

Matthew 5:4 The 'Be' Attitudes "Blessed Are Those Who Mourn"

8.23.15

#4 Verse of the Month:

Ephesians 4:29

29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Turn in your Bibles this morning to Matthew, chapter 5.

Last week we began our study of what are called the Beatitudes in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. We have chosen to call these 9 wonderful truths the "BE-Attitudes." Last week we saw the first one... Look at verse 3 with me...

Matthew 5:3

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Now do you remember what the word "blessed" means? The Greek word is:

Blessed (Makarios):

bestowed with divine happiness or joy; perfect bliss

Remember, divine happiness is "Bestowed" or "Given" to you by God. It's not something that comes from within you or because of your outside circumstances. It's an inner satisfaction and sufficiency that doesn't come from you...but comes from God.

We learned last week that being poor in spirit is THE fundamental, most basic characteristic of being a Christian. Why? Because it is the very first thing that must happen in the life of any person who desires to enter the Kingdom of God... Nobody has ever entered God's kingdom without first humbling themselves and swallowing their pride. Literally, "being poor in spirit" is the doorway to the kingdom of God and it is a very low door in which people must come...you enter via a crawl. Remember this image...



Jesus taught on that mountainside WHAT every person must understand in order to follow Him: **You must die to yourself and you can't do that until you humble yourself.** Being poor in spirit literally means you realize you are *incapable of saving yourself*. You understand you can't be filled until you're empty of yourself...and that looks something like this...



You are reduced to begging... You have no resources in yourself...to help

yourself. You are totally dependent on somebody else to help you. You are poor:

Poor (ptōchos) Toe-KASS. The “p” is silent:
reduced to beggary, begging, asking alms; helpless, powerless

To enter the kingdom of God you must be TOE-KASS. You come as someone who is desperately ashamed, and the only way they can survive is to plead for grace and mercy from somebody who might come along and help you. Matthew Henry describes being “poor in spirit” this way...

“The foundation of all other graces is laid in humility. Those who would build high must begin low. God’s mourners are those who live a life of repentance, who lament the corruption of their nature.” Matthew Henry, Bible Commentator

When you humble yourself in this way, do you know what your natural response will be? You will mourn. You will mourn about your sin. Look at verse 4...

Matthew 5:4

4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

In the NT there are 9 different Greek words used to speak of “mourning or grief.” The one used here is the strongest of the nine. This one is the most severe, because it speaks of the “mourning of death.” In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT), it is used to speak of Jacob’s grief when he believed his son Joseph had been slaughtered by a lion in Genesis 37.

It is used in Mark’s Gospel to describe the grief of the disciples after Jesus’ death. Mark describes what Mary Magdalene saw when she went to the upper room in Mark 16:10.

Mark 16:10

10 She went and told those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

It literally means to wail over the death of someone who is greatly beloved. You know how this feels. It’s awful. Death is horrible. It brings tremendous pain and suffering. And buckets of tears...

By the way, did you know that the ability to cry is a gift of God?



If we didn’t cry, the pain and the anxiety inside of us would poison our entire emotional system. If we couldn’t release the pain and the sorrow through tears...(almost like a pressure valve), we would explode! Tears are a gift from God and they help the healing process. The Bible says there is a time for tears.

Ecclesiastes 3:4

4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

In the pages of the Bible we find details about all kinds of mourning. We find mourning that comes from the death of a loved (as we have described), loneliness, discontent, defeat, and even over our

sin.

Now church family, if you and I want to see the raw emotion of tremendous mourning in all kinds of circumstances, we need to look no further than David. All through the Psalms David shares gut-wrenching grief about many things. Remember the grief and mourning over the loss of his son born to Bathsheba?

Remember the grief and anguish over the fact that his son Absalom was trying to take the kingdom from him and would ultimately be killed when he got his long hair tangled in the limb of an oak tree and was thrust through with 3 spear by David's commanding General Joab! Oh what anguish and mourning David experienced.

2 Samuel 18:33

33 And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Can you feel the mourning and the pain?

The Bible describes the mourning and weeping over a nation as the prophet Jeremiah experienced. Jeremiah, the prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah preached with tears to a nation that wouldn't listen. This is chronicled in chapter 9 of his book...

Jeremiah 9:1-3

1 Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! **2** Oh that I had in the desert a travelers' lodging place, that I might leave my people and go away from them! For they are all adulterers, a company of treacherous men. **3** They bend their tongue like a bow; falsehood and not truth has grown strong in the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know me, declares the Lord.

Oh that sounds so much like America today and I grieve and I mourn and I pray for our country. Do you? Most don't. We just want to know what's for dinner.

The Bible describes in Acts chapter 20 how the apostle Paul met with the Ephesian elders and Paul wept because he knew the church would give in to false teaching...

Acts 20:29-31

29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; **30** and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. **31** Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.

We know Jesus wept over Jerusalem. He knew most of the Jews would not receive Him and it broke His heart...

Luke 19:41

41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it.

The Bible is full of anguish and mourning. It describes mourning over disappointment and

discouragement, mourning over loneliness and unmet expectations... Mourning is a part of life...a very real...often times very, very painful part of life.

