



Lament Experiment

WHY LAMENT?

WHAT IS LENT?

Where do I long for newness to come into my life?

How can I cooperate with God's work in me to allow more life to spring forth?

(Philippians 2:12-13, 1 Timothy 4:8, Romans 12:1-2)

– A discipline is an intentional activity *I can do easily* that will help me do *what I cannot do naturally or automatically*. This requires a purposeful change in normal activities and patterns of habit.

Steps to designing your Lenten Experiment

Step 1: EXAMINE YOUR LIFE

Search me, God and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

- Where do you feel stuck? What's not working?
- How do you avoid facing the pain and difficulties in your life through behaviors that are not a true source of comfort? What are the persistent habits or temptations that lead you to self-sabotage?
- Where do you experience tension, anxiety or conflict in your relationships?
- Where do those closest to you express concern about your growth and well-being?

Step 2: EXPLORE PATTERNS & ROOT CAUSES

PATTERNS

- What is your physical and emotional state when you make these choices (tired, hungry, sad, lonely, bored)?
- What time of day or when during the week are you most vulnerable to what you struggle with?
- Where are you and who are you with?

ROOT CAUSES - What false scripts and fears might underly this pattern?

- How might your presenting problems relate to core issues of your personality?
- What are you afraid of? What is the fear that might be driving your decisions?
- What is the lie that you tell yourself?

Step 3: IMAGINE THE LIFE THAT IS POSSIBLE

We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:9-13

What is the good reality and vision of life in the kingdom that is promised to you by the gospel?

Step 4: DESIGN YOUR EXPERIMENT

What new steps can you take to cooperate with God's work in your life?
(Include a practice of both abstinence and engagement).

A NEW MIND PRACTICE

A NEW BODY PRACTICE

A NEW TIME, RESOURCE OR RELATIONAL PRACTICE

A GOOD EXPERIMENT:

- Is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound and avoids ambiguity
- Requires intensity and daily consistency (daily, or 5-6 times week will yield more results than 1-2 times a week)
- Includes both abstinence and engagement (What will you stop? What will you start as a healthy alternative?)
- Corresponds to a positive vision of what is possible (Life in the kingdom of God)
- Is taken as a serious promise and does not allow for exception or compromise.

Step 5: COMMIT TO YOUR PLAN & TRACK IT

A successful experiment is executed with consistency. If you compromise or fail to take action, you won't learn the benefit of your new choices. Make sure you have picked changes that are realistically attainable yet challenging and substantive-- enough so that you can determine whether the change has made a helpful difference. Share your experiment commitment with a friend, small group or the online Facebook group.

Tracking your practices will help you remember your commitment and encourage you to continue with it. Use whatever means work for you, whether a calendar you can write on, a spreadsheet on your computer or an iPhone app. Place it where you will see it daily.

How will you remember and keep track of what you are committing to do? (set alarm on my phone, keep track of your daily commitment using an excel spreadsheet, etc).

Step 6: EVALUATE YOUR EXPERIMENT

Experiments and practices are not ends in themselves. They are useful if they help you move towards your goals-- to be more open to the God and available to love others.

WAYS TO MAKE YOUR LENTEN EXPERIMENT STICK:

Join the private Facebook community.

- Post your experiment by February 10.
- Respond to the weekly self-reflection prompts
- Encourage and support others in the group by commenting on their posts

Join an in person weekly check-in group at The Practice.

- After the Practice gathering concludes on meet downstairs with 5 other people for a 30 minutes each Sunday night during lent.
- Do a 5 minute verbal check-in on your experiment
- Listen to others share their experiment and offer encouragement and support

Lenten Experiment Contract

Making a promise is a powerful way to stay motivated and accountable while you are taking steps to grow and change. Consider signing this learning contract as you begin your lenten experiment.

I am committing myself to a 40 day Lenten experiment. I understand that this involves identifying where I feel stuck, exploring deeper causes and scripts, and taking on abstinence and engagement practices that will help me become more open to God's healing work in my life. To effectively complete my Lenten experiment, I will:

- Commit to a daily lenten practices of abstinence and engagement
- Share my experiment commitment with a friend, small group or online community
- Check in on my progress with the person or group I have chosen once a week
- Share openly and honestly
- Listen compassionately and keep what is shared by others confidential
- Keep good records of my experiment using a journal, calendar or excel spreadsheet.

Signature: _____ Date: _____