

Blessed are Those who Mourn

Mt 5:4

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. A woman lost her young daughter to a brain tumor.
 - 1. She wrote a letter describing her grief.
 - 2. In that letter she says, “I can hardly bear [my grief] sometimes. My most recent wave of grief came last year before her sixteenth birthday. As the day approached, I found myself brooding over all the things that she would never be able to do. What did I do? What I’ve learned to do again & again: I did what I believe is the only thing to do to conquer grief, and that is to embrace it . . . I cried & cried & cried, and faced the truth of my grief head on.”
- B. As a preacher, I have been around grief a great deal.
 - 1. I never will forget the first time I watched someone die—I couldn’t sleep that night.
 - 2. I will also never forget the day that I faced personal grief for the first time, the day that my mother’s father died.
 - a. Nanny & Pappaw had been keeping RJ since Tammy first went back to work after he was born. But, during that entire time, Pappaw had been struggling greatly with cancer.
 - b. Mom called the day before Pappaw died & said, “Justin, tell Tammy not to bring RJ by this morning & you probably want to get here fairly soon.”
 - c. I threw on some clothes & got there as quickly as I could and sat with my family that entire day.
 - d. Late that night, Mom finally convinced me to go home & get some sleep.
 - 1) The next morning, I got up & ran back to the house.
 - 2) There were a multitude of cars in the driveway, in the yard, & along the road.
 - 3. As I got out of the car that morning, there was one passage of Scripture that popped into my head: “It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting” (Eccl 7:2).
 - a. There are times when mourning is far more appropriate than feasting.
 - b. Eccl 3:4.
 - c. “I walked a mile with Pleasure, / She chattered all the way, / But left me none the wiser / For all she had to say. / I walked a mile with Sorrow, / And ne’er a word said she, / But, oh, the things I learned from her / When Sorrow walked with me!”
- C. The philosophy of the world encourages us to get all the pleasure we can out of life.
 - 1. “Laugh and the world laughs with you; weep and you weep alone.”
 - 2. This morning, we need to examine a beatitude that contradicts this worldly thinking.
- D. “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Mt 5:4).
 - 1. The Greek term here portrays mourning of the most acute kind.
 - a. The term was used in classical Greek to mean “to bewail, to lament, to mourn for.”
 - b. This is the term most commonly used to refer to mourning for the dead.
 - 1) This is the term used in the LXX for the reaction of Jacob when he believed Joseph had died.
 - a) “Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days” (Gn 37:34).
 - b) The Greek-speaking Jews 150 years or so before Jesus used this word to describe the deep grief Jacob felt for Joseph.
 - 2) The point is that this sorrow is intense & poignant.
 - 2. This morning, let’s think about the blessing of mourning.

II. THOSE WHO MOURN.

- A. There are some mourners who are not blessed.
 - 1. The pessimists who continually whine & murmur are not blessed.
 - a. These individuals live for self-pity.
 - b. They dramatize their sorrow & get a kick out of receiving sympathy from others.
 - 2. Those who mourn because of injured pride are not blessed.
 - a. These are the egotists who feel no sorrow or pity for those who do the wrong.

