February 9, 2025
"A Disciple's Source" - Sarah Bartley

Read **Genesis 3:14-19:**

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,
"Cursed are you above all livestock
and all wild animals!
You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.
15 And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel."
16 To the woman he said,
"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;
with painful labor you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you."
17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you,
'You must not eat from it,'
"Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life.
18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.
19 By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return."

1. Genesis 3:14-19 is structured like a poem. What repeated words and ideas are there? What does the repetition communicate?

2. What is the tone of this poem? Sarah and Bobby both shared how this poem is more about lament than punishment – how is it a lament?

3. What are the trio of hostilities highlighted in this passage? In what ways do you see the trio of hostilities (between offspring, between man and woman, between humans and land) manifesting in today's world?

4. In what ways do you see the themes of scarcity, pain, and broken relationships playing out in your own life or community?

5. What are different ways we can respond to pain, scarcity, broken relationships?

6. The sermon highlighted one response is to deny pain by running from it? Is this a good idea? How is faith in God "an invitation to stop running"?

7. Another response to pain is to reduce it to "issues" to be solved – how is that an inadequate response?

8. On the opposite side, the sermon highlighted that a common response in our world to pain is deep hopelessness or nihilism. How can faith provide hope in the face of overwhelming problems and challenges?

9. Lament is to balance us between denying pain and being overwhelmed by it. Come up with a definition of lament from this sermon and your own reflection.

10. Here is a suggested definition. Lament is a profound, honest grieving that:
    - Acknowledges real pain without being hopeless
    - Offers pain to God
    - Seeks a larger perspective on suffering
    - Transforms individual grief into a shared, corporate experience
    - Ultimately points towards hope and potential healing

    The sermon emphasizes that lament is not just about feeling pain, but about bringing that pain to God and being open to a broader understanding of redemption.

    How does it feel to you to practice this type of lament? How is a broader understanding of redemption linked to lament?

11. Seeing this poem as a lament helps us see that God grieves even more than we do. How does this impact how you relate to God in the hardest of times?