

Joel 1:8–20

Leading God's People in Mourning Worship

for video and audio of this lesson click bit.ly/210530joel1 (or scan the QR code)



Main idea: Because we do not know how to mourn the loss of public worship, God gives us such helps as dependence, calamity, and leadership.

⁸ Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth
For the husband of her youth.

⁹ The grain offering and the drink offering
Have been cut off from the house of the Lord;
The priests mourn, who minister to the Lord.

¹⁰ The field is wasted, the land mourns;
For the grain is ruined, the new wine is dried up, the oil
fails.

¹¹ Be ashamed, you farmers, wail, you vinedressers,
For the wheat and the barley;
Because the harvest of the field has perished.

¹² The vine has dried up, and the fig tree has withered;
The pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the
apple tree—

All the trees of the field are withered;

Surely joy has withered away from the sons of men.

¹³ Gird yourselves and lament, you priests;

Wail, you who minister before the altar;

Come, lie all night in sackcloth, you who minister to my
God;

For the grain offering and the drink offering

Are withheld from the house of your God.

¹⁴ Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly;

Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land
Into the house of the Lord your God, and cry out to the
Lord.

¹⁵ Alas for the day!

For the day of the Lord is at hand;

It shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

¹⁶ Is not the food cut off before our eyes,

Joy and gladness from the house of our God?

¹⁷ The seed shrivels under the clods,

Storehouses are in shambles;

Barns are broken down,

For the grain has withered.

¹⁸ How the animals groan!

The herds of cattle are restless,

Because they have no pasture;

Even the flocks of sheep suffer punishment.

¹⁹ O Lord, to You I cry out;

For fire has devoured the open pastures,

And a flame has burned all the trees of the field.

²⁰ The beasts of the field also cry out to You,

For the water brooks are dried up,

And fire has devoured the open pastures.

Introduction: rejoice at your wedding, O bride! (v8 in the mirror). We don't know how to mourn the loss of public worship, because we don't know how to rejoice over worship like a bride on her wedding day.

1. Mourning worship

a. Mourning the loss of worship

i. Farmers first; v10–12, 17–18. Dependence and calamity. By making Israel's worship liturgy dependent upon the most basic food staples, He gave them an early warning system. The farmers would be the first to know when God was withholding covenant blessing (v11).

ii. Priests most; v9, 13. God made Israel to feel how essential worship was by calling a large number of them to lead that worship as their vocation (v9)—using the first-fruits of the farmers' produce (v10).

iii. Everyone in between; v8, 14, 16. Eventually, the locust plague would make everyone to feel the loss of the worship. It wouldn't just be the new wine and fresh oil that withered under the locusts that the Lord sent, but even all of the trees, from which the sons of Adam derived their fleshly joy (v12).

b. Mourning instead of worship; v8, 14, 16: a holy assembly not for joy but for grief. You must engage God, one way or the other. The greatest judgment would be to be given over to not feeling, to not mourning, to staying in that spiritual coma we heard about last week in vv4–7.

c. The end of all things will be either one or the other, the greatest destruction and grief you can't imagine, or the greatest blessing and joy; v15. Because of the possibility that The Day of the LORD could end up being the opposite of what they thought, God in mercy brings them into a calamity, and God in mercy makes them to mourn. The calamity without the mourning would not have been a mercy!

2. Mourning leaders (worship leaders)

a. Lead yourselves before leading the assembly, v13. How could their dullness toward God have gotten so bad? The priests were neglecting their duty to be leaders of the people in rejoicing over God, and now in mourning over Him. It is easy to slouch into replacing God Himself with our traditions—either old ones that we feel give meaning or new ones that we feel give vitality, when it ought to be God Himself in Whom we find both! So the priests had to be commanded to affect themselves with the affliction of the lost worship (v13). This is a desperate need for pastors and elders in the church, and for fathers/husbands in the home: that they be deeply affected with the things of God, and especially about the worship of God. How are they to lead those whom God has entrusted to them, if they themselves are not engaged with God? So, before calling the rest of the people together in v14, God commands them in v13 to lament, wail, and prostrate themselves all night.

