

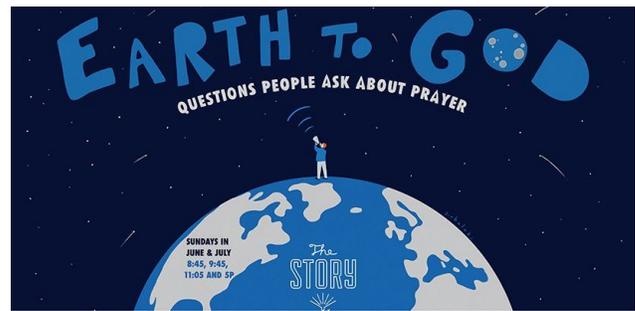
Sermon Study Guide

The Story Houston - July 21, 2019

Eric Huffman - Lead Pastor

fb/ig: @pastorerichuffman tw: @erichestory

EarthtoGod@thestory.church



Earth to God: Questions People Ask about Prayer

My, how time flies: only two weeks remain in The Story's sermon series on prayer. I hope this series has been inspiring and challenging to you. As we look ahead to the next month, be sure to register for next Sunday's special prayer class, "A PRAYING LIFE," by visiting thestory.church/aprayinglife and don't forget to join The Story's new Facebook Group called *The Story Houston ONLINE*. So far in this series, we've learned about the following questions:

- What is prayer? (June 9, John Hopper, guest speaker)
- Is there any proof that prayer really works? (June 16)
- If God already knows the future, why pray? (June 23)
- Does God talk back when we pray? (June 30)
- Why does God make us wait? (July 7)
- Is there a blueprint for prayer? (July 14, Kale Kinchen)

You can hear/watch these sermons online at thestory.church/watch or by subscribing to *The Story Houston* podcast on Apple Podcasts or your favorite podcast app.

Today we'll explore this question: ***How should you pray when your life is a dumpster fire?***

What were your thoughts about these questions before hearing this message? On what authority, knowledge, or experience do you base your understanding?

What is **lamentation prayer**, and where does it appear in the Bible?

Habakkuk 1:3-4

Why do you make me look at injustice?

Why do you tolerate wrongdoing?

Destruction and violence are before me;

there is strife, and conflict abounds.

Therefore the law is paralyzed,

and justice never prevails.

The wicked hem in the righteous,

so that justice is perverted.

What do the Old Testament prophets and the Psalms teach us about lamentation prayer?

Luke 23:26-31 26 As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. 27 A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. 28 Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' 30 Then

“they will say to the mountains, “Fall on us!”

and to the hills, “Cover us!””

31 For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

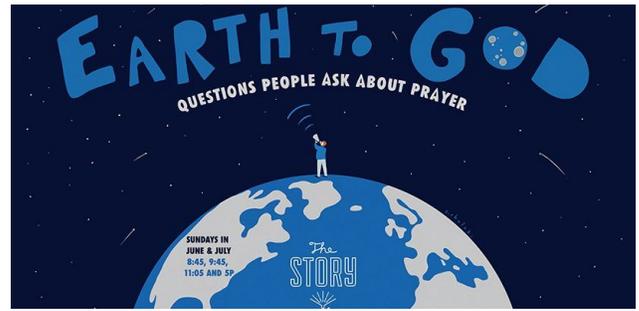
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What is Jesus saying to the women who are mourning his execution? What is the meaning of his green and dry tree analogy?

What is *eschatology*, and what does it have to do with lamentation prayer?

Sum up Christian eschatology in eight words or less:

Why do Christians have cause to hope, even when life is a disaster?

1 Corinthians 15:51-58 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

“Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Since we have this eternal hope, how should we interpret hardship, failure, pain, and loss, here and now?

Your notes: