

A Time to Mourn – Lesson 8 To Hide or to Hope

*“Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
and why art thou disquieted in me?
hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him
for the help of his countenance.”
Psalm 42:5*

Stages of Acceptance

- In *God’s Healing for Life’s Losses*, Kelleman divides the acceptance into four “Stages of Hope” that help bring healing.
 - These stages, with their typical and Christian responses, are:
 - Regrouping – Waiting
 - Deadening – Wailing
 - Despairing/Doubting – Weaving
 - Digging Cisterns – Worshiping
- Last week we looked at the need to wait on God instead of regrouping in our own strength.

Deadening

- Waiting for God does not mean that there is not pain or sorrow in our hearts.
- We may be tempted to deaden the pain we feel.
- We may refuse to find hope or call out to God because of the pain it exposes within us.
- We may refuse to see hope, as the Shunammite woman did when her miracle boy died – II Kings 4:28.

The Christian Response

- We have seen already in our grief journey the importance of calling out to God in our need (*complaint* in Lesson 4 and *cry* in Lesson 5).
- While we wait on God and have our hope in Him, we can express our struggles and desires to God.
- Paul does this in Philippians 1:23-25, saying that he longed for the fulfilled hope of being with Christ but also desired to stay and minister on earth.
 - He does not dismiss either his hope or his desire, but instead find a balance between the needs of *now* and the hope of *not yet*.

- Kelleman calls this *wailing*, which he defines as “longing fervently for heaven *and* living passionately for God and others while still on earth.”
- The key is *and*. We both long for Heaven and relief while also living our lives in their heartaches and joys.
- Paul again expresses these same conflicting desires in Romans 8:18-25:
 - vs. 18 - “sufferings of this present time” - NOW
 - vs. 20 – “vanity” or frustration – NOW
 - vs. 20 – “in hope” – NOT YET
 - vs. 22 – “groan and travail” – NOW
 - vs. 23 – “we groan within ourselves” – NOW
 - vs. 23 – “Waiting for the adoption” – NOT YET
- When we can both live in our present, broken world and hope for the future, perfect Heaven we move from simply *surviving* to *thriving* – Romans 8:28-39

Thoughts on Wailing

- Our troubles (such as grief or sorrow) reveal the brokenness within ourselves and our world.
 - We can give into that brokenness or seek that which is greater from above.
 - Psalm 42 is a tremendous expression of seeking God in trouble.
- Wailing is the expression of our deepest longings to God. What is it that we long for? God can form those longings within us as we express them to Him