b. Gather the assembly before leading the assembly, v14. This may sound obvious, but it had to be commanded in v14. This is the place where that multi-generational stirring up of one another toward God takes place (cf. 1:3, 2:15–16). The people perhaps found themselves “off the hook” for worship, and were comfortable with not gathering. How easily those who at first let attendance slide a little can find themselves content not to gather at all! So, they need to be gathered—and if the gathering for the rejoicing is not possible, then they need to be gathered for crying out, v14.

c. Lead yourself (s) before leading others, v19–20. It is not enough for leaders to know that leaders in general must do this. Each and every single leader must embrace this for himself. In vv19–20, Joel himself takes this responsibility personally, apparently even before completing authorship and delivery of this prophetic book.

Conclusion: How necessary this mourning, when the Lord sends calamity is! And especially the calamity of lost public worship! Because there is a day coming when all will be gathered before the Lord. And if in that day, He Himself is not your joy, you mustn't imagine that you will have some other joy. No. For those who have not had God Himself as their joy, the Lord Jesus Himself as their joy, the day of the Lord is not a day of joy and gladness but a day of destruction from the Almighty (v15).

What will that final day be like for you? If missing Him in His worship doesn't cause you to grieve now, how greatly you will weep and wail then! So then, whenever we are to gather unto the Lord now, let us be led (and/or lead) in doing so with the joy of a bride on her wedding day! And, if for a season Providence takes this gathering away from us, let us be led (and/or lead) in mourning over it like that bereaved bride on her wedding day.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Come now to worship. God in the hearing of His Word preached. We turn in our copies of that word to Joel chapter 1.

Joel chapter 1, we have as our portion this morning verses 8 through 20 and since we can only preach and read and hear rightly by His help let us ask for that help.

Our Father in Heaven, we come to you now. Asking for the help of your spirit that he would stir up faith in our hearts. That he would give us from Christ the life by which even just to hear well that the hearing would be mixed with faith. And so that it would be a means by which you bring us at last.

And to that everlasting rest of which these Sabbath keepings. For taste and. We confess that we have no confidence in the flesh. And that we count all of our ability to pay attention and give our hearts to you and bend our wills before you as done. So that we might have instead Christ and his life and his power.

Focusing our minds on you making our hearts to be soft and responsive and our wills obedient. Grant to us to have his joy grant to us that what grieves him would grieve us grant that we would know him as having all authority in heaven and on earth. That all of your law would be for us in him the royal law of liberty.

And that the law would be in the hands of the spirit of life. Who enables us to walk according to what you command and not in the hands of the sin and death that alone can come from us. So as we come to preach we pray. Lord that you would help the preacher.

You carry him along. We would not hear nearly the words of a man, but that by your use of the preparation and the means that you have appointed. He who is. Blood speaks better than that of able would address us from heaven by the means of his word preached.

And that your spirit would make the word to take root and grow strong. That it would not be choked by either the cares or the pleasures of this life. But instead bear fruit 30 and 60 and a hundredfold. The glorious thing, oh God. You do. In the preaching of your word, so we pray that indeed it would be you who do it.

And not merely a people on earth going through the motions by what we have in ourselves. For this mercy we ask and Jesus Christ amen. Let us rise. For the reading of God's word. Here the written word of God Joel chapter 1 verses 8 through 20. Lament like a virgin.

Girded with sackcloth. For the husband of her youth. The grain offering in the drink offering have been cut out from the house of Yahweh. The priests mourn who minister to Yahweh. The field is wasted the land mourns. For the grain is ruined the new one is dried up. The oil fails.

Be ashamed you farmers. Will. You vine dressers for the wheat and the barley because the harvest of the field has perished. The vine has dried up the fig tree as whether the pomegranate tree the palm tree, also in the apple tree all the trees of the field or whether to.

Surely joy. As withered away from the sons of men. Gird yourselves and lament you priests. Whales. You who minister before the altar come lie all night in sackcloth. You minister to my god. For the grain offering and the drink offering are withheld from the house of your God. Consecrate a fast.

