

Psalm 42 & 43: Lament

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Preacher: Kevin Murphy

[0:00] Lord Jesus, nobody here needs to hear my words. We need to hear your words. Lord, my words are fallible and imperfect, but God, you are perfect.

So I pray as we listen to your scripture being read, won't you speak to us? Won't you open the eyes of our hearts, help us to see you, help us to see ourselves, and help us to trust in you.

We pray in your great name. Amen. Great. Over to you. Good morning. Today's scripture reading comes from Psalm 42 and 43.

Please follow along with your Bible. Again, if you do not have a Bible with you, please grab a church Bible from the front of the stage, at the back, or near the door. Our passage today is on page 439 of the church Bible.

Hear then God's word to us today. Psalm 42. Why are you cast down, O my soul, to the quiet master, a masculine of the sons of Korah?

[1:05] As the deer pants for the flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night. While they say to me all the day long, where is your God?

These things I remember. As I pour out my soul, how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise.

A multitude keeping festival. Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

My soul is cast down within me. Therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Misa. Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls.

[2:08] All your breakers and your waves have gone over me. By day the Lord commands his steadfast love. And at night his song is with me. A prayer to the God of my life.

I say to God, my rock, why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with the deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me. While they say to me all the day long, where is your God? Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Psalm 43. Send out your light and your truth. Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people. From the deceitful and unjust man, deliver me.

For you are the God in whom I take refuge. Why have you rejected me? Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? Send out your light and your truth.

[3:18] Let them lead me. Let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy. And I will praise you with the lyre.

O God, my God. Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Let us believe and respond to God's true and living word. Great. Thank you, Lonnie. Pastor Mark Froichrup wrote the book Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy.

And he wrote it after the passing away of their young daughter. And he writes this. He says, we step into the world with a cry. Although none of us remembers that moment, the first sound we uttered after leaving the warm and protected confines of our mother's womb was a loud protest.

We entered this world wailing. However, we don't stop crying after birth. It continues because the world is broken. Our world has been infected with the broken effects of sin.

[4:36] Death is the elder reminder that something is not right with our world. But there are other examples too. Cancer, addictions, failed marriages, relational conflict, loneliness, abuse.

To cry is to be human. Friends, how do you handle the pain and grief and sorrow and sadness that comes to us through living in a broken world?

Where do you go and what do you do when life becomes unbearably difficult? Friends, when your heart breaks, when anger arises, when you feel scared or alone, we all enter the world wailing. But as we all know, the tears don't end there. And while this is true for all of us generally, if you're a human being, you live in a broken world and pain is part of our world. For some of us, more than just the regular hardships of living in life, for some of us, the particularity and the intensity of hardship and suffering is particularly intense and deep.

The depth of sorrow and sadness can't be easily shaken off. The intensity that results in a kind of leaving us in a place of helplessness or hopelessness, not knowing where to turn.

[5:55] For some of us, the dark clouds, when they roll in, they don't just darken your life. They kind of make you question, will the sun ever shine again? For some of us, friends, when sorrow or grief is so utterly intense, we feel like we may never be able to smile or laugh or experience joy.

And some of us here in this church have had to bury our children. An unbelievably difficult experience. Some of us, friends, have never got to say goodbye to loved ones as death stole them away from us unexpectedly.

Some of us have experienced the trauma of marriage coming apart, of marital unfaithfulness, of being the victim of abuse. Some of us mourn a relationship that is currently under strain.

Some of us feel the hopelessness of unemployment or the anger of unjust policies and politics and war going on in our world. As one medical practitioner said recently, trauma does not discriminate. It doesn't matter your social status, your financial status, your ethnicity, your religion, your background. All of us are equally vulnerable to the trauma and the pain and the harshness of this broken world creeping into our lives, creeping into our souls.

[7:11] Friends, where do you turn? Where do you go? How do you handle the hardness of living in this world when the storms don't just come close but threaten to make shipwreck of everything you've known, everything you've believed, everything you've held onto?

Now, before we look at our scripture today, which Lonnie read so well to us, I want us to think about this from a secular point of view for a few minutes. How do we handle the sorrows and the sadness of life if God is not real and if the scriptures are not true?

