

**The Heart of Romans: “Lament and Hope”
Weekly Recap
Romans 8:23-27**

Chris reminded us of Jared’s imagery from last week: The Curse of Creation, dust, goatheads, mesquite trees, and the Crown of Thorns. **Don’t miss that the Curse of Genesis 3 was literally pressed into the body of our LORD.** Jared finished with Romans 8:22:

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

Look at Romans 8:23-25

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Jared began his series on Ecclesiastes on September 24th last year. In his first sermon, “Meaningless”, he mentioned the darkness that invades the heart of people when they confront the raw reality of the world. Mystic Christians refer to this as “the dark night of the soul”.

Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.

- Ecc.5:2

Our lament is evidence of something greater. **Evil is only evil if good exists.** Our lament is a means of restoration. Hezekiah (37:14) spread everything out before the LORD. Don’t miss the importance of PRESENCE. It is key to Lament. Jesus in Matthew 25, **“I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”**

Examples:

Fall Festival on the West Side of town. Lament, and hope, PRESENCE.

12-6 This Saturday. Need help with a couple of small games, and with talking to folks. We also need some of our families there 2-5. Just because. Not just for, but with the community.

One Kingdom (hurricane relief): lament, hope, PRESENCE.

Special contribution box in foyer and online. One Kingdom- collaborate with Local Church, lasting presence. This is similar to the Good Samaritan leaving money at the inn for the care of the fallen man.

Life is not meaningless. God is not simply up in heaven and we, simply down here. The “dark night of the soul” is real, but it is not the end. Read Psalm 30: 5:

For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

The message of Romans 8 is that God has descended into the darkness and brought light through his Spirit. He has chosen to share that light through his people by dwelling within, and shining out from them.

In addition to PRESENCE, there are two other KEY ways this happens:

PRAYER (Intercession) and ACTION (Intervention). *We will discuss action next week.*

Romans 8:26-27

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

This is intercessory prayer. We intercede for the world; the Spirit intercedes for us. All Creation Groans, We Groan, and as we pray, The SPIRIT groans.

Intercession bridges the gaps. We don't know, we can't understand, God fellowships in our suffering through Jesus in the Spirit, so we can fellowship in the suffering of Jesus in the Spirit.

Communion: Go back to Jason's communion passage from last week.

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

- Romans 8:14-17

Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

- Mark 14:35

What did Jesus Want in the garden? We know he prayed FOR his disciples. What did he want FROM his Disciples?

He wanted PRESENCE and PRAYER. **"Watch and Pray"** (Mark 14:38)

We can give him that now. In communion, we can be there, in the Garden, as we cry, "Abba Father".

How will you commit to be PRESENT in the world this week, and PRESENT with God through his Spirit?