

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Scripture used: Lamentations 1:1-3 (NLT)

### OVERVIEW

This week's message is Part 2 in the "What's Next?" series where Pastor Hurmon teaches on the opportunities in transitions. In both the Psalms and the Book of Lamentations we find two expressions of worship: celebration and lamenting. The Psalms contain songs and poetry celebrating the benefits God brings to our lives, yet almost half of them are lamenting, or crying out to God – expressions of deep grief and even questioning if God is good. The book of Lamentations is a letter the prophet Jeremiah wrote to the Jews who remained in Jerusalem during the Babylonian Exile. Indeed, Israel had suffered great loss and did not know what the future held. Jeremiah's weeping encouraged the community to enter into worship as a response to their loss. No one can do endings well by themselves; we need each other to give voice to our pain to transition into the next stage of our lives.

### KEY POINTS

**Big Idea: Navigating transition is a part of life and faith!**

- 1) **The Anatomy of Transitions:** with each transition, there is an opportunity for us to emerge as better people with a deeper, powerful knowledge of who God is.
  - An Ending (loss, death, saying goodbye) where significant loss has taken place.
  - A Middle Passage (confusion, emptiness, anxiety) where the past and future seem unclear.
  - A New Beginning ("new" start, chapter, or season): in order to start well, we have to do endings well.
- 2) **Ending Well: Lamentation**
  - Recognize loss has/is occurring. We must acknowledge that we will never get back what we've lost.
  - Identify the layers of loss and mourn. We may think we have dealt with pain completely then are surprised when a memory of that pain unexpectedly returns or affects a different part of our life. Be honest about what you're feeling to God and others. There are no judgmental zones for feelings.
  - Begin to let go. Many people change or start new things quickly to avoid transitions, e.g., jumping from relationship to relationship without examining the ending and middle passage before starting a new beginning.
  - In order to let go and end well, we must examine three things:
    - *Shift in worldview.* What do I believe? When you don't understand what God is doing, stand on what you know about God.
    - *Shift in identity.* How do I understand myself?
    - *Shift in roles.* What is my role now?
  - Say Goodbye. Sometimes we must say goodbye more than once depending on the layers of loss.

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** Many people change or start new things quickly to avoid the painful examination proper transitions require. What has your experience been with transitions in your life? According to the message, do you transition well?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** The Bible is full of opportunities to worship by celebrating what God has done for us or lamenting about trials we are currently going through. Read the following passages

together and determine which they are: Psalms 43:1-3 and 103:102; Habakkuk 1:1-3; Lamentations 1:1-3, 16; 2 Corinthians 5:1-5

- 3) **DO & PRAY** No one can do endings well by themselves. Think about your most recent ending and pray for God to help you examine it. Share your findings with someone throughout the week.