Call a sacred assembly. Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land. Into the house of Yahweh your God and quiet out to you. Alas for the day for the day of yoga as a hand that shall come as destruction from the almighty. There's not the food cut off before our eyes.

Joy and gladness from the house of our God. The seed shrivels under the claws storehouses are in shambles. Bartons are broken down for the grain his withered. How the animals grow the herds of cattle are restless because they have no pasture even the flocks of sheep. Suffer punishment. Oh you always.

To you I cry out for fire has devoured the open pastures. And a flame has burned all the trees of the field the beasts of the field also cry out to you. For the waterbrooks are dried up. And fire has devoured the open pastures. So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent worked we look to him to add his blessing to the preaching of it as well, please be seated.

We don't know. How to mourn. The loss of public worship whether that's the loss of the ability to gather. Or the loss of God Himself in the worship when you gather but he's not there. We don't know how to mourn and grieve over that. Because we don't know how to rejoice over gathering for worship and God meeting us in His worship.

Like a bride at her wedding day. Think when we had to cut off early in the passage last week in verse 8, we had been much moved by this instruction to lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. This woman who is been betrayal of and now that day of the wedding has come.

Which she must exchange her bridal gown. For sackcloth. For grieving garments. Because she never gets to say. I do. And when the means of meeting God himself in his worship. And when worship of God or cut off from his people here by the locus plague, which he has sent to make them feel the loss of being gathered to him in his worship.

He tells them to lament like that virgin. And say if we are gathered here this morning and we have not just the procedure and the actions that the Lord has commanded for his worship, but we have God himself in those means. We also rejoice like the bride on her wedding day.

To be everything to us that these are the means by which he has appointed to meet us. You know how it ridiculous it would have been. If that bride and her mom comes in gives her the horrible news. Just pretended she didn't hear it. And went out and her ground and told the musicians to strike up the tune and walked up the processional and went through the motions and said.

She comes out at the end and she's I'm so glad today. Was it the music beautiful? And didn't I say the lines well and? We would all know she was insane. But this is the insanity. Of the worship of God. Without rejoicing over him as the group.

And yet the people were in this kind of spiritual coma, we heard last week the announcement to wake up and we come now to verses 8 through 20 hearing the command to lament the command to mourn. And so in a play on words where accustomed to the phrase morning worship, but here it's morning with a you.

Because the worship has gone but they're still being called to a sacred assembly. They're still being called to consecrate now not an assembly for prayers that are assembly for fasting. We must engage with their God and so he is calling them to mourn and he shows us in this chapter.

Some of the things that he has given us as helps to grieving when we either don't have the worship of God or even worse. We have a form of worship but not God Himself in it and we're failing to dream and so we need help and he is given us for that help things like utter dependence upon him and he's given us for that help calamity that takes away not just the worship for which we ought to have mourned.

But all of the joy from the sons of and it's singular there at the end of verse 12, we heard last week. All the joy of the sons of Adam. Who tried the first time. To have the enjoyment of created things without the enjoyment of the creator in them.

And so when we're not enjoying the creator, it's actually a mercy and we'll hear more about that next week. The mercy of this locus flight the mercy of this forte of the ultimate day of the Lord. It's a mercy. If we are not delighting in our Creator. For him to take away the delight in the created things to turn us back to him.

So we have morning worship and especially some of the helps that he gives us the farmers and the priests and the leadership that they are commanded to then in the second place that worship leaders. When the worship is not or when the worship is not when it what it ought to be ought to become morning leaders grieving leaders.

In the first place then morning the loss of worship there's an early warning system here in the worship of the nation of Israel God had promised Israel a specific land in which to be set apart as his people and he had tied many of the the covenant promises the blessings of the covenant to that.

End. It's production so that it will be a spiritual people and the ones in whom all of the nations of the earth were to be blessed there's actually a little bit of a repeal of the curse that God put upon the ground for man's sake that was seen in the covenant blessings of Israel you remember that when when we sinned and Adam and when we fell in Adam the curse that fall was a curse upon the ground that it would produce thorns and thistles by the sweat of his brow he'd barely be able.

