

MOURNING OUR POVERTY

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”
—MATTHEW 5:4

When Jesus talks about mourning in the beatitudes, He is not talking about death and funerals, but rather linking it with what has gone before. When we recognize and face our poverty of spirit, we can do one of two things: we can hide it and pretend it does not exist, or we can face it honestly and mourn it.

To mourn our poverty of spirit is repentance. Repentance is not simply being sorry for what we do, but it is recognizing that the cause of what we do is what we are. We are sinners, not because we sin, but because that is our inherent nature. When we were born, God did not look down from heaven and say, “That’s a cute little baby there. I hope I can keep that one.” And then one day, we sin and God says, “Oh, no! Not another one gone.” All God expects of us is failure, because the natural condition of our hearts is corrupt and therefore, we sin.

Paul wrote about himself, “We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin” (Romans 7:14). He is describing himself apart from God, and what we are like in our natural selves. Our natures are inherently corrupt and we do not grow out of this state. That is why we need to face and mourn our poverty of spirit. Repentance is not a one time act, but an ongoing attitude and disposition of heart; a change of mind in turning from

the things which are not of God to the things of God. It is turning from dependence upon ourselves to dependence on God, and operating not in our strength, but in His strength. It is turning from living our way to living God's way.

When we acknowledge our poverty of spirit and mourn it, the wonderful thing is that we are not criticized, humiliated or condemned because of it, but in response, God forgives, cleanses and sends His Holy Spirit, "the Comforter" as Jesus called Him. The Comforter is the antidote to our poverty of spirit and He comes to indwell us, so that He can replace the corruptness of our hearts with the righteousness of Christ.

I would suggest that the measure of our repentance that will mark the measure of the Holy Spirit's working in our lives. And the Holy Spirit's task is to replace our poverty with the riches of Jesus Christ, our weaknesses for His strength and our defeat for His victory. The Comforter is the presence of Christ within us and that is incredibly comforting!

PRAYER: Dear Lord, help me to live every day in repentance and to be totally dependent upon You. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I living in day to day repentance?