Where do we turn then? How do we handle these things? I want us to think about it. And there's many different variations and permutations of this, but let's think about it in three categories. One way is to numb ourselves through distractions, whether it's excessive drinking or excessive exercise, whether it's extreme hours in the office or extreme doom scrolling on social media, more hours in the gym or maybe more tattoos on our bodies.

One way that we can distract ourselves from the hardship and the difficulty of life is to give ourselves to something else that will kind of escape from the hardship.

And I personally think that exercise is actually a very sinister distraction because it's so good and it's so healthy and the endorphins get you feeling really good. But if it's a merely escapist behavior, there may be something wrong.

[8:36] So distraction, escaping it. What about denial? This is something I think that maybe younger people don't struggle with as much. Maybe older generations, we tend to put on a happy face, put on a smile and just pretend that life is okay.

We kind of keep calm and carry on as the famous British war poster had in the 1940s, right? Just tell yourself that you're just tired, you're just overworked, you just need a holiday.

But it's a way of maybe masking, denying some of the pain that we carry in our hearts. We're actually in a desperate place, but we don't want to face it.

Friends, some of us maybe, we just end up in despair. We see no light at the end of the tunnel.

There's no hope. This is the way the world is. This is the way we are. This is how God has made us. We will always be depressed. We will always be melancholic. And the best we can hope for is some kind of way to medicate the symptoms so that we can get through life and get through work and carry on.

[9:39] But no real solution, no hope, no way out. Well, against this backdrop, the scriptures actually have a remarkable different approach. And we see this in the Psalms that we're looking at this morning.

Now, if you've been coming for the last few weeks, we're doing this series called Praying Through the Psalms. And we've been looking at various categories of Psalms. Trust, meditation, confession, intercession, praise, various categories of the Psalms.

And the categories we're looking at today is the Psalms of lament. Psalms of lament. Scholars tell us that 30 to 40% of the Psalms actually make up Psalms of lament.

And to lament means to grieve or to cry out or to complain. Some of the Psalms of lament are corporate. They're meant for an entire nation or a community or a church as the whole nation laments the brokenness of their community or their world or maybe war that's come against them or God's judgment or their sin.

And together they cry out and say, God, how long must this continue? They bring their complaint before God. But many of the Psalms of lament are also individual. They're written for a person in a particular situation, facing a difficulty, oppression from an enemy, being driven out by family members, unloved, war, sickness, darkness.

[11:00] And the beautiful thing about the Psalms of lament is the fact that the Bible tells us that not only does it understand our pain and understand our grief and our sorrow and our sadness, the Bible gives us a language to express that sorrow and sadness.

So the Bible doesn't just say, it's okay that you feel that way, but once you find and come back, the Bible says, let me give you language how to express that, how to be honest with God.

And so the Bible gives us language to pour out our hearts to Him. So what is biblical lament? It's talking to God honestly about our sorrow and our sadness in order to renew our hope and our confidence in Him.

It's bringing to God, it's bringing our real selves to the real God in order to find real grace for the sorrows of our hearts and the sorrows of this world.

And the Bible calls us and invites us to lament. So let's look at these two Psalms. If you have your Bible, keep them open with me. We're going to look at a lot of the scripture here.

[12:05] And we're looking at these two Psalms, 42 and 43. Why two Psalms? Well, I trust that you picked this up as Lonnie was reading to us. These two Psalms actually go together. Many scholars say that maybe we're one Psalm originally that somehow got separated.

And we see this in a couple of ways. I'm sure you noticed there's that refrain, why you downcast over my soul? Why in such turmoil within me, hope in God?

It's like a chorus, that verse, chorus, verse, chorus. It keeps on coming back. And it's there in the middle of Psalm 42. It's at the end of Psalm 42. And then again, at the end of Psalm 43, this repeated chorus appears in both Psalms, verse 5, verse 11, and then again, verse 5 of chapter 43. But also notice, if you've got your Bible, almost all the Psalms have got a title in it. So 42 says, To the choir master, a mascal of the sons of Korah. But then Psalm 43 is one of the only Psalms in this entire section that doesn't have a title.

The author didn't give it any kind of title, say who it was by, because it was probably actually following on from Psalm 42. And then the other thing is, notice that the theme of lament, it carries through in both of them.