To make it eek out enough sustenance for him to to survive for humanity to survive and so the blessings upon Israel in their covenant with God were in a part of a repeal of that then it would be a land flowing with milk and honey that the frustration that the farmers would have would not be a frustration of working so hard to produce so little that it would produce so much that they have to stop the harvest in order to put.

For the next year because the the sale would overtake the reaper and the reaper would ever take the sower and it would just be so productive and so he had tied the light in the God who is saving us from the sin and death that we deserve an atom he's tied to lighten him to the production of the land and our dependence upon him and then when the land cannot produce that was a sign of curse unto them the lake is played.

Is a curse and you notice even in the in the end of our text in verse 20 the water Brooks being dried up God had sent not only this four-fold locust ply that we heard about in the previous passage but he had sent drought as well the drought and the the locust played together and there's this early warning system the first ones who knew tomorrow were actually the land in verse 10.

And the cattle and the sheep in verse 18 the animals grown the herds of the castle are the herds of cattle rather are restless because they have no pasture even the flocks of sheep are desolate or suffer punishment. And so that the first ones who know are the land and the sheath and the cattle and the people catch up by means of the farmers the farmers are you know, are the ones who know it's coming they are as it were the alarm that is sanded in.

The line that is sanded and the first verse of the next chapter below the trumpet and Zion sound an alarm in my holy mountain to some extent the farmers are doing that. And the some extent the priests are doing that the farmers were the ones who would harvest as agrarian society, it's not like our society so when he he says be ashamed you farmers and where you vine dressers he's not talking about that tiny sliver of the population that we have that produces food, it was a large portion of the population that would have been employed in the production of the of the food and of the drink of the wine and the wheat and the barley and what were the first fruit.

S go eat children who've been paying attention to your old Old Testament the new wine and be well translated there in the end of verse 10 the fresh oil well were the first bits go they would the farmers would take them to the priests because it was used in the worship of God.

When so the farmers first and then the the priests the most they would be able to to offer the the grain offering and the dream offering and the

oil is going that would be required and so forth. And so the farmers might be the first to know that God was beginning to withhold covenant blessing but the priests would be made to feel how essential worship is.

By their inability to do it the priests also were a large portion of their population weren't they an entire tribe of Israel. Was appointed for the gathering of that which would be used for the worship of God. And so God made Israel to feel how a central worship was by calling such a large number of them to the priesthood.

But they were suddenly unable to perform their duty. And so he's helping his people at least be as good as the dirt and the plants and the animals. Remember what Asaph said in Psalm 70:3. That so long as he was delighting in himself and pleasing himself and enjoying himself and it seemed to him that God was letting the wicked have all of the good stuff and not letting Asaph have all of the good stuff he was grieved and heart he was jealous and envious of those wicked until what what makes the difference in the middle of Psalms 73.

Till he goes to worship of God and he sees the holiness of God and he realizes that if he has God, he has everything. And if he has everything else but has not God has nothing and he says truly you set them in slippery places. And that's the point at which he goes on to say those lines that we've rejoice to say with him whom have I in heaven, but you there's nothing else.

I desire on earth beside you and so forth. But in the middle of the transition he said when I was thinking that other way I was like a beast. Towards you. Now enjoy one eight through twenty God comes to us and he says at least the land of Israel knew the morn at least the beasts of Israel knew the morn at least the farmers in Israel because the land was not producing they knew to mourn at least the priests in Israel because he had tied their worth it to that grain in to that line and to that they knew to more than you to grieve and wail and lament when they lost the worship of God.

Do we know. To grieve and mourn and lament. When we lose the worship of God.

Or when we lose him in the worship. Like that insane bride. The music was good the stuff we did was good it was so exhilarating had the outward forms that feel so meaningful to me. And don't think we're just talking now about that contemporary form of worship. Just as easily done traditional worship, you got all the liturgy.

