

## Lord, Hear My Cry Prayers for Difficult Circumstances

*Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. - Matthew 11:28-30*

Perhaps the Psalms of Lament are the greatest teachers for how humans are to cry out to God in times of grief, pain, anxiety, and despair. The Psalmists are candid with their emotions, while deeply believing that their God is able to bring them out of the pit and restore joy within their souls once more. Their beautiful cries and laments serve as encouragement, especially for young people, by portraying that anger and questions are not only acceptable to take to God, but God can handle any emotion at any time. The prayers included below are specifically written for young people who are experiencing pain, grief, anger, and question upon question after a specific event or trauma in their life. In addition to sharing these prayers with them, you may also wish to direct them to various Psalms of Lament in Scripture.

### When Grieving the Loss of a Friend

God of Grace, I can barely function right now because I'm in shock. I cannot believe they are gone. I keep expecting them to text me any minute. I don't understand why you didn't stop what happened. Why didn't you stop it? Why them? How can a teenager just die? Nobody at school really knows what to do and we just keep having prayer vigils and adults coming to talk with us. I'm glad to know so many people care, but I really just want to be with my friends and not deal with this. This can't be happening. What am I supposed to do now? I can't even focus on anything. Help me, God! Help me! I have always believed you were bigger than anything that could happen on earth, but I don't feel that way now. Remind me that you're still there and still in control. I need you now more than ever. In the name of your child, whose friends also grieved his death, Amen.

### After a Breakup

God of all relationships, I cannot believe we aren't dating anymore. I really did love them. I thought we were fine. I mean, we had some fights and stuff, but everyone does. I didn't see this coming, and I don't want this. I want to still be dating. I want to still hang out. The worst is that now it will be awkward with our friends, and I don't know if we can ever go back to being just friends at this point. I don't want to tell my parents or anybody. I just want to be alone to be hurt and sad. Someone told me that high school and college are all about dating different people, but I don't want to date anyone else. I just want us to be us again and to be happy. I don't want to sound desperate, and I'm afraid if I call them it will just make me feel worse. I wish all of this pain and weirdness would just go away. Help me figure out how to handle this, God, and take away my pain. Amen.

## When Parents Separate

God, I have no idea what's going on in my house. My parents had been fighting, but now they hardly speak to each other. We don't do dinner together as a family anymore and I've noticed that lately one of them has been sleeping in the guest room. I ask questions, but neither of them wants to talk about it. I feel like they think they can just pretend everything's fine, and I won't notice. It sounds like one of them may move out for a while, which probably means they will end up getting divorced. At least that's how it happened when my friend's parents got divorced. What am I supposed to do? Do I have to choose who I want to live with? I just want us to be a family again. I want to talk to someone, but I don't want my parents to get mad at me since nobody else knows. God, I feel like you're the only one I can talk to about all this. Help me know how to deal with this and still love and support both my parents. And help me figure out how to tell them that I need them to be honest with me about everything. In the name of your Son, Amen.

## When A Friend Commits Suicide

God of life, I just don't understand why they killed themselves. What could have been so bad to make them do that? I knew they were sad recently but had no idea it was that bad. I feel like a horrible friend for not seeing how upset they really were. What if I had paid more attention and could have stopped them? Everyone at school and church is really upset and some are saying things about how selfish suicide is. I get why they think that, but I know that they would never have done it if they thought there was any other alternative, so I see it as sad more than selfish. A lot of the parents and other adults are now afraid my friends and I might commit suicide, too, so we've had to talk to lots of counselors. I'm devastated about my friend, but I'm fine. I wish they would just let me grieve alone. I just feel so guilty and empty right now. God, restore my sense of hope and may my friend's family be at peace. In the name of Jesus who promises all of us life eternal, Amen.

## After Being Bullied

God of comfort, I am so embarrassed. I'm sick of being made fun of and bullied at school. I'm tired of my friends not standing up for me. I don't want to go to school ever again. I hate it. I used to love school and all my friends, but I don't want to go anywhere. My parents and my youth director keep reminding me that I am created in your image, and am fearfully and wonderfully made, but I have a hard time believing them when other people make fun of how I am. Why can't I just be like everyone else? My best friend told me to forgive the bullies and just ignore them, but I'm hurt and angry and don't feel like forgiving them. Ignoring them is easier said than done for sure. God, keep telling me that I was created exactly who I am on purpose and that you love me unconditionally. Keep telling me that, until I hear you louder than the bullies. And I know I should forgive them, but I just can't yet. Give me the strength to face everyone again and give me the peace to forgive when I'm able. In the name of Jesus, who often associated with people others made fun of, Amen.

## Suggested Lament Psalms

5, 13, 22, 25, 31, 42, 55, 61, 70, 80, 123, 141, 14

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