Yet, Jesus in His teaching on that mountainside taught that mourning can be a good thing. See it again...

Matthew 5:4

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

Now I want you to think back with me to last week. Remember how we talked about there is a progression in these BE-Attitudes? It's like climbing a mountain. In order to come into the kingdom, you must first humble yourself and realize that you are a beggar...



...and you need a Savior. And here's the thing...when you see yourself as TOE-KASS...as a beggar because of your sin, it will lead you to mourn. It will bring you to anguish over your sin because there is nothing you can do to deliver yourself from your absolute destitute condition. This understanding will invariably bring you to a place of mourning because of the fact that you KNOW you are 100% hopeless, helpless and doomed as a sinner.

Turn in your Bibles to Luke, chapter 7. I want to illustrate this to you.

Let me set the scene. Jesus has been asked by a Pharisee to have a meal with him at his home and a bunch of other Pharisees are there and while they are having the meal, a prostitute walks in...

Luke 7:36-50

36 One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. **37** And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, **38** and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. **39** Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." **40** And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." **41** "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. **42** When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" **43** Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." **44** Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. **45** You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. **46** You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. **47** Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." **48** And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." **49** Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" **50** And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go

in peace.”

Why was the prostitute crying? She was broken over her sin. She was mourning and it brought tears of anguish...but, it did more than just cause tears. Her mourning brought her to the place of action! It brought her to the place of repentance that moved her. So, she humbled herself. She was toe-kass. See that?



She became poor in spirit and that led her to mourning over her sins and Jesus comforted her and she got heaven to boot!

The prophet Isaiah described what I believe was the condition of this woman's heart. He does so in Isaiah 66 by first describing how powerful God is...watch...

Isaiah 66:1-2

1 Thus says the Lord: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? **2** All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

Hey church family, do you know what we have done to Christianity in America? **We've taken away the mourning.** We no longer mourn over our sin, we excuse it...we justify it and even glorify it by no longer even calling it sin. And this mindset is destroying the church and it is destroying our nation at its very foundation.

But, the same thing was happening in the 1st century. **Turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians 5.**

Paul has to write to the church about gross sexual sin. The sad thing is the fact that the church at Corinth had totally accepted and was even proud of this sexual sin.

1 Corinthians 5:1-2

1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. **2** And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.

The Corinthians weren't broken over their sin. They weren't mourning about it. They were proud of it! They glorified the sin! They elevated it and THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE DOING IN AMERICA TODAY! We are glorifying such deviant sin that we give people awards for such deviance and call it courage! That's not courageous. It's sin and if we really and truly loved people like we say we do, then we would have the courage to tell them. We'd have the courage in love to tell them, “You are lost and your sins are many and you need to realize what I had to realize that we are nothing but beggars who are broken and we need Jesus. And we'll tell them they need to come like her...



We need to come with a broken heart, mourning over our sin. She was a prostitute, entangled in sexual sin and Jesus refused to leave her in that sin!

Can I tell you something? The Corinthian church never learned! Paul had to write a second letter to them and near the end of that second letter he said this:

2 Corinthians 12:21

21 I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced.

Listen, if you are broken over your sin, you've got a shot at the kingdom and coming to Christ. But, if you aren't, you will likely remain in your sin while everyone pats you on the back and tells you how good you are.

Jesus' half-brother James was inspired by the Spirit of God to write these words:

James 4:8-10

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.

James was simply parroting what His older brother had taught on that mountain. The BE-Attitude of mourning. You see, if you want to be exalted...you must humble yourself...AND DO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE RESULT?

COMFORT!! The result of mourning is that you're going to get comfort!! See it...

Matthew 5:4

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

The word comfort is: parakaleo in the Greek and it means this...



It means to come alongside and helps someone who for all intents and purposes is helpless. And who is it that comes alongside to help us?

Jesus! Jesus brings comfort.

Remember what Jesus said in the synagogue in Nazareth in Luke 4?

Luke 4:18

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.

Guess what the word for "poor" is used there? Yep, you guessed it: TOE-KASS (ptochos).

Listen, when you get to the place that you know you can do nothing about your sin and you realize you are totally helpless, it will lead you to mourning...to crying out for help! It will lead you to the realization that are broken and doomed and when that takes place...you are finally ready to call out to Jesus. And He'll come...He'll parakeleo and comfort you! Jesus said:

Matthew 11:28

28 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. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

I close this morning with this...

Perhaps you're here today and you need comforting? Maybe you are going through some really, really hard times. Maybe it's been a death in the family. Maybe it's your health? Maybe it's financial. Maybe you're broken over this country (we're upside down). Maybe you are mourning a broken relationship. Maybe you are emotionally rung out. You're broken!

Do you know what David said?

Psalms 126:5

Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy!

That's comfort! And one day (thanks be to God!) there will be no more mourning, there will be no more crying...there'll be no more tears, for...

Revelation 21:4

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."

Listen...you will never know the joy of that moment, if you don't know Jesus as Lord.

There is no comfort... no real comfort...apart from Jesus.

My prayer today is that you will come to the place where your heart will sing no other name but Jesus. I pray you will come to the place where you'll run into His arms and realize He's more than enough. For if you will be comforted!