

# Praise and Vanity

## Psalm 126-127

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The Way Up

### Think About It!

What did we learn?

### Talk About It!

What does it mean?

### Do It!

What are we going to do?

### Think About It!

If you're experiencing suffering that seems impossible to change, you're the perfect candidate for a miracle. One of the amazing promises Jesus gives us in his Word is that sorrow is momentary. So if you're facing impossible pain, you're in the middle chapters — God's writing an end to your story that is beyond what you can imagine now, but is totally beautiful and full of joy. In this weekend's message, we'll journey together through the pain, with the expectation that God's coming plans are way better than anything we can imagine now.

### [LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

### Talk About It!

#### 1. Don't forget to praise on the way up

- **Psalm 126:1-3**
- **Parent Notes**
  - **Have you ever disobeyed your parents? What happened?** When we disobey people who love us, bad things happen. That's called a "consequence." Our parents want to keep us safe, and when we don't listen we make mistakes and get hurt. The Lord loves us even more, and wants to protect us. This Psalm is about a time when God's people didn't listen to him and got hurt. That's when they remembered God and ran back to him. When they called out, he rescued them!
  - **Has the Lord ever rescued you? What happened?** This is important because it shows us we need to praise God on the way up. When the Lord brings us out of whatever hard situation we've been in, we need to remember to praise him and thank him for his deliverance, even if we're still not sure how things are going to work out.
  - **Have you thanked God for rescuing you?** No matter what is going wrong, we know there's always something right if we are in Christ. And we can rest because

we know who God is. This Psalm talks about the streams in the south of Israel. In the summer months, the streams dry up. But every winter and spring, the streams start flowing again. When we see that summer and winter are faithful every year, it reminds us that the God who made them is faithful too!

## 2. The sorrow is momentary

- **Psalm 126:4-6**
- **Parent Notes**
  - **Have you ever seen God bring something happy out of something sad?** Those who sow in tears reap in joy. The Psalms talk about this, and so did Jesus, in Matthew 5. Being sad is part of being a human. God doesn't want us to fake it, or pretend we're happy when we're not. He wants us to give him our sadness so that he can transform it into the joy he wants to give us.
  - **Do you ever feel close to God when you are crying?** God is close to you. It says so in Psalm 34:18. God isn't afraid of our tears. In this Psalm, the writer has a whole bag of tears! Instead of just letting his tears fall, this writer gave his tears to God over and over again, planting them like seeds. He believed that God could turn those tears into joy.
  - **How sure are you that God will turn your tears into joy?** In this Psalm, the Lord says, "doubtlessly" the person who has sown in tears will reap in joy. The picture is someone who has harvested a field of joy and has their arms full! There is no doubt that God can turn anything around for the good of those who love him (Romans 8:28).
  - **If your life was a story, what part of the story are you in right now?** God only writes good stories. Sometimes they are hard or sad or scary in the beginning and the middle, but the endings are good. Sometimes that good ending happens here on earth and sometimes it happens when we get to go to Heaven and be with him. But when we let God write our life story, the end is always a good one!

## 3. Don't be vain

- **Psalm 127:1-2**
- **Parent Notes**
  - **Have you ever wanted something that you couldn't have? Was there a good reason that you weren't supposed to have it?** No matter how badly you want something, if God's not in it, it won't happen. Nothing we do will ultimately prevail against God's plan and purpose. Even though it can be hard to let go of something we want, it's important to remember that if God doesn't think it's good for us, we can trust him.
  - **Is there anything you really want right now? Are you able to hand that thing over to God and let him decide whether or not you should have it?**  
Lamentations 3:37-40 — We all need to think about why we want what we want. God gives us energy and passion for a purpose, but we so often spend it on

things that don't work out or things that aren't good for us. When we take God's hand and surrender to the Holy Spirit, he can help us want what is best for us.

#### 4. Kids are God's blessing

- **Psalm 127:3-5**
- **Parent Notes**
  - **How does your family lead you closer to Jesus?** Getting along with our family can be hard! God wants every family to encourage each other to move closer to him. You're part of that!
  - **How do you help move your family closer to Jesus?** This psalm talks about how children are a blessing, sent by God to grow families and move them closer to God. You were born into this exact family so that God could introduce himself to you, but also so that you could encourage them to become more like Jesus every day!

#### Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- What makes you say that?
- How does that make you feel?
- How would you explain this to someone who doesn't know Jesus?
- Why do you think God did it that way?
- Why should we do the things that God tells us?