

BUILDING BRIDGES: *Strong Bridges Live in the Tensions*

- i. The Bridge game as a boy growing up in Chicago.
- ii. This is an angry poem, but hopeful. “The Psalms are the prayer book of the Bible.”
Bonhoeffer.
- iii. Nowhere in this poem does the poet assume they are suffering because of sin.
- iv. This is communal, bold, meant for worship, pastoral, for us today and hopeful.
- v. Strong bridges are held together by tension. “Paradox is the midwife of truth.”
Kierkegaard.

WE CAN LIVE THE TENSIONS WELL BY LIVING THESE THREE MOVEMENTS OF ADVENT FAITH...

I. WE SHOULD LAMENT IN WORSHIP (Psalm 80:4-6)

- a. Lament: to feel, show, or express grief, sorrow. To mourn deeply.
- b. Enemies that laugh scoff and ridicule us.
- c. God is the primary object of our lament
 - i. Lack of God.
 - ii. The unavailability of God.
 - iii. Pain of God’s apparent absence.
 - iv. The yearning for God’s presence.
 - v. The community is in a world of hurt.
 - vi. God, do something!
 - vii. Corporate lament: what do we lament????

II. GOD ENTERS IN AS THE MESSIAH (Psalm 80:17-18)

- a. Hear us, give ear!
- b. Shine us forward!
- c. Awaken your might!
- d. Save us!
- e. Gospel: in the midst of lament and joy, what we believe and what we experience-
God doesn’t want our belief. God wants our faith.

III. WE SHOULD HOPE TOGETHER

- a. Hope: to look forward to with desire and reasonable confidence.
- b. Let your face shine! (3 x’s)
- c. That we may be saved (4 x’s)
- d. Restore us! (3 x’s)

Applications: There is space for what we believe and what we experience to be in tension. Disappointment (anger) and hope (joy) can coexist together in Christ.

1. It’s not always about sin; sometimes it’s the call to be faithful and hopeful in the midst of a dark night of the soul.
2. Jesus always points us forward in the arc of His-story (history) and never back to the sentimental past.

Call to action: Light a candle in lament or hope because God is with us in Jesus Christ.