

small group **discussion**

For the sermon on May 11-12, 2013
"When Trust Hangs On By a Thread"

lean in

Describe a time when you "hit a wall."

look down

The central question in the sermon series, *The Journey of Trust*, is: Can God be trusted? Trusting God is the foundation of obedience and discipleship. We are unlikely to obey God (Jesus) if we don't trust him. So, how can we be assured of his trustworthiness? This week, we'll look at three sets of song lyrics (Psalms) written by David. Each of these songs is considered to be a Psalm of Lament.

When David wrote these laments, he was in desperate circumstances needing God to intervene. King Saul had become jealous of David and had employed extensive resources to kill him. David, who was anointed by God to be king, was on the run for 10 years. You can bet he had some questions for God. (See 1 Samuel 18-31.)

Read Psalm 13, 55, and 69 together. As you read, look for these six elements of lament. Not all Psalms of Lament have all these elements, but many have a combination of these important aspects.

- A cry to God
- The real problem (the lament)
- The quest to trust
- Prayer or request
- Reasons given to God for the prayer to be answered
- Vow or shout of praise or gratitude

look in

A prayer of lament is an honest conversation with God. Lamenting recognizes the gap that seems to be between what we believe should be happening and what we are truly experiencing. In essence, it's saying, "What's up God? I'm hurting, scared and confused. I need your intervention. I really do trust you even though my circumstances tell me different."

How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? (Psalm 13.1)

My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death have fallen on me. Fear and trembling have beset me; horror has overwhelmed me. (Psalm 55.4-5)

I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God. (Psalm 69.3)

These are honest and raw words from a desperate man. Is this a good way to talk to God? Is this irreverent or dishonoring to God? Why or why not?

In his sermon Jeff Manion referenced a friend who said the three of dysfunctions of a family are: Don't feel. Don't talk. Don't trust. However, the Psalms of Lament scream the opposite, "feel, talk, trust." Where do you lean in stressful times?

If you were to write a prayer of lament, what would you write about? What honest words and emotions would you use? What words of trust and praise would you conclude with?



ada bible church

616.868.7005 | adabile.org