



March 15, 2026

Sandy Hughes

Lamentations 3

Introduction

This week Sandy Hughes led us deeper into the book of Lamentations, slowing down with chapter 3 to sit inside the poet's raw, circling grief. Unlike the tidy arc we often want—pain, fix, hope—Lamentations 3 offers a different path: pain, *memory*, hope. The poet doesn't turn away from God when God feels like the enemy; they talk *to* God *about* God. Sandy reminded us that lament is not a lack of faith—it is faith taking an honest form. And the turning point of the chapter isn't a change in circumstances; it's an act of remembering who God is. Hope is choosing to remember God's character while life still hurts.

Key Texts: Lamentations 3:1-2, 8, 18-26, 32-33, 40-41, 55-58

Icebreaker

When you're going through something hard, what's your default instinct—to pull away and go quiet, or to reach out and talk it through? Has that changed over the years?

Discussion Questions

1. Sandy opened by pushing back on the phrase "time heals all wounds"—noting that grief doesn't move in a straight line but in circles. You can feel okay, and then a song comes on or you see an old photo and the grief is suddenly right there again. Where have you seen that to be true in your own life or in someone close to you?
2. **Read Lamentations 3:1-2, 8, and 18 together.** In Psalm 23, David says the shepherd's rod *comforts* him—it protects and guides. But the poet here says he feels *struck* by that same rod. God doesn't just feel distant; He feels like the one behind the suffering. Have you ever been in a season where God felt not just absent but actively against you? What did you do with that feeling?

3. Sandy pointed out that the poet doesn't turn away from God—he talks *to* God *about* God. Mark Vroegop describes lament as "the language of those stumbling in their journey to find mercy in dark clouds." How does that reframe the way you think about honest, raw prayer? What does it look like in practice to bring confusion and grief *to* God rather than carrying it alone?
4. **Read Lamentations 3:19-24 together.** The movement in these verses is pain → *memory* → hope. The poet calls to mind God's *hesed*—His steadfast, covenant love—and says, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." In the ancient world, your portion was your inheritance and security. What would it mean for you, in a difficult season, to say "God himself is still my portion" even when everything else feels uncertain? What are some truths about God's character that you return to when hope is hard to feel?
5. **Read Lamentations 3:25-26 and 40-41 together.** The chapter moves from waiting quietly to examining our ways and returning to God. Sandy noted that lament can become a doorway to repentance—not just an expression of grief but an invitation to honest self-reflection before God. Have you experienced that? Has a season of suffering ever led you to see something about yourself or your posture toward God that you might not have seen otherwise?
6. Sandy closed with this: "*Hope is choosing to remember God's character while life still hurts.*" The circumstances at the end of chapter 3 haven't changed—the poet is still praying from the pit. What would it look like for you, practically, to choose to remember right now, in whatever you're carrying? How can the group come alongside you and pray with you in that?

Key Takeaways

- Grief does not move in a straight line—lament takes time and cannot be rushed.
 - Lament is the language of faith, not the absence of it.
 - The movement of Lamentations 3 is pain → memory → hope, not pain → fix → hope.
 - Hope is built on remembering who God is, not on circumstances changing.
 - God does not delight in human suffering; His *hesed*—His steadfast love—does not fail.
 - Lament can become a doorway to repentance, not just an expression of grief.
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Notes