

The Sermon On The Mount

Blessed Are The Weepers – Lesson Three

Matthew 5:4 (KJV) Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

The Challenges Of Life

There are many challenges that we are faced with in life. There are highs and lows, ups and downs, that all have to be mindful of. Sometimes the bitter disappointments of life can be more than we think we can bear. When you add to the fact that we live under the burden of the limitations of the fall of Adam, it can be overwhelming. Figure into the fact that the true church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a stranger and pilgrim walking through this world, we can feel even more alienated and ostracized by a culture that has very little hunger for God and His ways and this causes even more the feeling of heaviness that often assails many spiritual leaders and devoted saints of the Lord. We can feel as if the church is making very little, if any, impact on the culture. It would appear as if idols of the culture have reached a state of being bigger than God. We are beginning to see what idolatry, paganism, and secularization can do to a nation.

We are not alone in this battle because throughout the Bible true righteousness and holiness were often in the great minority. Recently, while reading through the book of Isaiah just for the sake of reading the Scriptures, I noticed a great similarity in the times that Isaiah preached in compared to our day. Isaiah 1-5 paints a very grim picture of the overall spiritual health of the nation of Israel and her chief cities. The backdrop of Isaiah 6 and the exalted view of God and His holiness in the Temple is even sharper when you look at the times that Isaiah was ministering in. Isaiah is able to show not only what the state of the nation was but also the mindset of the citizens of that nation. It would appear that social injustice, political corruption, materialism, and exaltation of humanism were prevalent in that day also (700 B.C.). All of this added to some of the mourning that went on in Isaiah (Isaiah 6:5).

Our world laughs at the terrible things, such as: comedians who spew out vile jokes filled with immoral innuendo, actors who promote wickedness at the expense of righteousness, and mockers who hold the religious saints in scorn and condescension. They have great joy in legislative acts that promote lifestyles that

are directly opposite of what God's Word calls sin. They have great celebrations over the material accomplishments and promotions of matters that eternity will erase. In the same way, just as they laugh at the wrong things, they weep over the wrong things. They weep over worldly losses such as money and possessions. They have sorrow for their pride which is wounded by the examples of righteousness around them. They have sorrow they cannot control the actions of the true church that still preaches against sin. They mourn at the afflictions that God brings their way in an effort to turn them toward Him. They mourn over the consequences of their sin instead of having godly sorrow for their sin.

All men face tragedies and troubles that come with life. Psalm 55 is an example of David pouring out his heart at the pain that betrayal has brought to him. There can be times when the disappointments will do their best to lead us into a land of bitterness and complaint. The Lord was being very clear in the Sermon on the Mount that there is a remedy against this creeping bitterness that would attempt to prevail in our lives; mourning or weeping. To mourn or to weep goes entirely against the entertainment mindset that has developed in our culture. Our society has built into its mentality that we are never to even consider letting our tears and painful experiences of life be acknowledged and dealt with. But the Lord in His grace and providence chose to show these early followers that there is great benefit in mourning over the right things. A saint of God can mourn over some things that will lead to a greater path of service.

Mourning over sin because it is a disgrace to God.

Mourning over the prevalence of sin in the world.

Mourning over the imperfections that are found in the church.

Mourning over our own spiritual immaturity.

Mourning over the slow progress that church often makes in the lives of believers.

Mourning over the persecution of Christian brothers and sisters around the globe.

Mourning over the distance we feel from the Lord at times.

Mourning over spiritual failure that leads us to weep bitterly as Peter did after the betrayal.

Mourning over the tendency of our flesh to be drawn toward carnality.

Tears have a way of cleansing us. Just as Naaman dipped in the Jordan and was cleansed of his leprosy, there are tears of repentance that can lead to a great cleansing of our spirit. Jesus said that the mourners will be comforted. They will

be comforted with an abiding joy that understands clearly that in the end, all matters will be settled by God. This mourning will bring about an undeniable sense of holiness, because it moves us into the presence of the Lord. The real mourning will strengthen a man for strong work in the Kingdom and help him to sustain a great commitment to the spiritual calling he has been called to do.

