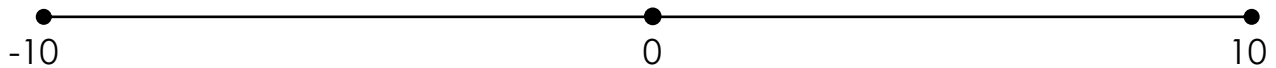


COMMUNAL LAMENTS



Warm Up 1: What is your emotional range? Over the past year, what strength of positive and negative emotions have you felt?



Warm Up 2: How common are “communal laments” in normal church life? Why do you think this is?

Read Psalm 79

1. Verses 1-4 describe the situation God's people are in... Jerusalem has been destroyed by a foreign nation, many Israelites have been killed, and many others have been taken off to exile. What about now? What's our situation? What might we lament about the situation God's people are in?
2. Verse 5 is an acknowledgement that the reason God's people are in this situation is because of God's anger and judgement. To what extent might this be true today? How can we know whether the things we are experiencing are “innocent suffering” or God's judgement because of sin?
3. In verses 6-12 the psalmist makes a number of requests of God... both *for* his people and *against* their (His) enemies. When you think about everything going on in our world and, in particular, everything God's people are experiencing today, what requests should we be making of God?
4. The psalm finishes in verse 13 with a hopeful expression of praise. No matter how bad things get, Christians are always called to live with hope and to give praise to God. What hope do we have as Christians? What reasons do we have to praise God, even in the challenges of today?

Hot Take: Communal laments don't make us more negative; they make our positivity more real. Do you agree?

Pray: What else is going on that we might want to lament? Use the four elements above to pray communal laments together (and don't forget to end with hope and praise!).