You're all the stuff that has meant so much to so many people for so long that you might not have a moment of actual interaction with a living God and still think that was wonderful worship. Do we know to mourn are we worse than beasts? Now he calls them to do this morning instead of the worship because they can no longer do the worshiping and so verse 14 call a sacred assembly sorry consecrate a fast call a sacred assembly gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house well, why would we assemble there's no grain there's no one we can't afford that the cattle or the lands anymore.

Well we assembled verse 14 and cry out. To your way. See they come into the assembly and that's how we're having the sacrifices like we always have them there's joy and gladness and the house of no they come in and they look around and they're discussing the worship in verse 16 is not the food cut off before our eyes.

Is not dry and gladness. Cut off from the house of our God. We did not rejoice over him. And so he's taken all joy and gladness out of his house. He's still calling us to his house. But he's calling us to grieve he's calling us. To mourn. Indeed this is why the locust flag and the drought together have teamed up because it's not just verse 12 is it?

It's not just the vine and the fig tree those were the most necessary. The pomegranates too. It's kind of like shopping at Aldi right? You've just take whatever's in season and it's the ones on the end as the cheap ones and the it's not the season for pomegranates. What about dates date palms?

Nope. Paul palm tree also well at least the apples, nope the apple trees too all the trees of the field are withered. So he takes out from them. Everything that they could enjoy. I suggest to you that too many of us miss a week here mess a week there.

Go through the motions and awards day service are our thoughts. 99% distracted on whatever else. However in standing. I'd better stand over when sitting a better set. Oh good. Clara net time. When the when the worship leader has that tone of voice rec starts to say in Jesus, okay, it's time to wake up and say I'm in with everybody else.

Singing just loud enough not to be heard by anybody else. Or not at all. Not thinking at all about the Christ through whom we could even come or the God who is assembling us up into glory and God the Holy Spirit who actually is doing this great work of love for the Father and the Son sustaining the and enabling the worship of the congregation.

None of the no fellowship with the Triune God marveling at what the Lord Jesus has done. And what he is doing?

And you can worship like that and be unfazed and if you'd worship like that once and you're unfazed, it's much easier to do that twice. And if you've done that twice, it's much easier if the third time and if you have grown up in church and you've done that for decades.

It's where I am possible. You need the work of God the Holy Spirit to wake you up and bring you to repentance. And sometimes he doesn't a similar mercy. Doesn't he? Does he did with the locusts and the drought? It might be cancer. It might be the job loss.

It might be that child that grew up in your home. While you were worshiping like that in the assembly and not worshipping it all in the house. And then you knew nothing of the joy over God or the grief when they didn't have him. And you see the spiritual destruction.

And you can't say train up a child in the way he will go and when he is old he will not depart from it. Because you didn't train up that child the

way they should go. And they departed a long time ago. It's not go through the motions while your child is growing up and then claim a verse out of context.

That God will bring him back back to what? God grant us repentance. That we would rejoice like the bride over the groom. Who just the bride who has eyes just for him and the music is good because it's the means by which he's getting him and the lines are good because they're the means by which she is getting him.

And the worship glorious. Because if this means by which he gives himself to us. And presents us in glory. And tells his father's tells out his father's name to his brethren and sings out his father's praise in the midst of the congregation. All those wonderful things that we have been continually seeing about worship from the word of God.

But if you don't have that and if he's not meeting you in it, or if you know by faith that he ought to but he isn't granting to you to experience by the Spirit the joy of knowing him and the mind learning of him. Tv beneath him. That you would at least grieve.

You ever reach in the back of a profit, or where my booklet went? I know you got the same thing every single week how to take the supper and how to prepare for the supper and who should take this offer how to respond to it and the instructions there for if you don't know in the taking of the supper the blessing of God for which it is designed.

That you would repent and look back to him and be quiet to him and.

So he calls them to mourning instead of worship, that would be their worship as commanded here. You see at the end. The day of the Lord will be one or the other. Many things that the return of Jesus Christ will be bullying is not one of them.

The same up to be true of your gathering. Unto the Lord God in His worship. That if you do not rejoice with Spirit given joy over him in it, then you ought to grieve with the desperate grief of one who had told yourself that the day of the Lord was going to be this wonderful day.

