

**Message:** A Time To Rejoice And Lament

**Scripture:** Proverbs 29:7; Isaiah 58:1-10;  
I John 3:16-18; Romans 12:9-15 (NIV '84)

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## 1. WHY DO WE NOT LAMENT?

An inadequate understanding of:

- 1) God's Word
- 2) History
- 3) Other People

## 2. WHY SHOULD WE AND HOW CAN WE PROPERLY LAMENT?

- 1) The **Love** of Christ Constrains Us.
- 2) The Crying Need of Our **Culture** Entreats Us.
- 3) The **Cross** of Christ and the **Gospel** of Christ Cleanse and Empower Us.

### **Daniel 9:4-5**

*“(4) O Lord... (5) we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws.”*

### **Daniel 9:16b**

*“(16b) Our sins and the iniquities of our fathers have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us.”*

**THE BIG IDEA:** God has not called us to treat the poor, the oppressed and people of a different race or ethnicity than we are in the same manner as we treat everyone else. He has called us to do much more - to actively seek them out, love them, listen to them, learn from them, and serve them to an even greater degree. We are to rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn. This is a necessary implication and expression of the gospel of grace. Any version of Christianity that does not include this in its teachings and in its actions falls short of the law of God and of the Good News of Jesus Christ. **CAN WE ALLOW WHAT HAS BROKEN THE HEART OF GOD TO BREAK OURS?**

### **Proverbs 29:7**

*“(7) The righteous care about justice for the oppressed, but the wicked have no such concern.”*

“I am about the least “woke” person you could meet. I have spent much of my life in a haze of relative cluelessness about and culpable indifference to many of the concerns that are addressed in this book. For instance, having grown up in South Carolina during the Civil Rights era, when I came to Jackson, Mississippi, at the age of twenty-nine, to teach systematic theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in the summer of 1990, the very first course I was asked to teach was “Pastoral and Social Ethics.” Now which, you may ask, social issues did I choose to address in the course? Abortion? Check. Homosexuality? Check. Marriage, divorce and remarriage?

Check. Medical ethics (infertility, end of life issues, etc.)? Check. Just war? Check. Death penalty? Check. But what about racism? Um, no. It did not even occur to me that this was a pastoral issue that I needed to prepare future ministers to address biblically in the church, much less in the communities where they would serve. How in the world could I have missed that?"

Ligon Duncan

"We should not regard what man is and what he deserves: but we should go higher - that it is God who has placed us in the world for such a purpose that we be united and joined together. He has impressed his image in us and has given us a common nature, which should incite us to providing one for the other. The man who wishes to exempt himself from providing for his neighbors should deface himself and declare that he no longer wishes to be a man, for as long as we are human creatures we must contemplate as in a mirror our face in those who are poor, despised, exhausted, who groan under their burdens...If there come some Moor or barbarian, since he is a man, he brings a mirror in which we are able to contemplate that he is our brother and our neighbor: for we cannot abolish the order of nature which God has established as inviolable."

John Calvin, *The Work Which Conquers All Things*

### **II Corinthians 5:14-15, 18**

*"<sup>(14)</sup> For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. <sup>(15)</sup> And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. <sup>(18)</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation."*

### **I John 3:16-18**

*"<sup>(16)</sup> This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. <sup>(17)</sup> If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? <sup>(18)</sup> Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence."*

### **I John 4:19-21**

*"<sup>(19)</sup> We love because he first loved us. <sup>(20)</sup> If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. <sup>(21)</sup> And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother."*

### **John 15:12-14**

*"<sup>(12)</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. <sup>(13)</sup> Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. <sup>(14)</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command."*

What do we do when we leave here?

Love  
Listen  
Learn  
Lament  
Labor

**Isaiah 58:1-10**

*<sup>(1)</sup> Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins. <sup>(2)</sup> For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them. <sup>(3)</sup> Why have we fasted, they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?' Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. <sup>(4)</sup> Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. <sup>(5)</sup> Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? <sup>(6)</sup> Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? <sup>(7)</sup> Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? <sup>(8)</sup> Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. <sup>(9)</sup> Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. If you do away with the yoke of the oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, <sup>(10)</sup> and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the dark, and your night will become like the noonday.*

**Romans 12:9-15**

*<sup>(9)</sup> Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>(10)</sup> Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. <sup>(11)</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. <sup>(12)</sup> Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. <sup>(13)</sup> Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. <sup>(14)</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>(15)</sup> Rejoice with those rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.*