grief**.

With everything going on in our world, and everything we've been through personally and as a society, I think unresolved grief is wreaking havoc on us in ways we don't even realize. And the reason it's unresolved is because 1) most people don't recognize the grief they're in, and 2) as a whole, we don't really know what to do with grief. We don't know how to process it, or work through it. So, we just keep feeling it and reacting from it.

And, here's the thing, unresolved grief doesn't just disappear. It doesn't go away on its own, it just finds another way out, and it's usually not very healthy. Unresolved grief expresses itself in things like:

Chronic anger – People lash out over small things because they're carrying deep pain, or disappointment, they haven't dealt with. There's a phrase in recovery programs that "hurt people, hurt people" and we see this chronic anger as a result of unresolved grief play out in road rage and social media rants, and arguments that often have roots in deeper wounds.

Emotional numbness – Over time, unresolved grief leads to emotional shutdown. People stop feeling joy or even sorrow. They're afraid that if they allow themselves to feel anything, then they're going to feel *everything*, and so they just emotionally detach.

Anxiety and fear – When we haven't grieved, we often try to control everything and everyone to avoid being hurt again. We think, "If I can just hold everything together, then maybe nothing else will fall apart," but this just leads to worry and fear.

And instead of getting to the root of these emotions and working through our unresolved grief, many of us just try to deal with them on our own. We know we don't want to feel this pain, but we don't know what to do with it, either, so we try to:

Numb it – We try to distract ourselves. Self-medicate or escape. Binge-watch show after show so we don't have to just sit in silence and think. Mindlessly scroll social media. Drink too much, eat too much, shop too much. We do everything we can to keep ourselves busy so we don't have to slow down and let the grief catch up to us.

Fix it – We try to solve our pain on our own. Take matters into our own hands. Try to fix broken relationships, only to make them worse. We overcompensate, overprotect, and over control. We try to fix our pain by putting a spiritual spin on everything and trying to rush through it because sitting in our pain doesn't feel very faithful.

(Leave slide up)

Unresolved grief leaks out in anger and anxiety and fear. And when we don't know what to do, we naturally go into self-protection mode and try to numb the pain or fix it ourselves. But the Bible gives us a 3rd option. A better option. When it comes to the pain we experience in our life, Scripture invites us to:

Feel it – Instead of numbing our pain or fixing our grief, Scripture invites us to bring our whole heart to God, all of our emotions, all of our disappointments...bring it all to the Lord and *feel it* in His presence.

Scripture invites us to pray honest prayers, even when they're messy. To let ourselves cry and cry out to God. To sit in silence and sadness. And this can feel unfaithful, but when you feel your grief with God, you're choosing not to dance over it or get stuck in it. You're giving yourself space to allow Him to heal your heart.

This is the Biblical practice of lament. **Lament is a prayer of pain...(leave up)**. Lament is what you pray when you don't have the words to pray. It's what comes out when your heart is broken, but you still believe that God is listening. It's not polished or pretty, it's raw. It's honest. It's telling God, "This hurts."

But, it's more than that. **Lament is a prayer of pain that leads to trust.** Lament doesn't end in despair. Instead, it moves towards hope. It's not just venting, it's reaching for God, who may feel distant, but has promised to be near to the brokenhearted. Even when we don't have answers, lament anchors our souls in the truth that God is still good, He still listens, and He still cares.

The practice of lament helps us process our pain with God, and in the end, even if the circumstances don't change, something **in us** does. We may come out still hurting, but with a deeper faith and trust in our Heavenly Father who loves us.

Scripture teaches us how to lament, and in our text today, Jesus models it for us.

Context:

Triumphant entry – Entering Jerusalem as a King. Cheering, celebration.

As Jesus rides into Jerusalem, a name that means "City of Peace," he knows there's not much peace to be found.

- They've turned their hearts from God. Rejected him.
- They might be going through the right motions, but their hearts are far from the right place.
- They have rejected God's messengers, killed His prophets, and twisted His words.
- The political and social unrest is reaching a boiling point that will lead to the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome in 70 AD.

And **Luke 19:41 tells us...(READ)**

Jesus weeps because people missed the peace He came to give them. He weeps because of the brokenness and pain of sin they are experiencing. He weeps over the spiritual blindness that has kept God's people from recognizing God in flesh. He weeps because He sees the destruction that will come.

Jesus weeps. And this isn't just a few tears. That word means loud wailing and sobbing. It's the kind of weeping that might make us say, "Jesus, pull yourself together," but he doesn't hide his grief. He doesn't bury his disappointment. He weeps. He mourns. He feels His grief as His love and compassion for people moves Him to tears.

But then, what I image is a prayer of pain turns to trust in God, and He goes. He goes into the heart of the pain. Into the brokenness, into the hardship. He goes to those who will reject Him, or already have. He goes to those who will soon shout, "Crucify Him!" Those who will nail him to the cross, spit on him, and shout insults. He goes, and He doesn't lash out or ignore the pain. He trusts in the One who will walk through it with Him.

That's what lament allows us to do. It's not about wallowing in self-pity, but it's not about ignoring our minimizing the things that cause us to grieve, either. Biblical lament is God's gift to help us: name what's broken, bring it honesty to the Lord, and then trust Him with the outcome.

And so, what is causing you pain today? What makes you want to weep? What unresolved grief have you been carrying around trying to put on a good face and ignore it, or just feel stuck in it, like you can't get out?

As I wrap up, I'm going to invite the worship team out and we're going to have a time where we practice Biblical lament together. I'll guide us, give us a few moments to pray, and then the team will lead us in a song. You can stay seated. Pray. Sing along or just let the words wash over you.

Let's take this time to practice lamenting together. So, what is breaking your heart today?

1) Be honest with God and yourself.

- What's heavy on your heart today? What loss are you grieving?
- Take a deep breath. Call out to the Lord, even if it's messy.
- If you can't find the words to say, just whisper His name: "Jesus..."

"God, I'm coming to you with this. Here's what hurts. I need you to sit in this with me."

2) Ask boldly and trust completely.

- What do you want to ask God to do? Where do you need Him to move?
- Even if nothing changes right away, can you trust Him?

"God, would you please move. Would you fix this? Would you give me strength and courage to face it? But come what may, I choose surrender and trust."

Response Time

Invitation/Prayer: As we leave today, we don't want to rush through this time and we don't want you to go through it alone. Prayer team to pray with you or talk about next steps.

Communion: As Jesus wept over Jerusalem, He knew that their peace would not come through politics or power, it would come through the cross. And He kept walking towards it.

He lamented what was broken, and then He gave Himself to make it whole. During communion, we remember that through Jesus' body and blood, He took the full weight of our sin and shame upon Himself and makes all things new.

And as we walk through this life that often times makes us grieve, we do not grieve as those without hope. Jesus wins. Grief and sadness, pain and death do not have the final word because Jesus will make all things new.