

# Seasons of Silence

Psalm 88

## Spiritual Journey

- ▶ There are highs and lows.
- ▶ There are different seasons and periods of spiritual struggle.
  - ▶ Dark Night of the Soul - St. John of the Cross
  - ▶ Journey through the Wall - Pete Scazzero

## Spiritual Journey

- ▶ We may experience feelings of
  - ▶ distance
  - ▶ dryness
  - ▶ disorientation
  - ▶ doubt
  - ▶ depression

## Lessons from the Psalms

- ▶ Be honest about your feelings, and take them to God.
- ▶ Remember who God is and what he has already done.
- ▶ Embrace trust, patience, and holy mystery.
- ▶ Cry out to God for help and praise him.

## Psalm 88

- ▶ overwhelmed with troubles
- ▶ without strength
- ▶ you remember no more
- ▶ your wrath lies heavily on me
- ▶ overwhelmed with all your waves

## Psalm 88

- ▶ confined, cannot escape
- ▶ grief
- ▶ surround me like a flood
- ▶ completely engulfed
- ▶ darkness is my closest friend

## Psalm 88

- ▶ Why, Lord, do you reject me and hide your face from me?

## Psalm 88

- ▶ Lord, you are the God who saves me;
  - ▶ “Yahweh, God My Savior”
  - ▶ may my prayer come before you
  - ▶ turn your ear to my cry
  - ▶ I cry to you for help, Lord

## Psalm 13

- ▶ How long, Lord?
  - ▶ Will you forget me forever?
  - ▶ How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
  - ▶ day after day have sorrow
- ▶ Look on me and answer, Lord my God

## Psalm 13

- ▶ But I trust in your unfailing love
  - ▶ my heart rejoices in your salvation
- ▶ I will sing the Lord's praise
  - ▶ for he has been good to me

## Psalm 6

- ▶ worn out from my groaning
  - ▶ all night I flood my bed with weeping,
  - ▶ drench my couch with tears

## Psalm 6

- ▶ have mercy on me
  - ▶ the Lord has heard my cry for mercy

## Psalm 22

- ▶ My God, my God why have you forsaken me?
  - ▶ why are you so far from saving me?
  - ▶ so far from my cries of anguish?
  - ▶ I cry out, you do not answer
  - ▶ I find no rest

## Psalm 22

- ▶ I am a worm and not a man
  - ▶ scorned by everyone, all mock me
- ▶ I am poured out like water
- ▶ all my bones are out of joint
- ▶ my heart has turned to wax
- ▶ you lay me in the dust of death

## Psalm 22

- ▶ Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One
  - ▶ you are the one Israel praises
  - ▶ In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them
  - ▶ to you they cried out and were saved

## Psalm 22

- ▶ Lord, do not be far from me
- ▶ You are my strength; come quickly to help me
- ▶ deliver me, rescue me, save me



## Psalm 22

- ▶ I will declare your name to my people
  - ▶ in the assembly I will praise you.
- ▶ Praise him, honor him, revere him

## Psalm 22

- ▶ for he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one
  - ▶ he has not hidden his face from him,
  - ▶ but has listened to his cry for help
- ▶ those who seek the Lord will praise him

## Lessons from the Psalms

- ▶ Be honest about your feelings, and take them to God.
- ▶ Remember who God is and what he has already done.
- ▶ Embrace trust, patience, and holy mystery.
- ▶ Cry out to God for help, and praise him.

## What might God be doing?

- ▶ John 15:1-2
  - ▶ I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

## What might God be doing?

- ▶ Hebrews 12:4-12
  - ▶ Endure hardship as discipline...
  - ▶ God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness
  - ▶ harvest of righteousness and peace

## What might God be doing?

- ▶ What's on the other side of this season?
  - ▶ Growth in humility
    - ▶ greater appreciation for holy mystery and our own brokenness

- Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*

## What might God be doing?

- ▶ What's on the other side of this season?
  - ▶ Purging of unholy affections
    - ▶ greater detachment from earthly things, opinions of others, even our feelings about God

- Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*

## What might God be doing?

- ▶ What's on the other side of this season?
  - ▶ Transformation in the way we love
    - ▶ greater ability to relax in God's love and freely give ourselves to others

- Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*

## Seasons of Silence

- ▶ God is with us even when we do not feel like it.
- ▶ Don't try to avoid these seasons; it will hinder your growth.
- ▶ God wants to heal and transform you on a deep level.