



Running on Empty – Week 2 – Cynicism & Depression
Spiritual Formation Guide

We hope you'll use this guide to take the teaching from Sunday's service and reflect on it with a few friends or with a group. If you have questions or want to talk more about how to take a next spiritual step, contact us at info@wschurch.org.

Scriptures:

"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life."
John 10:10

"I am the one who has seen the afflictions that come from the rod of the LORD's anger. He has led me into darkness, shutting out all light. He has turned his hand against me again and again, all day long." (verse 1)

"He has hidden like a bear or a lion, waiting to attack me. He has dragged me off the path and torn me in pieces, leaving me helpless and devastated. He has drawn his bow and made me the target for his arrows. He shot his arrows deep into my heart." (verse 10)

"Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning. I say to myself, 'The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!'"
Lamentations 3:1, 10, 22

This is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory.
Colossians 1:27

Reflection Questions:

- How aware of your emotions are you? Do you find yourself ignoring them or overwhelmed by them?
- Eddie shared that this week's theme occurs at the intersection of our physical, psychological, spiritual and circumstantial realities. Do you see these areas of your life overlapping? When do you notice it most?
- Read the verses above from Lamentations 3 slowly. What do you notice within yourself as you read Jeremiah's words? What disturbs you? What comforts you?
- Read Colossians 1:27. Then read Eddie's words: "God's promise is that even when strength fails, there is perseverance. And even when perseverance fails, there is hope. And even when hope fails, there is love. And love never fails. In other words, **depression can't steal you from the God who loves you and is holding onto you.**"
How have you experienced God's presence and love in your hardest, most discouraged moments?

- Eddie shared several takeaways in his teaching. Look over them:
 - I can be honest with God, even when I get it wrong.
 - The best fathers allow their children to experience some pain.
 - My faith must govern my feelings, not the other way around.

Which of these statements is one you need to explore more with God this week?

- Look over the prayer and practice suggestions below. Share with your spiritual friend(s) if there's something you might practice this week.

Prayer:

- Morning & Evening:
 - This week, pause in the morning and in the evening to read through Lamentations 3:22-24 as your prayer. (Consider reading it from different Bible translations throughout the week.)

The faithful love of the Lord never ends!

His mercies never cease.

²³ Great is his faithfulness;

his mercies begin afresh each morning.

²⁴ I say to myself, "The Lord is my inheritance;
therefore, I will hope in him!" (NLT)

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.

²³ They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.

²⁴ I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him." (NIV)

God's loyal love couldn't have run out,
his merciful love couldn't have dried up.

They're created new every morning.

How great your faithfulness!

I'm sticking with God (I say it over and over).

He's all I've got left. (Message paraphrase)

Practices:

- **Reflection -**

Have you ever noticed that you make worse relational and spiritual decisions when you are exhausted or famished? Do you treat your family and friends worse when you are extremely tired, or especially hungry, or suffering from chronic pain? If you're not sure, ask your friends and family!

Take a quick scan of your physical, psychological, spiritual, relational, and circumstantial state. Any warning lights going off? Any areas of health or growth to celebrate?

- **Gratitude** – Pause to notice and name the specific ways God has cared for you today. Can you write a list below? Can you fill up the page?