

"Blessed Are They That Mourn"

Matthew 5:4

1. The God and Father of Jesus is "the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3,4).
2. Such mourners are prepared to receive such blessing.
- B. The blessed outcome of those who mourn over their own sins.
 1. The outcome is reconciliation and fellowship with God, which includes abiding joy and eternal hope.
 2. The careless and foolish world looks on such with pity: "Why does he take things so seriously and hard" (Isaiah 6:1-6)?
 3. Don't pity him who is on the eve of a great new discovery: "Jehovah is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart" (Psalm 34:18; Isaiah 66:2).
 4. His mourning was a gateway to needed comfort and provided inside bracing.
 5. "There is therefore now no condemnation... in Christ." (Romans 8:1).
- C. Such mourners must be mourning **for sin** and **not merely for its consequences**.
 1. Contrast King Saul and King David (Psalm 51:1,14). Their outcomes were opposite.
 2. What were their outcomes?
 3. Contrast Peter and Judas: The remorse which led to God vs. the remorse which leads to despair.
- D. Those who mourn over the sins of others are also comforted.
 1. Jesus mourned over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41; 22:43). Angels came from heaven and strengthened him. **Yet Luke 23:28!**
 2. But Jesus did more than weep: He went down to cleanse the temple/plead with its crowds, and die for its hating multitudes; and his joy was made perfect (Hebrews 12:2; Acts 2).
 3. Paul was a mourner of this type: 2 Corinthians 2:4; 1:3,4.
 4. The more we become dead to sin and self the more alive we may become to God (Galatians 6:14; Romans 6:6,11).

CONCLUSION —

- I. The cross and the crown are linked.
- II. Those who enter into the fellowship of Christ's suffering do find comfort: They find it not only in the by and by, but in the here and now (Psalm 23:4; Philippians 3:10,11).
- III. Are you conformed unto his suffering and death, that you may know his joy? (Hebrews 12:2; Philippians 3:7-11)?
- IV. Will you now follow Jesus by doing the Father's will and plan for your life by committing yourself to live for Christ here that you may live with him in heaven throughout all eternity?

--Charles E. Crouch

INTRODUCTION —

- I. THIS BEATITUDE IS A PARADOX, A SEEMING CONTRADICTION OF TERMS: IT SEEMS TO SAY, "HAPPY ARE THE UNHAPPY."
 - A. It contradicts the accepted views of our time.
 - B. We don't congratulate, but pity, those who mourn.
 - C. This is like consoling a financial success, etc.
 - D. So we change it to, "Blessed are those who always smile, make others laugh, and never cry."
- II. BUT JESUS, WHOSE BIRTH BROUGHT GREAT JOY TO EARTH, PERSISTS IN SAYING THE SAME.
 - A. To him, the tearless eye/untender heart is a tragedy.
 - B. A man on Molokai once lost physical sensitiveness so that hot water spilled on his foot did not hurt: He was a pitiful leper.
 - C. If you could walk on hot coals or in scalding water without pain, you would not consider that a good sign! A million times no!
 - D. But Paul describes a worse condition as being "past feeling," a condition which was not confined to Paul's day (Ephesians 4:19).
 1. You can sear and stifle the voice of conscience: Yesterday's sin was harder to commit than today's.
 2. A sermon once would have broken your heart: Today you are as unmoved as the chair or pew on which you sit.
 3. Some pass by spiritual needs with indifference.

DISCUSSION —

- I. **JESUS DOES NOT SAY EVERY MOURNER IS ALWAYS NECESSARILY BLESSED.**
 - A. Tears are not good in and of themselves: Jesus teaches, "Be of good cheer" (John 16:33).
 - B. There are tears that brighten the eyes, beautify and make wise and tender. But sorrow is not always better than laughter (Ecclesiastes 7:3,4).
 - C. There are also tears that leave the eyes smarting and blinded and the heart heavy, which bring no comfort to that kind of mourner (2 Corinthians 7:10b).

