



Connect Discussion Guide

06.20.21 Message | Dr. Tom Ewald | Matthew 5:4

Key Scriptures:

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

- Matthew 5:4

“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.”

- Isaiah 53:3

*“Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.”*

- Psalm 118:25–26

“Jesus wept. So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

- John 11:35–37

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

- Luke 19:41

“Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer’s; he makes me tread on my high places.”

- Habakkuk 3:17–19

Message Highlights:

- The paradox we see is that those who are mourning are the ones who are blessed, both because of the comfort they receive and their kingdom membership.
- Jesus is no stranger to grief; we see multiple instances where Jesus grieves, was despised and rejected in the New Testament.
- Life’s failures and disappointments can be our greatest teachers.
- We find comfort by rejoicing in the Lord for what is, not wallowing in what isn’t.

Conversation Starter:

When you've endured seasons of mourning in the past, is your mourning self-led or spirit-led? While grief looks different for everyone, what truths can we all hold fast to?

Discuss the Message:

1. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted, and though we know in our heads that those who mourn are blessed, too often we tend to dissuade one another from sorrow and mourning. Why do you think this is? How can we guard against this tendency, and why is it important that we do?
2. Reflect on the fact that Jesus is referred to as a "man of sorrows". How do you react to the truth that Jesus did not exempt himself from feeling pain, and intimately knows *all* of our sorrows? How does Jesus' sorrow differ from self-pity?
3. In what ways can we draw near to the Lord during seasons of contentment in order to prepare our hearts to receive comfort from the Lord during seasons of mourning and suffering?
4. Although it may be hard to see it in the moment, failure and disappointment are some of the greatest teachers in our life. Looking back, how has this been true in your life?
5. Reread Habakkuk 3:17-19. Tell about a time when you found the strength to "rejoice" and "be joyful" even though your immediate circumstances weren't exactly favorable.

Pray:

Father in Heaven, although we do not like to admit it, we know that failure and disappointment are indeed the greatest teachers in our lives. Help us to embrace mourning, just as Jesus did. We are strengthened as we remember that Jesus himself was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. You did not exempt yourself from feeling the pain of loss and grief that we feel.

We mourn our own brokenness, and the collective brokenness of the world around us. Remind us daily that we are blessed when we mourn because your Spirit comforts us. Help us through your Holy Spirit, our Comforter, to rejoice in all that you have done for us instead of wallowing in what you have chosen not to do. May the sorrows we experience in this life drive us to seek you and to find our true and lasting joy in you alone. May our lives shine bright in a dark world as we place our ultimate hope in your promises. Amen.