

## **Voicing Lament and Nurturing Community: A Study of Lamentations and 1 Corinthians**

University Baptist Church – Online Bible Study  
Session 8: November 22, 2020

**To prepare:** In this last week of our fall study, we will consider how a Christian as an individual and Christians as a whole community are called to behave in our interactions with the world around us. Before we begin, remember that this epistle is a letter from Paul to the Christians in Corinth about how to handle particular problems within their community: chapters 5-7 focus on issues about sex, and chapters 8-10 are about whether Christians should eat meat sacrificed to idols. But more than that, these chapters talk about love, and the act of denying one's own desires for the sake of loving others well. What are some of our modern equivalents to these questions that Paul is addressing about sex and food?

### **Sunday morning discussion questions:**

A key verse in the midst of these chapters is 1 Corinthians 6:12, "I have the freedom to do anything, but not everything is helpful. I have the freedom to do anything, but I won't be controlled by anything" (CEB translation). How does this one verse set the tone for our conversation today? In light of this verse, how do we approach the topic of interactions between Christians and the rest of the world?

Why would Paul write a section about lawsuits in the middle of a discussion about sexual morality? What does this section teach us about our interactions within our own Christian circles, and how does that affect our relationship to the surrounding community?

Wisdom in 1 Corinthians 8 could be defined as "applied knowledge" or "the alignment of knowledge and feeling." How do we use wisdom in deciding on particular behaviors?

Why do we label some things as "sacred" and other things as "secular" in the world? How do we distinguish between the sacred and the secular? Is there a clear dividing line, and what is that line? Is it possible to learn truth and be drawn into God's kingdom through supposedly "secular" work?

When we think about contemporary examples of our interactions between Church and the world – political systems, cultural trends, etc. – how then should we interact? As people of faith, where do we draw lines, and how do we go about deciding where those lines belong?

### **Sending Prayer**