



Big Idea: Being honest about your disappointment with God can move you into a deeper relationship with Him.

Key Bible Passage: Psalm 77

[Slide1]

[OPENING ILLUSTRATION]

How many of you have ever been to the Grand Canyon? Or any canyon? Or seen a photo of the Grand Canyon? [Slide2]

The Grand Canyon is considered one of the greatest natural wonders of our world. Millions of people travel millions of miles every year just to look at it (and get some great Instagram content). Photos of it pop up everywhere - the enormous red rock walls reflecting the colors of the setting sun, making the ideal background for every motivational fitness ad or your laptop wallpaper.

But the Grand Canyon wasn't always a canyon. At some point in geological history, the Colorado River began to flow and as it grew in its flow, it began to sweep away sediment along its path. Over a large period of time, layer upon layer of limestone, sandstone, and shale were swept away by the rushing water, carving, in many places, a canyon that is now over a mile deep!

[TEACHER NOTE: Share your experience of being at the Grand Canyon, or if not, say something like this:] People who've been there say that the photos don't do it justice. They say that words can't describe the sheer enormity of the walls and how small you feel when you're deep inside the canyon.

One of the things we all want is to go 'deep' in our relationship with God. We want our relationship with Him to be more than surface-level. We have those surface-level relationships (we call them 'acquaintances') with people where there's some connection or conversation that happens, but those acquaintances don't really mean anything to our lives. We don't want our relationship with God to be like that; we want our connection with Him to be

real and meaningful. We want a relationship with God that looks like this: **[Slide 2]** (canyon), not this: **[Slide 3]** (flat desert).

But how is a canyon formed? **[Slide 4]** A canyon is formed over time, through erosion, through the rushing water carving away at the rock and sweeping away the loose pieces. A deep relationship with God isn't any different. It's formed over time, through the erosion of our false ideas of Him and our false expectations of the way He works. And the rushing river that does the work is our disappointment with Him and our honesty about that disappointment.

[TENSION]

I want you to think of a time God, at least on some level, let you down.

- Maybe you prayed very specifically for something and believed to the best of your ability that He could do it, but it didn't happen.
- Maybe you felt close to Him at one point, but you haven't been able to feel that closeness lately.
- Maybe you know someone who used to be strong in their faith and now they've totally walked away from it all and you just aren't sure why He would let that happen.
- Maybe you're reading some things in the Bible that don't seem to match up with what you've always thought God was like.

Most of us get the idea, especially if you've grown up in the church, that expressing disappointment with God is wrong. We get the sense that it would be disrespectful or selfish to say that we feel like God let us down in some way. We learn lots of phrases to sugarcoat our disappointment, like: "God's got this!" and "God is good all the time!" Or mostly we just learn not to talk about it.

[SCRIPTURE]

But the Bible is full of people who expressed their disappointment with God, especially in the book of Psalms. Today, we're going to read from Psalm 77, where the writer, whose name is Asaph, digs deep into how he feels God has let him down.

[Slide 5]

*1 I cry out to God; yes, I shout.
Oh, that God would listen to me!*
*2 When I was in deep trouble,
I searched for the Lord.*