II. WHO THEN ARE THOSE WHOSE MOURNING BRINGS NO COMFORT?

- A. Constitutional pessimists: Faultfinders who look habitually for the bad and sad, the dark side, who whine, murmur, complain, rebel and condemn.
 - 1. Lop-sided deliberate pessimists are gluttons for wretchedness.
 - 2. They are never so miserable as when they feel duty bound to be contented and optimistic, and never so happy as when they have a perfect right to be miserable.
 - 3. They rewrite Paul's wonderful words in Philippians 4:4-8.
- B. Those self-centered persons mourning over some great loss, financial reverse, wounded pride, frustrated ambition or humiliating defeat.
 - 1. We have all known some like this: Self-pity is deadly and faithless, not a blessing.
 - 2. Napoleon and Ferdinand Marcos are examples: Sorrow in exile brought them no comfort.
 - 3. Many mourners, like Judas, are driven to insanity and to suicide: "The sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Corinthians 7:10b; Matthew 27:1-5).
 - 4. They truly mourn, but are comfortless.
- C. Most people who lose some loved one are eventually comforted, but even those are not necessarily blessed by their mourning.
 - 1. Such losses have been a gateway to comfort, increased strength, greater faith and better understanding for multitudes.
 - 2. Elisha was never the same after Elijah was gone (2 Kings 2:12).
 - 3. You have not been the same since your mother or baby died (Philippians 1:21; Mark 10:14).
 - 4. But here and there a mother becomes very bitter over such loss. And for similar reasons, we cannot use Psalm 23, etc., "At A Sinner's Funeral." -- McCord, *Happiness Guaranteed*, p.20.
- D. Nor are all those blessed whose mourning is born of remorse.
 - 1. Many sinners, having ruled God out of their lives, hate the **effects of evil but not evil.**
 - 2. Jails are full of such, who are sorry they got caught. Judas; etc.
 - 3. Jesus says, eight times, hell is full of mourners (Matthew 24:51). But why are they there? I think you know.
 - 4. Better if these were never born! (Matthew 26:24).

III. WHO THEN ARE THE BLESSED MOURNERS WHOSE MOURNING BRINGS COMFORT?

- A. Speaking broadly, this is true of every mourner whose sorrow leads him to God through Christ, to overcome his sinful condition (2 Corinthians 7:9,10; 1 Peter 4:1,2).
 - 1. Whatever your burden, **if it leads you to Him, you are sure to find comfort and rest for your soul** (Matthew 11:28; 1 Peter 5:7).
 - 2. Many could testify to this truth! But...
- B. The primary mourning Jesus has in mind is mourning over sin, one's own sin: One who sees sin through God's eyes and whose godly sorrow works repentance.
 - 1. Blessed is he who sees his own unworthiness and knows he is not what he should be.
 - 2. Who realizes he can of himself do nothing (John 5:30).
 - 3. One who not only is conscious of his failure, but who grieves over it.
 - 4. Only those aware of and sensitive to sin find relief from it; but the knowledge of our spiritual poverty would not help unless it led to **godly mourning** (2 Cor. 7:10).
 - a. The case of the prodigal son is a good example (Luke 15:15-20).
 - b. David is another (Psalm 51; cf. 1 Kings 15:5).
 - c. Peter, who wept bitterly (Luke 22:54-62).
 - d. Isaiah (Isaiah 6:5).
 - e. So often our confessions of sin are cold or formal, and without real feeling or value.
- C. But there is also blessing and comfort for those who mourn over the sins of others.
 - 1. Jeremiah (Jeremiah 8:18).
 - 2. Jesus: "Himself took our infirmities" (Matthew 8:17). He also wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41).
 - 3. Paul wept for unconverted Jews (Romans 9:1,2) and shed "many tears" for others (Acts 20:31; 2 Corinthians 2:4; Philippians 3:18).
 - 4. Blessed therefore is he who bears his cross for truth and right, who shares with Jesus the pain of a world gone wrong (Matt. 9:36; 2 Timothy 1:34; Philippians 2:19,20).
- D. Mourning of sympathy—like that of Jesus (John 11:35).

IV. THE OUTCOME OF SUCH MOURNING: THEY ARE COMFORTED, STRENGTHENED AND HAVE PEACE WITH GOD. (Romans 5:1)

- A. This is true for two reasons. (Romans 15:5; 6:17,18).