

PP The King and His Kingdom

Part 4-Matthew 5:4 *Those who mourn*

2/18-19/2017

Illus In the book *Stories for the Journey*, William R. White tells about a European seminary professor named Hans, whose wife Enid passed away. Hans was so overcome with sorrow that he lost his appetite and didn't want to leave the house. Concerned for him, the seminary president paid him a visit, along with three other colleagues, and the grieving professor confessed that he was struggling with doubt. "I am no longer able to pray to God," Hans admitted. "In fact, I am not certain I believe in God anymore." After a moment of silence, the seminary president said, "Then we will believe for you. We will pray for you." The four men met daily for prayer, asking God to restore the gift of faith to their friend. Some months later, as the four friends gathered for prayer with Hans, he smiled and said, "*It is no longer necessary for you to pray for me, today I would like you to pray with me.*"

Friends, have you often considered that we never see our Lord and Savior laughing?

There was a prophecy about Him in **Isaiah 53:3**

PP "*He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*"

We do not see Jesus laughing, but often we see Him weeping: over the death of His friend Lazarus; over the spiritual hardness of heart of those in Jerusalem

The second beatitude that Jesus gives is about mourning and grief and it necessarily, rightly follows being '*poor in spirit*', a recognition of total spiritual poverty

This is how one must gain entrance into the kingdom of God, that no self-righteousness in us can purchase for us salvation

We come to Christ for salvation only with empty hands, pleading for His mercy and grace And when we enter the kingdom of heaven, we should never lose that sense, knowing that

"nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh" Romans 7:18

But where spiritual poverty leads it given in the next beatitude

***"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted"* Matthew 5:4**

PP 1-What is the mourning that Jesus means?

***"Blessed are those who mourn..."* Matthew 5:4a**

There seems to be nothing remotely related to a blessing in the word mourning

Blessed, or divinely joyful, are those who mourn--seems an oxymoron, a contradiction

So to begin, we need to understand what it means to '*mourn*'

Life is hard, and it can erupt in suffering and sorrow in an instant!

Suffering is so common with life in this fallen world, that nine different Greek words are used in the NT to speak of sorrow

We all suffer from one degree or another

And suffering is no respecter of persons as both the righteous and the unrighteous experience it

There is a broad range of types of mourning, and not all of them are intended by Jesus here, nor certainly are all of them comforted

God doesn't comfort the criminal who mourns that he was caught, not the corrupt politician that lost his or her seat of power

The Greek language has nine words for '**mourn**', and this one is the strongest and most severe. It describes mourning, grief, sorrow that pierces the heart, usually used in connection with death. It is Jacob's grief when he thought his son Joseph had been killed by wild animals. It was used for the disciples' mourning between Christ's death and resurrection. It is the sorrow of businessmen during the tribulation over the death of world-wide commerce. There is nothing sentimental or gentle in it, it is not the sorrow of missing the good ol' days. It is not the grief of missing a loved one, or your sports team losing the championship. This is a mourning that rips the very fabric of one's soul.

Yet the word '**mourn**' is broader than we might at first think:

PP i. *There is a mourning that happens when we personally suffering*

The pages of the bible are littered with tears of sorrow, including those of our Lord and Savior

PP There is an Arab saying that goes like this: '*All sunshine makes a desert*'

Times of perpetual ease do not make a strong Christian

Elgar the great musician once made some comments of a young girl who was singing who had a beautiful voice and a nearly flawless technique: '*She will be great when something happens to break her heart.*'

It is in sorrow that we discover the things that matter, getting us to the true blessings of life

In sorrow we discover the meaning of friendship and meaning of love

It's in sorrow that we discover whether our faith is merely superficial or essential

Life can be terribly hard and for Christians whom God has called to suffer, He will bring comfort

PP ii. *There is a mourning that happens when you see the world's injustice*

There ought to be in all Christians, an eruption of concern and grief when Christians are

massacred, when unborn babies are killed, when women are sold into the sex trade

We should have the heart of Jesus and shed tears when we see our nation rejecting salvation in the Son of God

Our hearts should ache and mourn as people are oppressed and exploited

Christians, of all people, should be concerned with the state of our society and not only our country but what is happening over the whole world

Those that mourn over injustice are driven to spend their lives in service of the vulnerable

These impassioned Christians will one day be comforted as the God of justice breaks out on evil

As true as these first two examples of are, they are not yet the mourning of this beatitude

PP iii. *There is a mourning that happens when a Christian sees their sins*

Here is the only right response to the first beatitude...spiritual poverty

When God shows us our sin, the response must be godly sorrow and mourning

The one who will be saved must first cry out with the Apostle Paul, "**Wretched man that I am!**

PP *Who will deliver me from this body of death?" Romans 7:24*

And immediately, that heart of spiritual poverty and mourning is comforted by the God of

PP grace: *Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Romans 7:25a*

And to grow in our Christian walk is to also grow in awareness and hatred of our sin
Take the Apostle Paul for instance, whose letter to the Galatians was his first he wrote, who in the opening greeting refers to himself as an *'apostle'*, laying claim to the highest office

PP 7 years later he writes to the Corinthians, and he writes, ***"For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle"*** 1 Corinthians 15:9

PP Another 8 years goes by when he writes to the Ephesians, ***"I am less than the least of all the saints"*** 3:8

