

Psalm 12

(To the choirmaster: according to The Sheminith. A Psalm of David.)

¹Save, O LORD, for the godly one is gone;
for the faithful have vanished from among the children of man.
²Everyone utters lies to his neighbor;
with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.

³May the LORD cut off all flattering lips,
the tongue that makes great boasts,
⁴those who say, “With our tongue we will prevail,
our lips are with us; who is master over us?”

⁵“Because the poor are plundered, because the needy groan,
I will now arise,” says the LORD;
“I will place him in the safety for which he longs.”

⁶The words of the LORD are pure words,
like silver refined in a furnace on the ground,
purified seven times.

⁷You, O LORD, will keep them;
you will guard us from this generation forever.

⁸On every side the wicked prowl,
as vileness is exalted among the children of man.

On the difference between godly lament and sinful complaint:

The Bible often refers to faithless complaining as *grumbling* and warns us not to do that (Numbers 14:26–30; John 6:43; Philippians 2:14; James 5:9). Grumbling complaints directly or indirectly declare that God is not sufficiently good, faithful, loving, wise, powerful, or competent. Otherwise, he would treat us better or run the universe more effectively. Faithless complaining is sinful because it accuses God of doing wrong. But faithful complaining [lament] does not impugn God with wrong. Rather, it is an honest, groaning expression of what it's like to experience the trouble, anguish, and grief of living in this fallen, futile world (Romans 8:20–23). -Jim Bloom, Desiring God

Lament in Union with Christ

Psalm 12

Lament: a cry for help and/or understanding in the midst of pain, suffering, persecution, or distress.

Lament in union with Jesus' Body (the church)

Individual and communal lament

Lament in union with Jesus' Person

Not alone | transformed into his likeness | way of loving our enemies

Lament in union with Jesus' Victory

True enemy unmasked | in the middle of a story that ends well

[Social media] outrage is generally not brought before God, but before others in an effort to generate political and social action. The path advocated is not necessarily a movement toward Christlikeness, but the acquisition of political power by the generators of the “Twitter mob.” Please don’t mishear me: the evils of racial injustice and the killing of the unborn *should* be incorporated fully into Christian lament. But for the most part, the medium of social media has not, so far, been a place where fully-orbed expressions of Christian lament has flourished.

- J.Todd Billings, *The Hermeneutics of Biblical Lament* (2)

If we are to recover the Psalms of lament today, we should not just move our grief and outrage from social media into the sanctuary. We need to allow our grief and anger to be reframed – in light of the Psalmist’s stubborn hope in God’s covenant promises, and on the paths of the enemy-love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Anything less than this fails to receive the laments as Christian scripture. -Billings