And you learn your church hymns and even your country songs. About what a wonderful thing that last day will be. But when you get to the last day, there will be the Lord Jesus.

And it will not be about streets of golden fishing with grandma and all of the other Milwaukee. That non Jesus ideas of the last day are full of to be just him and even be the rejoicing that he grew in you Lord day by Lord's day and day by day and your private worship and day by day and your family worship until he had perfected his work in you and that increasing joy had become perfect joy and the last day him.

But the Israelites have gotten accustomed to saying were the special people of God Jerusalem is a special city of God, we you know, we go to worship on Zion we attend the temple which is the special host of God, we got special sacrifices of God, we must be special.

We do the same.

But it will be exposed on that last day and so he brings them a little picture of that last day in this worship assembly which is now not worship but morning and he says verse 15 or last for the day for the day as a hand, it will come as destruction almighty.

Think about it think of it as an Israelite. What was the day of Yahweh to them and what did they think it would be? That great day in which God beats up and destroys everybody else and puts us where we finally. Weren't they still doing this hundreds of years later when Christ came and they thought that that's what the kingdom was going to be.

The Jesus had come to destroy. And set them back where they belonged.

Well, whom did Jesus send whom did God send ahead of himself? He's coming into the world. He sent John the baptizer. And what did he say? He said repent for the kingdom of God as a hand, not rejoice. Yes, there's rejoicing but there's no rejoicing without repentance. And that's what Joel is saying here.

Not real for the day of Yahweh as a hand for the day of Yahweh as a hand because of the, And you don't have him it is not going to be a day of joy and victory and celebration.

Verse 15 is extremely shocking to them. Because he says the day of Yahweh is something over which you wail. Alas for the day it shall come as destruction from the Almighty. This is what Peter says to. This is why it's such a mercy that judgment begins with the household of God.

So that in the household of God, he shows us what it is to face his day without him. So that we will repent and cling to him. And that when the final day comes it will be that day of joy. And he gives us leaders who are under obligation to lead the worship, but what if he takes away the worship then they're under obligation to mourn?

And to lead in mourning. They're the ones who are doing this consecrating of the fast and the calling of the sacred assembly in verse 14 and we too are fathers need to and husbands in our houses need to be leading worship and of course the elders of the church need to be gathering and leading worship.

We're going to tackle them especially here because the text does so but don't tune out. If you're the wife or if you're a church member. Because you need to be praying for your husband's wife and you need to be guarding and encouraging them. That their spiritual lives may be taken care of so that they can lead the house that God has called them to lead.

And all of you you need to be praying for your elders and following everything that is good. Submitting to them. Hebrews 13:7 imitating them knowing the outcome of their faith.

When you who are children. Are you not? Fathers and husbands and training are you not mothers and wives and training? And you're not just church members and training your church members already. We weren't just talking to the taller older more cynical ones. I'm gonna go. There's all of us just as in verse 3, we saw tell your children about it let your children tell their children and their children another generation.

You know, especially where that happens in the worship assembly because when it comes back to this consecrated fast coral sacred assembly, if you flip the page into chapter 2 blow the trumpet and Zion consecrate a fast call a sacred assembly chapter 2 verse 15, but now listen to the expansion of the 16 on the who is supposed to gather in.

14 that is in front of us now gather the people sanctify the congregation assemble the elders gather the children and the nursing babes. So, do you have a nursery yes, we have a nursery. It's all in the pews because it is this.

Delighted in. Who we rejoice even now over a word that is polling us to mourn and commanding us to grieve whenever we don't have him but even this word is from him even this word is him addressing his body washing his bride by the washing of the water with the word so that he will dress us up in the garments that have no spot or any such thing that even when he gives us a hard worker it was it is with a view.

To the day of the wedding supper of the lamb and we would drink him died to accomplish to accomplish the coming of that day and now is given his spirit who blesses us in the preaching and hearing of his word to bring us to that day, which he has which he has one which he has earned.

And even. Children in nursing babies for 16 can tell when you're going to that one thing that is of great joy when you're doing that one thing of great seriousness. And when you're grieving together. There's not a one-year-old or a two-year-old. Put her. Sweet little hands on your face and say.

