

things we grieve

the loss of a loved one
the loss of a pet a breakup or a divorce

things we might also grieve

major life transitions	the effects of big decisions (even when those decisions are ultimately good for us)	a friendship breakup
being unable to achieve a goal or fulfill a dream		the person we were before something traumatic or life-altering occurred
a diagnosis		moving to a new location
not living the life we hoped we would live	losing a job or switching careers	a faith transition or a shift in our other beliefs

*Psalm 10:1 – Why, O LORD, do you stand far off?
Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?*

*Psalm 38:9-11 – O Lord, all my longing is known to you;
my sighing is not hidden from you. ¹⁰ My heart throbs, my strength fails me; as for the light of my eyes—it also has gone from me. ¹¹ My friends and companions stand aloof from my affliction, and my neighbors stand far off.*

*Psalm 130:1-2 – Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD.
² Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!*

WHAT IS LAMENT AND WHY SHOULD WE LEAVE SPACE FOR IT?

Sean Nemecek, *The Weary Leader's Guide to Burnout*: (p 184)

God gives us biblical testimony to show how to handle loss, anger, grief, and other negative emotions. These witnesses can be found in the psalms of lament.

Learning to lament is an essential step in our spiritual development. When there are...parts of ourselves we won't allow into the light, God remains hidden until we are willing to work through the pain. It's not that God is hiding from us; we are putting up a wall that is separating us from God and his healing presence.

WHEN IS LAMENT APPROPRIATE?

When did life not work out the way we thought it would?

Choices we made, sins we committed:

- Poor choice, and consequences were life-changing – “If only I hadn’t...” or “If only I had...”
- We hurt someone and it has caused an estrangement

My notes:

Someone sinned against us:

- Childhood abuse, abandonment, estrangement
- Marital abuse, adultery, abandonment
- Someone committed a crime against us
- Other betrayal

My notes:

Consequences of the Fall

- Prayed a lot for something, and it didn’t happen
- Health issues in ourselves or family members
- Death of a loved one, especially someone who passed away before they should have
- See “things we grieve” picture on the back page

My notes:

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON’T LAMENT?

Often, instead of bringing things to God, we cover them up. Maybe we are told to get over it. Maybe think we can’t bring things before God because it might make Him angry. Maybe we were taught that God causes bad these things to happen.

We cover our wounds tightly:

- Addictions – food, caffeine, shopping, social media, binge-watching television...keeping us distracted and numb
- Busyness – it is a badge of honor these days to be so busy that we are chronically exhausted

Result: we don’t have to be alone with ourselves—we don’t have to think about and feel things we’ve been avoiding

The wounds never heal...because we never treat them