



Tears of Joy

Psalm 126

HOPE
for the holiday blues

Why traditions?



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3. God is a celebratory God.
 - God instituted several regular feasts and celebrations for his people Israel.
 - God rejoices.



Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
 he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
 he will exult over you with loud singing.



Why traditions?

1. The physical tends to compliment the spiritual.
2. We forget without regular reminders.
3. God is a celebratory God.
 - God instituted several regular feasts and celebrations for his people Israel.
 - God rejoices.
 - The future consummation of God's kingdom is described as a wedding celebration.



Revelation 19:9

Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!”



The Dangers of Traditions



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1. Traditions can become an end in themselves.
2. Traditions can be used to separate and condemn.
3. Traditions can create expectations that lead to discouragement when not fully realized.



Proverbs 4:23

Keep your heart with all vigilance,
for from it flow the springs of life.



Hope for the Holiday Blues



Hope for the Holiday Blues

- Depression and loneliness
- Materialism and gift pressure
- Strained relationships



Hope for the Holiday Blues

- Depression and loneliness
- Materialism and gift pressure
- Strained relationships
- Loss



Loss → **Biblical Lament** → **Joy**



Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;

then they said among the nations,

“The LORD has done great things for them.”

The LORD has done great things for us;
we are glad.



Psalm 126

Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like streams in the Negeb!
Those who sow in tears
shall reap with shouts of joy!
He who goes out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.





Loss → Biblical Lament → Joy

We're pretty bad at lamenting!

Genesis 50:1-3

Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. Forty days were required for it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.



Genesis 50:7-10

So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company. When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days.



Biblical Lament



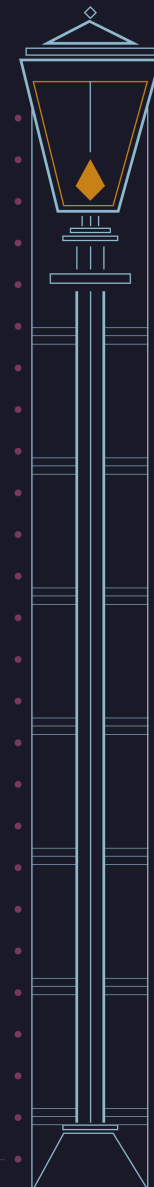
Biblical Lament

1. Biblical lament includes others.



Romans 12:15

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.



Luke 16:30-35

Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."



Luke 16:30-35

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept.



Biblical Lament

1. Biblical lament includes others.

Question: Have you invited somebody else into sharing your loss with you?



Biblical Lament

1. Biblical lament includes others.
2. Biblical lament involves raw honesty expressed directly to God.



Psalm 88
(page 494)



Biblical Lament

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Question: Have you taken extended time with God to honestly lay your loss at his feet?



Biblical Lament

1. Biblical lament includes others.
2. Biblical lament involves raw honesty expressed directly to God.
3. Biblical lament produces hope.



Psalm 73
(page 485)



2 Corinthians 4:16-18

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.



C.S. Lewis on Nostalgia



“The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing. These things—the beauty, the memory of our own past—are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshipers.”



C.S. Lewis on Nostalgia

“For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited.”



David Gibson on C.S. Lewis

“When you experience nostalgia, your heart is longing for a more beautiful person than you have ever met or a more beautiful place than you have ever known. You think you’re longing for the past, but the past was never as good as your mind is telling you it was. And, says Lewis, God is giving you in that moment one of the most profound glimpses of the intensity of perfection and beauty that you have actually yet to see.”



David Gibson on C.S. Lewis

“What is in fact pulling on your heartstrings is the future: it’s heaven; it’s your sense of home and belonging that has just cracked the surface of your life, for just a moment, and then is gone.”



Revelation 21:3-4

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”



Biblical Lament

1. Biblical lament includes others.
2. Biblical lament involves raw honesty expressed directly to God.
3. Biblical lament produces hope.

Question: Have you trusted God with your eternity?



Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.



Isaiah 53:4-6

All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.



Luke 2:10-11

And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

