



THE BEATITUDES
Mourn To Be Happy
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January 10, 2021

The Crossing Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING

This week we are continuing our study called **Different Than Last Time**. Over the next few weeks we are walking through the most counterintuitive statements of all time: **The Beatitudes**. These come at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' most famous teaching, and each Beatitude begins with the word "**BLESSED**" (happy or fortunate). Here we see the portrait of a Christian disciple pleasing to God and we are challenged by the words and wisdom of Jesus

SCRIPTURE¹

Matthew 5:1-10 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and he sat down. His disciples came to him and he began to teach them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are *those who mourn* for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Job 1:20-21 Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship. He said, "I came naked from my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I leave. The Lord gave me what I had, and the Lord has taken it away. Praise the name of the Lord!"

Job 42:5 My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

OBSERVATION

The setting for the Sermon on the Mount is a hill near the Sea of Galilee where a church has been built to commemorate Jesus' words. There we find three groups of people who are following Jesus: 1) The Twelve; 2) Other followers who believed in Him and went wherever He went; 3) The hundreds and thousands of people who would come to be healed or to hear Jesus teach. These were not the religious elite. They were not successful or prosperous. They were poor, broken-hearted and suffering outsiders. Jesus told them, "I am the King and am here to bring you a different Kingdom. Now I want to show you the characteristics of the people who are aligned with me."

QUESTION: Who are the people in your life that would be called poor, broken-hearted, suffering and rejected? What can you do to reach out and speak the comfort of God to them?

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture referenced here is NIV

Job's Old Testament book is the oldest in the Bible – from about 2000 B. C. He was happily living the good life - it was comfortable and easy. Job had a wife, plenty of healthy kids, a booming business, wealth, and herds of various animals. In a moment it was all gone. The animals and children were all dead, his wealth was gone, without insurance or government help, his health declined as he was covered in boils, his home had collapsed and all he was left with was his wife who told him to curse God and die. Ironic, right? And his friends asked, "What did you do to deserve this?" Eventually, God provided to him a new abundant life and Job found a new and deeper relationship with Him and, hopefully, a repentant wife!

QUESTION: When have you suffered much grief?

QUESTION: Tell us about a time when God restored you after a very grievous situation.

APPLICATION

Being blessed is not having a new car, a bigger house and a comfortable job. It is living out these Kingdom principles that reflect our King Jesus. And so, we continue our study with the second Beatitude: Blessed are those who mourn. What is mourning? It isn't a common word in our culture and is usually relegated to one activity – when someone dies. "Mourning is defined as the kind of grief which takes such a hold that it cannot be hidden. It is not only the sorrow which brings an ache to the heart; it is the sorrow which brings the unrestrainable tears to the eyes."² Of course, we want to avoid suffering and mourning. We do everything we can to make it go away -- drinking or shopping or working or partying. Most of us want to avoid grief so we push it down and bury our emotions. Anything to get past it. But Jesus says we are blessed when we are so desperately sad – He promises us when we walk through grief we will be comforted.

QUESTION: When have you felt the comforting of God? What form did it take?

God can use times of mourning to help us mature in Him just as He did for Job. Job had many questions but God answered by asking His own questions. "Where were you when I created the world? Did you determine how much water the oceans would hold? Did you make the sun rise? How many snowflakes are scheduled to fall on the earth? How does light travel? Tell Me if you know."³ Don't you think Job was humbled by this? We surely are. Something happened to him through this experience. He went from hearing about God to seeing Him. from knowing about God to knowing Him. The question isn't why we suffer. It is Who can controls our universe. When we mourn we are comforted by God's presence-- the blessing isn't in the mourning – it is in the Comforter. Jesus promises that there is a blessing for us in those moments when life just falls apart – moments of heartbreak, loss and deep disappointment – those moments when it feels like we've come to the end of our rope.

QUESTION: What questions are you asking God? What questions is God asking you? Are you listening?

There are three **QUESTIONS** which will help us to move forward into a new life:

1) What are you mourning? What is breaking your heart today?

2) In what area do you need God's presence today? God wants us to come to Him. Our prayers are heard in heaven as Revelation 8 tells us. So, we need to pray through Scripture for the Armor of God⁴ to protect us and to pray God's promises to us as told throughout Scripture.

3) What truth do you need God to plant in your life? We may be wondering if we will ever be whole again, but God is planting something new. What is that for you? Just as the farmer plows up his field, plants seed, waters the ground -- then he waits. Nothing happens all at once, but eventually new life emerges. This same process is working within us as we mourn.

QUESTION: Consider the parable of the four soils.⁵ Which of them describes the condition of your heart? Is it ready to receive the new life God has prepared for you?

² William Barclay

³ Job 38-39

⁴ Ephesians 6

⁵ Matthew 13:1-8, 18-23

Matthew 5:4 The Message “You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

PRAYER Lord God, plant within us hope and trust and peace and joy because we know Your presence is always with us -- even during our most heart-breaking and desperate times. Forgive us for our never-ending questions and help us to respond with gratitude for Your mercy, compassion and grace. **PRAISE THE NAME OF THE LORD!** In Jesus’ name. Amen.

QUESTIONS

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QUESTION: When have you suffered much grief?

QUESTION: Tell us about a time when God restored you after a very grievous situation.

QUESTION: When have you felt the comforting of God? What form did it take?

QUESTION: What questions are you asking God? What questions is God asking you? Are you listening?

QUESTION: What are you mourning?

QUESTION: In what area do you need God’s presence today?

QUESTION: What truth do you need God to plant in your life?

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