“The waters (tears) of repentance must not overflow in the morning, at the first hearing of the Gospel; and at mid-day, in the midst of health and prosperity, grow cold and be ready to freeze. It must be a daily weeping, a daily mourning.”

– Thomas Watson

“The world is mistaken in accounting the jocund (cheerful, lighthearted) and merry companions the only happy men; their mirth is madness, and the their joy will be like the cracking of thorns under a pot: but those who are rather the happy men, who mourn; yea, such are most certainly happy, who mourn out of duty in the sense of their own sins, or of the sins of others, or who mourn out of choice rather to suffer afflictions and persecutions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season.” – Matthew Poole

It is a blessed man who can mourn! One thing that is continually brought to us in Sermon on the Mount will be when we understand that Kingdom principles are in total reverse of the principles we see in the world. This idea of mourning is evidence of that. The hurt of life ought to make us more intent and focused toward attaining heaven where every tear will be wiped away (Rev. 21:4-5). Weeping and mourning is a gift from God. If the pain of life is not released from our heart, we will be captured by bitterness. David cries that his tears literally have become his food of existence (Psalm 42:1-5). Paul was no stranger to tears and he noted that Timothy had to endure the pain of ministry also (2 Timothy 1:4). All ministers have discouragement and defeat to pull at them on a regular basis. Paul mixed his preaching of warning with tears (Acts 20:31) for a period of three years. Jeremiah understood the downward tug of weeping (Jeremiah 9:1). In fact, Scripture is full of examples of men and women who found that weeping was commonplace in the path of life (Mark 9:24; Psalms 126:5; Luke 7:37; John 11:35; Ecclesiastes 3:4).

One of the most positive aspects of sorrow to come to a saint of God is that which promotes repentance. Godly sorrow leads to repentance. This is the kind of

mourning that Jesus was speaking of. Godly sorrow will lead to great comfort in your life. A man is blessed when he is convicted of his sin. Our entrance into the kingdom of God comes with a sense of spiritual bankruptcy.

2 Corinthians 7:10-11 (KJV)

10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. **11** For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Those who mourn over their sin will be the ones who are blessed and comforted. If a saint tries to hide his sins in his life, there will be a removal of the blessing of God. The Bible encourages great mourning in our lives over the presence of sin and it should go against everything in us to cover sin. We live in a day which wants to make church “fun” and entertaining but first and foremost, the house of God is a place of weeping. Ezekiel 21:10 asks a rhetorical question when he states that in the presence of the attack of the sword, you want a man to “make mirth?” Ezekiel could not do it; he could not be happy when he was aware of the coming judgment. If you ever wonder why there is a sobriety about men who are serious about the work of God, it is because they know too much. We ought not to laugh at evil and take it in a light manner. To laugh at what the world calls entertainment should make something turn over in our souls. The church that falls into this trap has a very defective doctrine of sin.

In contrast, there is a kind of weeping that is inappropriate. An example of this is found in 1 Kings 21 where the story is told of Naboth and his sacred vineyard. He had a vineyard that was part of his heritage and the wicked king Ahab wanted it. He began to mourn over the fact that Naboth would not sell it to him. Before it was over, Jezebel killed Naboth and gave the vineyard to Ahab. David had fallen to the wrong kind of weeping also when he expressed a thought that he wished his soldiers would have died rather than his own rebellious son, Absalom (2 Samuel 19:4-6).

The Right Way to Mourn

Just as there is a wrong way to mourn, there is also a right way to mourn.

2 Corinthians 7:8-11 (KJV)

8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. **9** Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. **10** For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. **11** For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

This is the real work that sorrow would work toward men. Godly sorrow will lead us to repentance, but it also moves us toward great comfort because of the “carefulness” and the “clearing” that Paul noted. The concept of carefulness is the earnest, eager diligence that one has toward the cleansing of the heart and soul. The idea of clearing is that of a plea or an apology. It hints at the fact that because of repentance there is now a defense the soul has in place against what will take place in the future. Repentance moves our defense against sin and helps us to live out Romans 6 in the continued striving to kill the old man that periodically rises from within.

