

A Prayer of Lament

FOR A FAILED NARCISSISTIC MARRIAGE

I loved you so much, Lord.

I reveled in the joy of knowing the Holy Spirit personally.

How I longed to serve You with my life, to tell others of Your love, salvation, and power.

My trust had been wounded through the rejection of a former relationship.

Now I stood ready to trust You to teach me to trust again.

I had faithfully equipped myself and begun to gradually re-open my heart to love and the possibility of a life partner.

I trusted Your Holy Spirit to guide me, to help me discern Your leading.

He seemed so safe, gentle, loving, nurturing, caring.

He had invested in me, loved me, a sheltering, gentle love.

I sought Your guidance, trusted Your sovereignty.

He said, "I want to know when we will be out-of-God's-will unless we take the next step-of-faith and get engaged."

I yielded. I thought I felt Your pleasure, Your joy, Your peace.

Did I? Or was it a rush of hormones mimicking Your Spirit?

I thought I felt joy and peace.

Now, five decades later, the heart and soul of my earthly life is past—spent, used-up loving him, I thought, for You, in obedience, for Your glory.

I am broken, cast aside, disillusioned.

Did he ever really love me?

Was it all an illusion?

I ignored the wounding.

Denied the obvious.

Gasped for air.

Begged for relief.

Longed for tenderness.

Overlooked the betrayal.

Yet, I am also feeling betrayed by You, Lord.

I had trusted You, sought Your leading, sought Your will.

Didn't You see?

Didn't You know?

Where were You in all this?

How easily You could have intervened, redirected me, saved me, protected me in those initial days of courtship.

I struggle with Your seemingly passive role as you watched Your vulnerable daughter be hoodwinked, deceived, misled, then rejected.

I grieve, I mourn, I ache over my disappointment in Your protection.

Why, Lord?

Why did You allow me to entrust my heart and soul to a fantasy person who did not know how to care for it?

You watched, You waited.
And I know, now, You grieved.
And here I sit disorientated, discarded—with a sobbing granddaughter and 4 confused adult children,
facing the winter of my soul
and an unknown future, wondering
“How did this happen?”
Who was that naïve, vulnerable young woman?
Where is she now?
Who is she now?
Now what?
Such overpowering emptiness.
Lord, can I hear your voice clearly enough to find my way now?
Can I trust You now—on the other side of life?
How is this trust different today from then?
How has my discernment changed, since You, Lord, are unchangeable?
Who am I today other than broken, disoriented, and disillusioned?
I do not trust myself—because there was nobody inside of the person I chose to fully love, and I didn’t
even know it!
The tragedy of that overwhelms me.
I am immobilized with despair. I am humiliated, embarrassed, ashamed.
I am undone for not knowing, about my naivety, my passivity, my own fantasy—that I could somehow be
enough.
What do You want me to do now?
Show me the way and help me trust You, Lord, that I can correctly discern Your leading.
My trust feels damaged, betrayed, taken advantage of, stolen, stepped on, trashed, devalued.
Bring my heart to Job’s own conclusion, for I am not there yet: “I know You can do anything and no plan
of Yours can be thwarted...surely I spoke about things I did not understand things too wonderful for me
to understand” (42:1).

Shirley Rice once wrote: “Right now, my marriage is a trophy of what the redeeming love of Jesus Christ
can do in two rebellious hearts if they will cease their rebellion and become slaves of Jesus Christ. It may
please Him, someday, to make one of us or both of us, or our marriage, a trophy of what He can do in
another kind of circumstance. He might choose to break my heart. Whatever happens, I am in the train of
a conqueror, and He will lead me in triumph.”

I wish I had included that prayer in my wedding vows, but, with a contrite heart, I offer it up to you now,
much like the widow’s mite—for it is all I have to give. Multiply this meager offering for Your glory. Amen.