

The Blessing of Mourning

February 26, 2017

I. Introduction

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

A. The blessed know joy even when they don't feel happy.

B. The blessed can live right side up when the world is upside down.

C. To mourn is to have an emotional response to some form of grief. It is sorrow.

- There are many aspects to mourning... not just death.

I. II. The Blessing of Comfort

A. Comfort comes from God.

1. God, the Father, comforts us.

Psalm 51:17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

2. Jesus, the Son, comforts us.

Isaiah 61:1-3 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

3. The Holy Spirit comforts us.

John 14:16 (KJV) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

B. Comfort comes from others.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

1. If you are not mourning, maybe you should be comforting.

- *Sign up to join a Connect Group at The Hub or online at www.toledocalvary.org.*

2. We must be careful not to dismiss or despise those who are mourning.

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.

3. Times of mourning prepare us for times of comforting.

I. III. The Blessing of Mourning

A. What is Mourning?

1. Mourning is humanity's way of dealing with times of loss.

- Mourning is necessary to be functional in a dysfunctional world.

2. Mourning is God's way of healing in times of loss.

- a) Mourning makes room for God to bring healing in seasons of loss.
- b) If you mourn before God, there is comfort.

James 4:8-10 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

- c) You cannot fix what you do not know is broken.

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

B. Reasons to Mourn

1. If you are mourning because of death, there is comfort.

a) Sometimes we grieve with certainty.

- There is a promise of reunion.

2 Samuel 12:23 But now that he is dead, why should I go on fasting? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”

b) Sometimes we grieve with uncertainty.

- We trust that God is righteous.

Deuteronomy 32:4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

- We must trust Him for our own salvation.

2. If you are mourning because of loss, there is comfort.

- Our feelings of loss can be filled with God's promise of hope.

Matthew 7:7-11 “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. “Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

3. If you are mourning because of change, there is comfort.

- Change is unavoidable.
- Change can be favorable.
- Change can be difficult.
- The uncertainty of change breeds the opportunity for worry.

Matthew 6:28-34 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

4. If you are mourning because of hurt, there is comfort.

a) If our hurt does not lead to healing, it may become defining.

- People view life through the filter of their fears and the perspective of their pain.
- Hurt without healing may eventually lead to bitterness and distrust.

b) God’s perfect plan is sometimes damaged by human sin.

- Do not let an unhealthy human experience of yesterday keep you from God’s best for your life today.

Psalm 55:12-14 If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were rising against me, I could hide. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship at the house of God, as we walked about among the worshipers.

- Trust God to know the truth.

Psalm 55:16-18 As for me, I call to God, and the Lord saves me. Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice. He rescues me unharmed from the battle waged against me, even though many oppose me.

- Depend on God to be your defender.

Psalm 55:19 God, who is enthroned from of old, who does not change— he will hear them and humble them, because they have no fear of God.

Let the One who heals you deal with the one who hurt you.

c) You won’t take hold of something healthy until you let go of what is toxic.