Godly sorrow does more than just wound the conscience. It will aid the spiritual will of a man to fight against the carnal nature of the flesh. The battle will be fought at every point in the mind, but the spiritual man gives in to the godly sorrow and it works toward repentance which is the about face of sinful behavior and activities.

If proper repentance is not embraced there are four traps that a saint of God can fall into:

Become a hypocrite and continue to live a life of sin. This can sometimes come in the form of hidden, secret, or private sin. As he lives with his sin, he continues to

hold to religious activities and appearances, but he becomes a hypocrite and lives as a Pharisee. The outside is good, but the inside is rotten.

Become caught up in efforts to change through behavior modification and will power. This will lead one down a path of self-righteousness.

Fall into a state of great despair and follow through the steps that Judas took. One may not actually commit physical suicide, but they can commit spiritual suicide.

Repent and be saved as the prodigal son did.

Repentance is always at the foundation of salvation. There is great mourning and the desire to turn away from our sin. What does this look like? Paul answered that very well in Romans 8:23-26:

Romans 8:23-26 (KJV)

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. **24** For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

The groaning that Paul noted is connected to the mourning that the Lord spoke of in the Beatitudes. In essence, Paul was affirming that he was tired of the battle that was constantly having to be waged in this fallen world. He was mourning as he was waiting for the adoption which would result in the redemption of the body. But there is a human aspect of groaning and there is a divine aspect of groaning. When the Spirit begins to make intercession, there are groaning's in prayer that we do not understand, but we feel a closeness to the Lord when we are involved in it.

There are helpful discipleship practices that can help a saint become a mourner.

Here are some practical ways to help:

Remove the hindrances that cause you to resist the Spirit. There are matters that lead to a hardness of heart such as a love of sin, despair (“God can’t forgive me of this!” Jer. 18:12), pride (“I’m not that bad!”), presumptuous sin which is embracing a cheap grace (“This isn’t so bad!” Isaiah 55:7), procrastination (“Not now, maybe later in my life!” James 4:14), and laughing at sin (Amos 6:5; Job 30:31).

Do a topical study on sin. Look at what God ultimately does to a person who refuses to give up their sinful ways.

Pray for a contrite heart. Hard preaching creates soft hearts and soft preaching creates hard hearts. Let the Word do its work of cultivation and then instead of justification for the actions, turn to God in repentance.

A true mourner can be easily identified by his reaction to sin. If it makes us grieve we know this is a positive step toward becoming spiritually mature. We also can understand a greater spiritual maturity when we mourn over the sin of others. Jeremiah mourned for his people (Jer. 9:1; 13:17).

The Result of Mourning—Comfort

Jesus gave a promise to those who were engaged in mourning. He said they would be comforted. The only real work of comfort comes about through the work of the Holy Ghost (2 Corinthians 1:3). There is also a comfort that comes from the Word of God (Romans 15:4). All through the Bible there are men and women who were comforted by the people of God who were around them to help them through the deepest moments of sorrow. Therefore, we are comforted by the Spirit, by the Word, and by the fellowship of other believers.

One aspect of comfort that takes place is the healing of wounds that sin has placed on the life of the converted. The blood of Jesus Christ will prevail against every wound that sin has ever inflicted on a person. There can be a complete healing in the mind and this comes as a result of the mourning over the condition of man.

Another aspect of the comfort comes from knowing the truth and allowing it to settle down into the heart. As the song goes, “When I think about the Lord, how

He saved me, how He raised me, how He filled me with the Holy Ghost..." The truth ought to be greatly treasured and held up in our lives. It is only when we can acknowledge the power of truth in our lives that we will be set free from the constraints that time places on us. We are eternal beings, but the aspect of salvation is only fully grasped when we embrace the comfort of the truth.

We find comfort by the convicting voice of the Spirit who warns, rebukes, and admonishes the true child of God. The Spirit is the warning system against the influx of the world and we should be very much encouraged when the Spirit speaks expressly to us concerning the direction of our walk.