[13:21] So let's look at this two-in-one Psalm together. And Psalms are not just meant to be studied or analyzed. They're meant to be felt. They're meant to be experienced. And so let's point out a couple of things as we think about these two Psalms and lamenting.

Notice, firstly, the three sections. So there's section 1 to 5, section 6 to 11, and then chapter 43 is 1 to 5 again. And if you notice, when Lonnie's reading, there's kind of lament and questioning, and then there's this hope that, why are you downcast?

Trust in God, my God, and my salvation. And then he goes back to questioning, and lamenting, and hurting, and wondering. And then he comes back to hope and trust in God. And then in 43, he goes back to questioning.

There's this back and forth, this to and fro about the Psalm. Did you pick that up? Why is that? Why didn't the Psalmist just say, God, life sucks, blah, blah, blah, vomit all his complaints, and then say, but, you know, I'll still hope in you.

Actually, there's this kind of wave after wave of anguish and questioning, but then he kind of finds a rock, and he holds onto it. And then the waves come back again, and he's questioning and wondering, and then he stands on the rock, and then the waves come.

[14:35] Well, I think one of the reasons for that is because that's how life works, isn't it? That's how pain works. That's how sorrow works. Friends, for us, lamenting is never just, you know, a

linear graph up and to the right.

But it's always, it's anguish. It's good days and bad days. There's waves of grief that come, and sometimes you feel better, and sometimes it feels overwhelming again.

The Psalmist knows that lamenting is dynamic. It's raw. It's real. It's messy. It's unpredictable. And Christian lamenting involves knowing how both to be honest with our pain and turn to God.

And sometimes these happen at the same time, and sometimes this is more real, and sometimes the pain is more real. Christian lamenting is knowing how to both face the facts of our hardship in life as well as facing the Father who is sovereign over all things.

But sometimes you face the Father, and then the waves of lament come. And there's this back and forth, this journey of faith. Notice, secondly, as we look at the Psalm, how honest the Psalmist is with God.

[15:45] I mean, if you've ever struggled or gone through hardship, maybe you felt depressed, or you know that kind of pithy sayings or, you know, trite little words like, everything will get better, or God is in this somehow, don't really help.

But the Psalmist here doesn't throw out pithy sayings. He uses this powerful word imagery, language that expresses his feelings. Look what he says in verse one, as the deer pants for flowing streams, so my soul pants for you.

My soul thirsts for God. If you've ever been on the sports field out for a run on a hot day like today, right? You know when your throat burns and you're desperate for a drink of water?

That's what he's saying. He's saying, God, I'm burning with desperation for you. Well, look at verse seven. Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls. Your breakers and your waves have gone over me.

Okay, friends, picture being placed under Niagara Falls, okay? You've got 100 million tons of water crashing down on you. You're not going to stand. You're going to get pummeled into the rocks.

[16:49] Or maybe you've gone to the sea, not to Big Wave Bay, because Big Wave doesn't really have big waves, but maybe you've gone somewhere. They really are big waves. And the waves crash you into it and you're flipping over and you don't know which way is up and which way is down and you're completely lost.

Psalmist saying, that's how I feel, God. I feel like the waterfall is pummeling me into the rocks. I feel like I'm turning. I don't know which way is up or down. I am lost. He's using this honest language.

Or look at 42 verse 10. As a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me. They say to me all day long, where is your God? The language of my bones are infected and infested.

This isn't just a surface wound. He's honest with his pain. But then notice something else with the psalm. Each stanza is wave-like in its repetition, but there's also a kind of progression.

The psalm makes progress. I don't know if you noticed that. Each wave of lament and hope is a wave, but it somehow brings him closer to the shore. And so by the end of the psalm, he's closer to the shore than he was in the beginning.

[17:57] One scholar put it like this. He moves from helpless nostalgia to present afflictions to hope of restoration. Did you see that?

Look at it with me. Look at stanza one. In verse four, he says here, he remembers the time when he used to lead God's people in worship with glad shouts and songs of praise.

But where is he now? Well, verse six tells us that he's somewhere in the desert. He's in the land of Jordan and Mount Hermon. He's far away from Jerusalem, and it's like he's in exile in the desert, remembering back upon the time when life was so much better.

And he's saying, God, if only I could go back there. Those were the good old days when life was...

He has no vision for the future. He's just remembering how things used to be. But then in the second stanza, he's kind of not just remembering the past.

He's very present. He says, God, my soul is cast down within me. Therefore, I remember you.

Verse six or verse seven. The psalmist talks about the waves that break over him.

[19:00] But at least he knows they are God's waves. Look what he says. Your breakers, your waves have gone over me. I stand under your waterfalls. And then verse eight.

By day the Lord commands his love at night, his song is within me. He's moving from just remembering the past to being present. But then in the third stanza, he cries out to God.

And he has hope that things will change. 43 verse one. Vindicate me, O God. Defend my cause.

Verse two. You are the God in whom I take refuge.

Verse three. Send out your light and your truth. Let them lead me home. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God who is my exceeding joy. And the cries and the complaints, the lament is doing something.

He's not just sitting in the ashes. He's progressing and he's finding renewed hope and confidence again. So friends, how does this help us?

[19 : 59] Well, how should we think about this? Well, I think the message of the psalm is pretty clear, isn't it? When sorrow and sadness come our way, when life overwhelms us, we need to learn how to lament well by bringing our real selves to the real God and finding real grace and hope and strength.

So now, as we said, this series is not just about studying the psalms. It's about praying the psalms. So how might we pray Psalm 42 and 43? How might we apply this to our lives?

Well, in this book, *Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy*, Mark Prochtrup suggests four things, four elements of lamenting. And I've added a fifth one. And he doesn't actually look at this psalm so much.

He looks at Psalm 13 more, but they're applicable here. And so let's look at those five things.

Firstly, he says this. Lamenting is turning to God. When the sorrows and the sadness overwhelm and come in close, we turn to him rather than away from him.

And look at the overarching refrain of this psalm. In the midst of all the waves and the taunts and the sorrow and the sadness of his heart, what is the one thing the psalmist does? He turns to God.

[21 : 14] Look at 42 verse 1. As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you. My soul thirsts for you, the living God. Or verse 6.

My soul is cast down, therefore I remember you. Verse 9. I say to God, my rock, why have you forgotten me? Okay, he feels forgotten, abandoned, but at least he's crying out to God rather than to his mates at the pub.

Nothing in the psalm tells us that the psalmist is going to get his question answered, but what is he doing? He's bringing his complaints, his cry to God. Friends, where do you turn when the storms of life come?

Where do you turn when the agony comes close, when wave after wave threatens you? What do we do? Well, how might it look like to pray Psalm 42 and 43 this week?

It might look like saying something like this. Using the words of the psalmist, we might say, God, I feel like the psalmist here. Lord, I feel like wave after wave is crashing over me.

[22 : 18] I don't know which way is up and which way is down. Jesus, I feel overwhelmed with sadness and sorrow when I read the news, when I think of my mother's condition, when I think of my child's behavior or how they're being bullied at school.

God, I feel hopeless. I need you. Turn to God means choosing to talk to God about what is happening in our lives.

But then secondly, more than just turning to God, we are honest in our complaints with God. We bring our real selves to the real God and tell him how we're really doing. And look at how the psalmist does this here. He says in verse 9, Why do I go out mourning?

Because of the oppression of my enemies? Why do my enemies taunt me all day long saying, where is your God? Or 43 verse 2, You are the God in whom I take refuge.

Why have you forgotten me? Why have you rejected me? Friends, the temptation is just to ruminate on our misfortune or to simply rehearse our anger. They're like, I can't believe this is happening.

[23 : 19] That is so wrong. There are people like this in the world. And we just rehearse the anger of our hearts and we build it up and get worse and worse and worse. But actually, and I do that. I tell myself I'm justified to be angry.

It's that person's fault. And if only they didn't treat me like that. But actually what the psalmist does is he comes to God with his honest feelings. There's no grace in just complaining.

There's no healing in redemption. Friends, the psalm calls us to bring our honest complaints and invites him into our sorrow and our pain. And so look at how might this work for us.

How might we pray Psalm 42? Well, look at the words that he uses here. Maybe you say something like, Jesus, I feel like you've forgotten me. I feel like maybe you've even rejected me.

