

“The Home of Faith: Showing Up”  
Lamentations 3:22-23

One of the modern challenges for us is how many things we have to distract us. It is hard to really show up for our lives when we have so much distraction at our fingertips. It is easy to blame social media and all the technology that we have for this, but in reality, being distracted is mostly about our internal state. Here is a video that explains it well: <https://youtu.be/KZGVgz9b2fw>.

It is much easier to avoid uncomfortable feelings by distracting ourselves than to feel them. They become like triggers for us. While it may feel good in the short term to run away or hide, we miss out on the best parts of life. We also miss out on showing up for our own lives.

Showing up with the fullness of who we are and to the fullness of life is not always easy. It is the work of a lifetime and part of our faith journey to love and to live wholeheartedly. It is about believing these words from Lamentations 3:22-23

“The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, God’s mercies never come to an end; <sup>23</sup> they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

We may imagine when reading these words, a beautiful scene in life where the sun is shining, and all is going well. It is easy to imagine harmony and a sense of peace when the circumstances of life are good. Yet, these words are a part of a book that is about grief and lament because of the horrific events of the siege and fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE to the Babylonians. The writer is reflecting on a time of great loss and expressing deep feelings of pain. Yet, in the middle of all the loss, there is a powerful image of hope that is based in God’s grace and compassion. Here is a video from the Bible Project about this book: <https://youtu.be/p8GDFPdaQZQ>.

According to the witness of scripture, God shows up to the people of God all the time, in good times and in bad times. When things are going well, they trust that God is with them. When things are falling apart, they mourn together, and they remember together. The power of collective memory helped the Israelites during so many hardships in life. They leaned heavily on God’s mercies to find their way back. They stuck together and reminded each other of God’s steadfastness. They showed up for each other to lament and to rejoice.

When life is hard or our feelings of pain or discomfort threaten to get the better of us, we always have a choice. We can choose to do the instinctual thing of numbing, distracting, or deflecting these feelings or we can lean into these discomforts with God’s grace and mercy. The first choice is all too familiar. We know very well how to numb or distract from our uncomfortable feelings. We also know how to deflect or project our discomfort on others through blame or anger. But building a home of faith involves a higher level of engagement in life. It is when we are able to see the mercies of God in every moment and in every situation in life.

There is a lot in life to lament and to fear. These experiences may make us shrink or feel diminished in our joy. But focusing on love helps us to see grace in every situation. When the focus is on love, we find the courage to show up fully to our lives.

If we are to get in the flow of grace, our practices of showing up to God's mercy in community is so important. The anxiety of our divisions (or relational brokenness) is ever with us, and our culture tends to amplify that anxiety. But in faith, we know the true story of our lives. We know that love is ever with us and that in order to live in that love, we have to trust and share with others the mercies and currencies of our lives.

A couple of good examples come to my mind when thinking of the power of showing up through the power of love. The first one comes from our own church community. A few weeks ago, a woman in our congregation experienced a sudden loss which is very hard to face. She immediately called her friend. Her friend considered herself to be inadequate for dealing with such situations. But motivated by love, she showed up for her friend. She showed up with her fears and with her love. She let love guide her steps despite the enormity of the situation. When I walked in, I felt the pain but most definitely felt the overwhelming care and love that was present there.

The second example comes from the Wizard of Oz. Dorothy felt trapped in her own life. She was orphaned and living in a one-room house and the only thing that was precious to her was her dog. She was afraid that he was going to be taken away from her too. She imagined that if she left her home in Kansas all of her trouble would be left behind and that she would be happy. When a cyclone hits her home, she is taken on a mysterious quest to find the Wizard who she thought could solve all of her problems. But what she discovered along the way was that love is what mattered. Her friendship with some unlikely figures gave her the courage to show up to her own life with a renewed focus on love. Home is where we are able to show up and focus on love. Here is: <https://youtu.be/RPs2Y4FdGzM>.

Lamentations 3:22-23

"The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, God's mercies never come to an end; <sup>23</sup> they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." Amen.