- b. They only have self-pity because their pride has been harmed.
 - c. These men fly into a tearful rage & go on temper tantrums every time their pride is not respected.
3. Those who mourn over material loss & frustrated ambition are not blessed.
 - a. These individuals depend upon the things & circumstances in the world to make them happy; they feel regret & sorrow when they suffer loss or frustrated ambition.
 - b. The Christian whose life is hidden with Christ does not feel particular sorrow because of any material loss or because his well-laid plans go awry.
 4. Those who mourn in view of the effects & consequences of their sins are not blessed.
 - a. Those who mourn because they endure the consequences of sin do not hate the evil but only its effects.
 - b. These are like the child who cries when he is spanked—he doesn't hate what he just did but only its painful consequences.
 - c. Judas was an individual like this.
 - 1) He could have repented of betraying Jesus just like Peter did.
 - 2) But, he didn't like the consequences of his sin & so he went and hanged himself.
 - d. 2 Cor 7:10.
 - 1) The sorrow of the world is being sorry that you must pay the consequences of your actions.
 - 2) This kind of sorrow brings death.
- B. There are mourners who shall be blessed:
1. Those who mourn over the sins of others shall be blessed.
 - a. Lk 19:41.
 - 1) Jesus fully knew the consequences of living in sin.
 - 2) Therefore, he wept for those living in sin.
 - b. God surely mourns over those who sin.
 - 1) Gn 6:6.
 - a) The fact that individuals were living in sin broke God's heart.
 - b) My friend, if you are living in sin, you are breaking the heart of God Almighty!
 - 2) God desires that everyone be saved.
 - a) 2 Pt 3:9.
 - b) it must break God's heart to know that not everyone will be blessed.
 2. Those who mourn over their own sins are blessed.
 - a. Those who mourn over their own sins mourn because they are poor in spirit.
 - b. Mourning over our sins leads us to repentance—2 Cor 7:10.
 - c. The Bible contains examples of those who mourned over their own sins.
 - 1) The prodigal son grieved over his sins. READ Lk 15:11-19.
 - a) He squandered his father's inheritance, but he came to his senses & returned to his father.
 - b) He told his father, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son" (v 21).
 - c) This son knew he had sinned & made his wrongs right.
 - 2) Peter grieved when he denied the Lord.
 - a) When Peter realized he had denied the Lord, he "went out and wept bitterly" (Lk 22:62).
 - b) Peter experienced heartbreak because he had sinned.
 - d. We have every reason to mourn over our sins.
 - 1) Our sins caused Jesus' death.
 - a) Jesus died for our sins.
 - i. Jesus "is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn 2:1).
 - ii. "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rm 5:8).
 - b) Had we never sinned, Jesus would never have had to be beaten, be spat upon, hang at Golgotha struggling for every breath! Yet, because we are sinful, Jesus had to offer himself for our sins.
 - c) Rembrandt was a genius who often did self-portraits.

- i. Undoubtedly, the most amazing self-portrait Rembrandt did was one of Jesus' crucifixion—in that painting, he painted himself as one of the crucifiers.
- ii. Rembrandt understood that he shared responsibility for Jesus' death. He mourned over his sins. Do we mourn over our sins?

III. THOSE WHO MOURN SHALL BE COMFORTED.

- A. The comfort given here comes from God.
 1. God is the God of all comfort (2 Cor 1:3).
 2. Part of Jesus' mission in coming to earth was "to bind up the brokenhearted" (Is 61:1).
 3. God is near to those who have a broken heart (Ps 34:18).
- B. The comfort promised in this second beatitude is not mere theory but it is a profound reality in the experience of every faithful Christian. How does God comfort those who mourn?
 1. He comforts with an ennobling of character.
 - a. The grief we have over our sins brings us into closer union with Christ.
 - b. To feel sorrow over the things for which Christ felt sorrow can only make us more like him.
 - c. Paul wanted to have fellowship in the sufferings of Christ (Phil 3:10); when we grieve over sin, we have part of such fellowship.
 2. We receive comfort from others.
 - a. Christians are to weep with those who weep (Rm 12:15).
 - b. As we mourn over our sins, we receive the comfort of our fellow Christians.
 3. We receive divine forgiveness.
 - a. The one who truly mourns for his sins will repent of them & turn to God.
 - b. Genuine sorrow over sin leads us to repentance (2 Cor 7:10).
 - c. There is no greater joy than knowing that our sins are forgiven!
 - 1) Jesus told his disciples not to rejoice that the demons were subject to them but to rejoice that their names were written in heaven (Lk 10:20).
 - 2) "Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Ps 32:1).
 4. We also have the comfort of heaven.
 - a. it is in heaven that the Christian mourner will be comforted in the fullest sense.
 - b. Heaven is a place of comfort.
 - 1) "Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy!" (Ps 126:5).
 - 2) "I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow" (Jer 31:13).
 - 3) "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rv 7:17).
 - 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" (Rv 21:4).

IV. CONCLUSION.

- A. Do you truly mourn over your sins? Has God comforted you with forgiveness?
- B. If you need to have God's forgiveness, we invite you to come as we stand & sing.