Why are you so sad mommy?

Because mommy just realized. That she was happy without Jesus. And that's sad. But let's have Jesus. And then we will have happiness.

So if you're going to lead such an assembly, what do you need to do? Well, the first thing you need to do is afflict yourself. If you're going to lead this grieving and wailing and crying out assembly in verse 14, then you need to interact with God yourself first yourselves and lament you priests.

Will you who minister before the altar? He gives. Specific commands here or just through the section in in Second Samuel where we saw David doing this you remember when his child was ill and he said who knows, you know, the the Lord might save him and the servants were like, you know, you were grieving until the child and then when he died you got up and washed your face and went to worship what you always had all about.

Well, the the grieving of David was lying down prostrate, right? So he says come lie all night and, Cloth. You who minister to my God? So easy for the priests to say. No green no new wine no oil extended vacation. We can have temple worship over zoom.

Just as it would have been easy for the assembly verse 14 to say the priests don't have the stuff for leading the assembly. Why would we assemble? But there were to afflict themselves first so that the inverse 13 so that they could lead this assembly of mourning and grieving.

Many of us have felt. Even if we weren't grieving for the loss of the public worship in our. Congregation. Do we not love God and love his church broadly.

Many of us have felt that we ought to be grieving in one of the reasons. Why we didn't grieve more. Is because the pastor wasn't grieving enough.

But he wasn't afflicted like one who'd received a command to go lie all night and sackcloth.

Lamenting. So that he could lead. In this grief. When you miss family worship in your home's dad's. Husbands. You need to feel it in your soul.

You need to grieve and lament and mourn and not grow accustomed to it. And not let yourself off the hook and say well it's been a really busy season. I'm sure we'll get back into it eventually. Because your wife needs to feel the loss of it and your children need to feel the loss of it and you need to lead them in it.

In how are you going to lead them and if you don't feel it yourself? With that not what he's doing here with the priests. In verse 13 and verse 14. Saying you feel it yourself first verse 13. And then you gather the people of God. You gather the household of God.

And you lead them and feeling it too. Expressing it too. You have to lead yourself before you leave the assembly and then you have to gather the assembly that might sound obvious. But they're commanded to do it so. Apparently it's not that obvious. The people perhaps having found themselves off the hook for a time needed to be brought back together commanded back together.

How easily those who at first let attendance slide a little can find themselves content not to gather at all.

So if the gathering for rejoicing isn't possible. Then the gathering for weeping is necessary. It wasn't just others it wasn't just the priests generally. Note that Joel takes this very personally and individually verse 19, oh Yahweh to you I cry out. Hey, we found out something other something else about Joel.

So far all we've known as his name and his daddy's name. Remember when a couple weeks ago when we were trying to introduce the book and that was one of the difficulties. But here's something else about Joel. He takes this personally first-person singular. Oh Yahweh to you I cry out for fire has devoured the open pastures and flame has burned all the trees of the field.

It's possible we'll see this in chapter 2 that he's describing the effect of the locust plague. It's also possible that God had sent fire in addition to locusts and in addition to drought. But he says, I see what you have done. And I what's he doing? He's putting into practice personally for himself the general commands given in verses.

13 and 14. And every single leader whether in the household of God or in your own household needs to do this himself. It will not do for you as a husband or father to sit there and hear a sermon like this and say, oh yeah. I wish all the husbands and fathers could hear sermons like that.

I wish I heard sermon like that 20 years ago and I started out being a husband and father. He's a good thing we heard that today. And never take it to heart for you. You see what Joel did here. Joel received an instruction for the assembly as a whole and Joe received an instruction for the leadership generally in verse 13, but he knew himself to be the one through whom the word is coming and he said, I'm not exempt.

This is for me first.

And this is how everyone of us. Need to be taking the word of God. Young men start now. You take the word of God to heart for you yourself personally and individually so that when you get to be in a place of leadership in your marriage or in your home, you are receiving it personally and responding to God and engaging him individually and personally so that you can lead your house.