God, my soul feels to be in mourning like wave after wave pounding me. Jesus, there are people who are making my life a misery. And I don't know how to get out of it.

[24 : 16] Jesus, my heart is both grieving and angry at what I read about. Where are you? Are you at work in this world anymore? Bringing your honest complaints to the honest God.

But then we don't just stop there. We also see how the psalmist boldly asks for help and he asks for change. In the psalm, the writer not only does he directly go to God, but he asks God to deliver him and to save him and to change his circumstances.

And we see this most profoundly in chapter 43. But actually throughout the psalm, it's there. He's making his requests to God. He's asking God to deliver him from the taunts of his enemies, to deliver him from the waves, to bring him near.

And so look at verse 1 again. He says, of chapter 43, he says, Vindicate me, God. Defend my cause. What's he asking for? He's asking for God to intervene, to God to defend him against the attacks.

Or verse 3, send out your light and your truth. Let them lead me home. Let them bring me back to your holy hill. He's saying, God, this sucks. I don't want to be here. Won't you do something about it?

[25 : 24] He's not just wallowing saying, well, I guess, you know, God is sovereign. And I guess that's what you want. Your will be done. I'll just suffer on like Eeyore. No, he's asking for deliverance.

Saying, God, God, let your tender mercy break in and change the situation. Friends, what might it look like for us to pray Psalm 42 and 43 this week? Jesus, I need your grace this week.

I don't know how I'm going to get through without you. Give me your spirit, please. Or you may say, Jesus, I feel like I'm trapped in a corner. I can't see my way out. God, I need you to deliver me.

Or Jesus, I feel so overwhelmed when I read what's going on. I don't even want to get out of bed.

God, give me the strength to face today. Be near to me. Give me your spirit.

Well, God, I'm asking you to restore that relationship. This broken relationship that I have is causing me agony and angst. God, won't you help us to talk to one another again?

[26 : 26] Bringing your bold requests before God. Now, friends, we at Watermark, the church tradition that we're part of is we call it reformed Christians. That's kind of our Christian heritage and what we believe.

And I think reformed Christians are generally very good at handling suffering and sorrow because we've got a big view of God's sovereignty. What we're not so good at is asking God to intervene.

I think this is something we can learn from our charismatic friends. Sometimes we need to say, God, we know you're sovereign. We know all things come from your hand. But, Lord, we're asking you to come and do something about this situation.

God, come and break in and change things. Listen to how David does this in Psalm 5. He says, give ear to my words, O Lord. Consider my groaning.

Give attention to the sound of my cry. He's asking boldly, God, come and be involved in my life. So, how do we lament? We turn to God.

[27 : 24] We're honest with our complaints. We ask boldly for God to intervene and be at work in our life. But then, fourthly, we speak truth to ourselves. And I think this is one of the most beautiful things about these two Psalms.

And it's something that we see, actually, again, throughout the Psalms. But we see it most particularly here. The Psalmist here, it's not David. The Psalmist speaks to his own soul.

And he is, in the midst of his complaints and his cry for help, he speaks to his own heart. Look at the constant refrain, verse 5. It's almost like he's been pouring out his heart to God.

He's been crying out to God. And he said, God, I need you. I need you to intervene. Lord, this is how I feel. But then, for a moment, he stops crying out to God. And he looks inward to his own heart.

And he says, how is my own soul doing? And he starts to speak to the condition of his own heart in the midst of his difficulty. Tim Keller, speaking about Psalm 77, which we see the same dynamic, says this.

[28 : 40] The Psalmist is arguing against his own heart, which had determined that things were hopeless. He looks at his heart and his heart says, things will never change. This is the way I'll always be.

And he says, no, no, no, heart, don't you believe it. You hope in God still. Martin Lloyd-Jones, very, very famously, wrote a book called Spiritual Depression. And he based it on these two Psalms, Psalm 42 and Psalm 43.

And in it, this is his very famous quote. Listen to what he says. He says, have you realized that most of your unhappiness, your sadness in life, is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?

Self. Those thoughts that come to you, they're speaking to you. Somebody is talking to you. Who is talking to you? Yourself is talking to you. Now, this man's treatment was this.

Instead of listening to himself, he starts talking to himself. Why are you downcast, he says. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says, self, now you listen to me for a moment.

[29 : 44] I will speak to you. Friends, think of the Israelites in the wilderness as they're traveling through the wilderness in the book of Numbers. And things are not going well.

There's hardship. There's difficulty. And they start grumbling and complaining. What do they do? They're listening to themselves. They're starting to tell themselves a narrative and then believe the story that they tell themselves.

This is so unfair. How could God treat us like this? Things were better back in Egypt. Maybe we should go back to Egypt. Actually, Egypt sounds pretty good. Actually, when we think about it, in Egypt we had all this food and there's figs and cucumbers.

It was amazing. And they start listening to the narrative that they tell themselves. Friends, sometimes you need to speak and say, soul, I know you feel overwhelmed.

Hope in God. Trust in Him. Things are not the way that they seem. So, friends, how might we pray Psalm 42 and 43 this week?

[30 : 42] Well, take these words from the repeated friend and preach this gospel to your heart. Kevin, why are you downcast? Why are you in such turmoil? What story are you believing?

Turn that over in your mind. Jesus, I feel downcast. I'm anxious. What in particular is causing the sadness? But then don't stop there. Speak truth to yourself. Now, self, you listen to me.

You hope in God. You shall praise Him again. This season will pass. This is not determining your life story. I know you feel forgotten, rejected, and abandoned.

But it's not true. What is true is that God will never leave you, never forsake you, never give up on you. How do you know? Because Jesus Christ was abandoned and forgotten and rejected on the cross.

Jesus was rejected and God, when He cried out to God, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? He was forsaken so that those who trust in Him will never be forsaken.

[31 : 39] I know that the cross is empty. The tomb is empty. The grave is empty. Jesus has died and risen again. Therefore, O my soul, you hope in Him, the one who conquered the grave, and you trust in Him.

Maybe you can pray, God, the truths of Scripture feel far and distant. Come and remind me of your truths and help me to believe your word today. Finally, friends, how do we lament?

We choose to trust in God. Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him, my salvation and my God.

Verse 5. Verse 11. Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him, my salvation and my God.

43, verse 5. Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him, my salvation and my God. Friends, this is the final destination of lament. It's not up in linear, perfect chart to the right.

It's wave after wave. It's grief. It's hope. It's anguish. It's hardship. It's not up in the right. But the ways bring you to the shore, to the rock of Christ. And the final destination is knowing that once again, we will trust in Him.

[32 : 49] Not all that our problems will go away. Not that grief is gone and that happiness returns. Not that no clouds will ever roll into our life again. But trust in the God who is with us in the storm.

That, Lord, even though the darkness rolls in and my grief is intense, you, God, are with me, we will trust in Him again. Ian Thomas said this, All of our why questions in the midst of lament are always eventually answered with a who in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The one who died and rose again and conquered the grave and lives forevermore. Friends, we've come out from under the waterfall. We're no longer hopeless. No longer wave tossed.

We're firmly fixed on the rock, even as the storms rage on. So how can we pray in times of sadness? In times of sorrow drawn near? We come to the psalms of lament and we let them guide us.

Give us language to make our own. Learning how to turn to the Lord Jesus. Learning how to be honest with our real complaints. Learning how to ask God boldly for breakthrough and hope.

[33 : 54] And then we speak to our own souls and remind ourselves of the truth of Scripture. And then we choose to trust in God who reigns forevermore. Friends, when the storms of life come your way, learn to lament well by bringing your real self to the real God in order to experience real grace and real strength.

Mark Froichrup concludes like this, Let's pray together.

Why don't you join me as we pray? And then we're going to get into groups and pray together. But let me close my sermon with a prayer. Father God, this is easy to speak from the stage.

It's hard to live through. God, many of us here are in the throes of the waves and the waterfalls crashing over us. God, the waves of sorrow are real.

And we pray, God, we ask you boldly. We turn to you. We're honest. But God, we also ask you boldly. Won't you intervene? Won't you break into our lives? Won't you lift the dark cloud and bring your deep mercy?

[35 : 12] God, be with us in the midst of our sadness and help us to trust in you. Help us to choose faith in you and to believe the truth of Scripture rather than the narrative of our world.

We pray these things in your great and wonderful name. Amen. Amen.