PP But listen to how he sees himself as he awaits death, ***"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost."*** 1 Timothy 1:15

The longer we walk with Jesus and the nearer we come Him, we are bound to see more clearly the standard of perfection in Christ which brings our lives into comparison

Along with it, the more we know Jesus, the more we will realize the cost of our own sin that Jesus had to die to save us

PP You should know that the word *'mourn'* is in a Greek tense that means continuous action
We must be reawakened every day to a deep sorrow over our sin

Godly sorrow is a gift of grace...how blessed we are when God's Spirit wakes us up to our sinfulness and the sacrifice of Jesus...and when we mourn, God never leaves us there

Godly sorrow is that sorrow that drives you to Jesus Christ where we fall at His feet pleading with our hands out toward His willing mercy

PP 2-When we mourn over our sin, we will be comforted

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Matthew 5:4

It is not the mourning that blesses us, but the comfort God gives those who mourn over sin

Have you ever experienced the truth that sin and divine joy are totally incompatible?

Only those who mourn over their sin can be have this joy of blessedness, simply because it is only they who experience forgiveness

There are those who see their sinfulness and respond in despair and carry out their own judgment in self-loathing and despair

I have a friend miserably sinning himself to death, not believing that God could forgive him

For every person who sees their spiritual poverty, and their heart is torn in grief over it, God promises comfort that only He can give

And what a comfort it is, one that will be well worth our understanding

This word does translate to comfort, but rarely, and it has a broad range of meaning

In noun form, *'comforter'* is the word for both Jesus and the Holy Spirit, meaning *Helper*

PP ***"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever"***
John 14:16

But the word has more meanings and they fill out the beauty of what Christ says in this beatitude

PP *The Greeks used this word to invite someone to a banquet, and it provides the great picture of those who mourn over their sin God will never treat as a criminal

He trusts that person again, inviting him or her to again be His witness among people, trusting His reputation to that mourner, confident His grace can turn defeat into victory

PP *Even more, the word was for troops cheering each other as they entered into battle

PP *For Aristotle, he used the word to stimulate and energize the mind or motivate a person

PP *And finally, the word was commonly used for blowing on a spark until it burst into a flame Altogether, the word's wide use shows the greatness of the forgiveness and comfort of God Only the Christian can mourn over sin and through the Holy Spirit see Jesus Christ our advocate, reminding us of His love and forgiveness and help

When we go to God with godly sorrow, not only are we assured of the joy of having our sins forgiven and forgotten, but our hearts are filled with courage, our minds stimulated to new and right thoughts, and our flickering, struggling faith is fanned to a flame

Some have mistaken '*shall be comforted*' as only taking place at the end of their lives

It is true that final, eternal comfort will be given to believers when they see Jesus face to face

But each time the gospel brings us to spiritual poverty, and we see our sin, and mourn, we will comforted in the forgiveness of Christ

King David was one well acquainted with the comfort that comes to those who mourn over their

PP sin: *"Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice."*

Psalms 51:8

PP In **Psalm 30:11-12** he wrote, *"You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!"*

PP *"Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning."* **Psalm 30:5b**

PP 3-Seven evidences of godly mourning

I know of no clearer scripture to help us understand what godly mourning and sorrow looks like than **2 Corinthians 7:10-11**

PP *"For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death."* **2 Corinthians 7:10**

Paul captured the church at Corinth's mourning, yet it applies equally to the repentant sinner

PP *"For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter."* **2 Corinthians 7:11**

I do need to stop for a moment and tell you that the words '*For see*', or '*Behold*' in some of your bibles, is akin to '*Holy smokes*', or '*Wow!*'; it is a term of exhilaration

Titus is telling him what is happening in the Corinthian church, and Paul is absolutely thrilled!

PP i. *"For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you"*-means to make sober haste to make the changes necessary

There is no need to consider or think on it, the mourning, repentant Christian immediately acts and pursues righteousness no matter what

PP ii. *"but also what eagerness to clear yourselves"*-it is the priority to clear your name and to prove you are no longer who you were, that you've distanced yourself from that sin

PP iii. *"what indignation"*-this is in a word, anger...anger and hatred at the sin you committed, the shame you brought on yourself and the damage it caused to others

It is not anger that you were caught, and your sin exposed...it is anger directed at yourself for sinning in the first place

PP iv. *“what fear”*-What realization that our sin was ultimately against God, and our once flippant attitude has turned to reverence

The result will be a heart of renewed worship seen in lifting up God and His holiness

PP v. *“what longing”*-It is the overwhelming desire to see the relationship that sin broke, restored

That there would be nothing that lies between you and another, either a person or God

PP vi. *“what zeal”*-It is an intense love and when it is for God, it is a hatred of anything that dishonors His name, a renewed honoring and protecting of God’s reputation, intensely wanting to do nothing that would tarnish the glory of God

PP vii. *“what punishment”*-When godly mourning is real, it will in the end seek justice, deal with it rightly, and the person will no longer protect him or herself, accepting whatever might come

Paul ends by saying that all seven of these must be present in godly sorrow, and when they are, it will lead to comfort and the state of being blessed

PP The Second Beatitude is this: *What divine joy and perfect happiness is possessed by those whose see their sin and grieve deeply and confess, for they shall have their sins forgiven and forgotten, their hearts will fill with courage and minds with new and right thoughts, and their faith will be fanned to a flame*

Amen?

Pray