

Class 6: Making a Battle Plan

1. Lamentations 3

- a. Two kinds of Christians: those who say “Great is thy faithfulness” intellectually, and those who say it from experience. We can only truly sing the song when we’ve experienced God’s faithfulness in the valley.
- b. I suggest that perhaps the reason why our suffering and affliction is prolonged is because our primary aim is simply to get rid of the affliction itself, rather than to become more like Christ. If the reason we are in this moment of affliction is because God wants to chasten us to form us more into Christ’s image, then our affliction remains until our perspective changes.
- c. Suffering is a teacher. Romans 5:3-4. Suffering Taught Jesus.
- d. We suffer as one who has been united to Christ in faith. This means our suffering cannot be in vain.
- e. Welch: But it only truly teaches us as we fix our eyes on Jesus. If you avoid him in the midst of pain, expect to be embittered by it. But if you look to Jesus, you will no longer be alone. You will be strengthened, and you will be changed. Expect to say, This is exactly what I needed. Through depression I have learned things about God and myself. It would have been nothing short of a tragedy not to have learned them.

2. Practical Advice:

- a. Change takes effort. Phil. 2:12-13.
- b. Physical tips from 2nd week
- c. Reading
- d. Prayer – specific, guided. Valley of Vision, Keller’s Psalms, etc.
- e. Know your patterns (seasonal, work stress, etc.)
- f. Be Patient. Sanctification takes time.
- g. Keep going to church. One of the worst things you can do in depression-anxiety is distance yourself from others. Don’t distance yourself from the place God has ordained for you to fellowship with other Christians, sit under the preached Word, and be reminded of his love and grace through the Lord’s Supper.
- h. Find 2 or 3 godly people who you can consistently rely on for solid, good, biblical and gospel rich advice. Not to be contradictory with cross and criticism approach.

3. Other helps to aid in spiritual change

- a. Thought Investigation Questionnaire

<p>1. My Life Situation: Time? Place? People? Events?¹</p>	<p>Asaph’s life situation is not defined in detail in Psalm 77. Asaph calls it “the day of my trouble” (v. 2), a deliberately general description which fits many life situations</p>
<p>2. My Feelings: Sum up your mood in one word if you can. Are you sad, worried, guilty, angry, etc? You may want to rate the intensity of your feeling by determining what</p>	<p>Troubled (v. 2, 3, 4) 100% Inconsolable (v. 2) 90% Overwhelmed (v. 3) 90% Cut off from God (v. 7) 95% Pessimistic (v. 7) 95% Insecure (v. 2) 80%</p>

¹ David Murray, *Christians Get Depressed Too*, pp. 74-77.

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 Fear, Anxiety, Depression Class Outline

percentage of the time you feel that way.	Scared (v. 2) 75%
3. My Thoughts: What am I thinking of at this time? About Myself? Others? The present? The future?	My past was all great, but the present is terrible (v. 5). God has cast me off (v. 7). The future is bleak and gloomy (v. 7). God's promises no longer hold true (v. 8). God has forgotten how to be gracious (v. 9). God has shut up His mercies (v. 9).
4. My analysis: Identify false or unhelpful thinking patters such as false extremes, false generalization, false filter, etc.	The psalmist confesses to wrong and unhelpful thinking when he looks at his thought patterns and says, "This is my infirmity" (v. 10). His "infirmity," or his distorted thinking, includes false extremes, false generalization, false mind reading (of God), false fortune telling, false feeling-based reasoning.
5. My behavior: Impact of 1-4 on me and my relations with others. Stopped helpful activities? Started unhelpful activities? Reduced activity? Hyper activity?	Crying (v. 1) Complaining (v. 3) Cannot sleep (v. 4) Cannot speak to others (v. 4) Cannot praise God (v. 4)
6. My reasons: Why do I believe the thoughts I listed in step 3 are true? What evidence is there to support my conclusion?	The psalmist is not explicit but does imply: This is how I feel. This is how things look to me.
7. My Challenge: List evidence and reasons against the thoughts in step 3. Think of what God would point to, to show you that your thoughts are not completely true.	God has dealt with his dear people similarly before (v. 10) God's powerful providence through the years (v. 11-20). God sometimes leads His people through deep waters (v. 19) God sometimes shepherds His people through the wilderness (v. 20) God will lead His people to the Promised Land (v. 20)
8. My conclusion: Come to a balanced conclusion, which will also be truthful and helpful.	Although I feel cast off and forgotten by God, He is redeeming me and leading me through the wilderness into the Promised land. Unlike God's Word and works, my feelings are infirm – inaccurate and unreliable.
9. My new feelings: Copy some or all of the feelings from step 2 and rate them again.	Asaph is not explicit, but from his words in verses 13-20 we may reasonably infer that Asaph now feels a degree of confidence, optimism, safety and comfort. Troubled (30%)

	Inconsolable (20%) Overwhelmed (15%) Cut off from God (30%) Pessimistic (10%) Insecure (10%) Scared (20%)
10. My Plan: How will I put the balanced conclusion into practice?	I will think more about God than myself. I will think more about God's deeds in the past. I will believe God's unchanging power and grace. I will trust even when in the deep waters or in the wilderness.

- b. **Write your own Psalm of Lament.**
 - c. There is no human emotion not expressed in the Psalms. They are the Christian prayerbook, and a great aid in times of despair, sorrow, grief, pain, and affliction.
 - d. A Psalm of Lament can generally fit this pattern:
 - i. Vent your Lament
 - 1. V. 1-2
 - ii. Express your Trust
 - 1. V. 3
 - iii. Cry for Deliverance
 - 1. V. 4
 - iv. Vow to Praise Again
 - 1. V. 5-6
 - e. Look at Psalm 13 as an example
 - f. Write out your own prayer of Lament following this pattern.
 - g. Other model Psalms of Lament include: 3, 5, 6, 7, 13, 32, 44, 60, 69, 74, 77, 79, 80, 83, 85, 88, 90, 123, 130, 137 and 142
4. **Compare what you think or feel to be true with what is factually true (Scripture)**
Use journal example
5. **Final Thoughts**
- a. Remember everything that we've talked about. Use it to think through your own depression, as well as help your loved ones.
 - b. The worst thing you could do is leave this class and never think, talk about, or use the things we've talked about together.
 - c. Will send our a survey soon. Please take it.