

Blessed are those Who Mourn

Jeff Rogers / Lamplighter Bible Study

Matthew 5:4

Alistair Begg recently said regarding the Beatitudes spoken by our Lord at a different time in Luke's gospel, "I likened the experience to standing on a rake and being hit on the nose by the handle." He added, "It is when the Church is different from the world that it makes an impact."

In the Beatitudes, our Lord introduces how a believer's life should be lived! What makes us salt and light? It is the God-given humility and mournfulness over sin. It is meekness and the pursuit of righteousness. It is living at peace and making peace by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot reflect the behavior, values, and attitude of the world and its evil system and expect that reflection to impact the Kingdom of God!

We live in a world that shuns mourning and pursues happiness. The world encourages us to forget our troubles and make pleasure our goal. Our society is pleasure-driven. More money, energy, enthusiasm, and entertainment have become the world's salve to mask depression, disease, addiction, and relationship explosions. Worst of all, we turn our back on conscience and forsake God's truth for the lies of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

I. The Biblical Topic of Mourning.

- A. What the Bible says...
 - 1. The warning of pursuing the world's pleasures and satisfaction
 - a) **Luke 6:25**, *"Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry. "Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep."*
 - b) **Isaiah 65:14**, *Behold, my servants shall sing for gladness of heart, but you shall cry out for pain of heart and shall wail for breaking of spirit.*
- B. What the world does...
 - 1. **Exterior Christianity** – This is an exterior-only "air of godliness and Christianity." It is a godliness to be "seen of men" rather than by God.
 - 2. **Presumptive Heart** – I am not bad; this is conceit or arrogance. We see sin as a small thing not worthy of God's wrath. Defective sense of sin – Not a deep conviction of sin before a holy God.
 - 3. **Procrastination** – I will take care of that later; right now, I will "enjoy" my life.
 - 4. **Shallowness** – Christianity that turns off at noon on Sunday.
- C. Different kinds of sorrow in the Bible
 - 1. Human sorrow:
 - a) Tears of Loss - Abraham wept over Sarah's death (Genesis 23:2)
 - b) Tears of Loneliness - The Psalmist wept over God not appearing in his suffering and loneliness (Psalm 42:1-3)
 - c) Tears of defeat and discouragement (2 Timothy 1:3-4)
 - d) Tears of anticipated judgment (Jeremiah 9:1)
 - e) Tears of a father for a sick child (Mark 9:23-24)
 - f) Tears of devotion (Luke 7:38,44)
 - g) Jesus wept over Jerusalem and at the tomb of Lazarus.
 - h) Mary Magdalene wept at the crucifixion.
 - 2. Improper sorrow
 - a) Amnon wrongly lusted after Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-2) (Amnon preyed on her innocence).
 - b) Ahab, over Naboth's vineyard. (1 Kings 21:4) Ahab was *vexed* and *sullen*. Would not eat.
 - c) David weeping over Absalom (possibly more about David's failure as a father)
 - 3. Godly sorrow (**2 Corinthians 7:9-10**) *As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. 10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.*
 - a) This kind of sorrow leads to repentance (change & transformation)
 - b) Godly sorrow leads to life and salvation (worldly sorrow = death (no comfort/forgiveness)).

- c) When we sorrow a godly sorrow, it is without regret. (As opposed to David over Absalom)
- d) This sorrow brings blessing and comfort!
 - (1) In Matthew 5:4, it is connected to 5:3. We first must see our spiritual bankruptcy.
 - (2) We must first see ourselves as beggars. No resources, Shame-filled, destitute
 - (a) As Paul says, “*In my flesh dwells no good thing.*”
 - (b) As Isaiah says, “*All my righteousness’s are filthy rags.*”
 - (c) David in Psalm 32 & 51 after confronting his sin.
 - (d) Job in **Job 42:6**, *Therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*”

II. What Does It Mean “To Mourn”?

- A. “Mourning” is the strongest of nine Greek verbs for sadness and mourning.
 - 1. It is reserved for mourning the dead. It is a passionate lament over losing a loved one.
 - 2. The impact of mourning over sin.
 - a) “*my strength was dried up.*” – my vitality (life juices, blood, saliva) is baked out by the sun of unconfessed sin. (Psalm 32:4)
 - b) **Psalm 38**
 - c) Psalm 51
- B. The ongoing sadness over sin.
 - 1. It is the nagging reality of sin in our lives (keep acknowledging poverty and embracing mourning)
 - 2. **James 4:7–10**, *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*
 - 3. When you no longer mourn over sin, you will no longer repent; when you no longer repent, you’ll no longer confess; when you don’t confess, there will be barriers between you and God, and you will forfeit blessing. (**Ezekiel 21:9–10**, **Isaiah 22:12–14**)
- C. It is a Romans 7 Experience (Vss. 14, 18, 19, 24)

III. The Paradox of Happiness “for they shall be comforted.”

- A. God’s answer to our mourning over sin is forgiveness.
 - 1. Mourners are not happy because they mourn. They are happy because they are comforted! They are comforted by forgiveness.
 - 2. **2 Corinthians 1:3–4**, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*
 - 3. **Matthew 11:28–29**, *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*
 - 4. **Revelation 21:4**, *He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”*
 - 5. **Romans 8:23** *And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.*
 - 6. **2 Corinthians 5:1–4**, *For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, 3 if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. 4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.*

IV. How do we become a mourner?

- A. **Hebrews 3:7–8**, *Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness,*
- B. Three things to do:
 - 1. Hard hearts result from the love of sin, despair, conceit, presumption, procrastination, shallowness.
 - 2. Study the penitent in Scripture (David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Peter, Paul, Job)
 - 3. Pray for a contrite heart.