And if you desire that office of overseer that office of elder, which is a good thing and for which family leadership is training. That by the time you come into the office of elder you are accustomed to receiving the word of God before you receive it for anyone else before you think of how it needs to be applied to the general culture or the general church or your particular congregation the other fakes in it or the other people in your house.

Joel did. The word of God not just coming through him. But first verse 19 and 20 to him. Oh Yahweh to you I cry out. He takes the responsibility personally. Apparently even before completing altership and delivery of his prophetic book. You consider Joel. Writing this Peter says carried along by the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit hasn't turned off his mind or his heart.

And his calling the assembly and calling the priests and calling the farmers and pointing out how even the field and and the cattle and the sheep know them horn and don't you all be beasts. Or worse than beasts. And in the midst, he doesn't go from verse 18 of chapter 1 to verse 1 of chapter 2.

He cries out in the midst of it. How necessary it is to mourn when the Lord sends calamity. And especially the calamity of lost public worship. Because whether or not you gather to the Lord now and engage with Him now. You will be gathered to him in the last day.

And you will. Engage. Him in be engaged by Him in the last day. There are no atheists. At the return of Jesus Christ.

Fool says in his heart now, there is no God.

Because if in that day, he himself is not your joy. You mustn't imagine that you will get to think about or pay attention to something else. You will join. Those who well for all creation to hide them because the day of the land has come. Now for those who have not had God himself as their joy the Lord Jesus himself as their joy the day of the Lord is alas for the day.

For the day of Yahweh as at hand and it shall come as destruction for the Almighty. What will that final day be like for you?

If missing him in his worship. Is not causing you to grieve now. Then how great will your weeping and wailing be then?

So then whenever we are together unto the Lord now, let us be led in doing so with the joy of a bride on her wedding day. And if you who want to lead your family's day by day and you who are called in the office of elder to lead this congregation week by week.

If you are called to affect yourself first with the grieving in which you would lead the people of God in your home or in the congregation in grieving, are you not also called? To affect yourself first with the joy. Because the ordinary life of the people of God is one in which you do have him and you do have his assemblies and you do have his worship and you have him in his worship.

So that you're quiet times or devotions, whatever you're going to call it dear men. They need to be a rejoicing over your redeemer and your creator who gives himself to you in that reading of the Bible and gives himself to you in that prayer. So you've come out like Moses with your face shining.

And lead your family in rejoicing over him. It's one of the hardest parts of being an older being a pastor. Knowing that I have a duty to be affected with the joy of God in his gospel.

Because that's the appointed means by which. God leads, you shepherds you. And rejoicing over him in his gospel in his worship.

So let us. Be led and gathering to him week by week with the joy of a bride on her wedding day.

And if for a season. Providence either takes the gathering away from us. Or exposes our remaining sin. By hiding from our ability to know him and perceive him in his workshop. Then let us be led in morning over it. Like that bride who is bereaved. On her wedding day.

But God helping us. Let us never stop gathering for the worship of God. And let us never do it being unmoved either one way or the other. And then let us pray.

My father we pray that your spirit would.

Make us to treasure your worship. Because it is yours. Because in it you display your glory.

In the you have been pleased to give us. Exactly the opposite of what we have deserved to be left to our sin and to receive destruction from you and from your presence forever. The events that put your put our sin upon Christ. Not only that we might be forgiven but that by his blood consecrating that two true tabernacle of which the tabernacle and temple on earth was a copy.

That he has consecrated us as your temple. Lord who pray that you would help us to rejoice over being gathered in even up into the holy of holies through the new and living way that is his flesh. That knowing what it is that you have called us to on these Lord's days.

That we would not forsake the assembling of ourselves together a summer in the habit of doing. But that as we see the day approaching and as we have this weekly day in anticipation of that one. You would make us to. Rejoice with spirit given rejoicing from the joy of Jesus.

Over these worship assemblies. Lord, don't let us be like the insane bride. Who is glad with all of the other things and her feelings.

With an absent groom.

We thank you for the truth that you never leave us nor forsake us.