

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

Text: Matthew 5:4

INTRO: In order to understand this passage, it is necessary to remember (1) the immediate context, and (2) the overall context of Scripture in general. We will have more to say about these matters as the lesson progresses. And note that the blessedness is not primarily subjective happiness. God has pronounced him blessed.

I. HAPPY ARE THE UNHAPPY (?)

A. Solomon informs us that there is a time to laugh & a time to mourn; Eccl. 3:1-4.

B. Both rejoicing & weeping have their part in a well balanced life, Rom. 12:15.

C. Those who thru hardness of heart have destroyed their capacity to mourn, have, in the same process also destroyed their capacity for long term happiness.

Rom 2:5-6, But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the, day of wrath & *I* revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who "will render to each one according to his deeds"

Eph 4:19, past feeling;

1 Tim 4:2, conscience seared

II. NOT ALL MOURNERS ARE COMMENDED. Again we must remind ourselves that in the immediate context, Jesus is discussing matters that have to do with the kingdom of heaven.

A. Jesus is NOT here promising comfort to all who have lost a loved one. There is, of course, much comfort for us if that loved one lived a life of faithful service to God, but even that is not what Jesus is discussing here.

B. Not deliberate "pessimists.. Some will never be comforted because they refuse to be comforted. They look for problems, trouble, tribulation. They behave as if Paul had said, "Whatever things are false, whatever things" are ignoble, whatever things are unfair, whatever things are soiled, whatever things are hateful, whatever things are of bad report, if there is any vice, if there is anything derogatory--meditate on these things." (See Phil 4:8).

C. Some mourn over selfish loss or ambition, over not being able to take unfair advantage over someone else. Diotrephes probably 'pouted & mourned because John told the truth about him in 3 John 9-10. But unless he repented of his sins, he has no blessedness in the kingdom of heaven.

D. Many mourn because they have fallen victim to their own sins & misdeeds. They languish in jails or prisons for their crimes and weep crocodile tears—because they were caught & punished. In most cases they have come to hate the police-man who arrested them, the jury who convicted them & the judge who sentenced them—but they will never embrace the promise of Matt. 5:4 until they come to hate the sin that put them where they are.

E. Indeed, according to Jesus, many will mourn forever with no hope of comfort throughout eternity, "weeping & wailing & gnashing" their teeth. MT 8:12; 13:42, etc.

III. THE BLESSED MOURNERS--those whose mourning leads them to Christ.

A. Mourning over your own sins--that you have grieved God & set the wrong example for others. 2 Cor. 7:10

2 Cor 7:10, For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow *of* the world produces death.

B. There is also comfort awaiting the righteous who mourn over the sins of others. Jeremiah, Ezekiel & other O.T. prophets. The apostle Paul.

Rom 9:1-5, I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow & continual grief in my heart. For I could wish that, I myself were accursed from Christ for *my*: brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers & from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

CONCLUSION: Paul learned that the more we mourn over the lost condition of others, the more we become dead to self. The more we become dead to self, the more we become alive to God. Thus he wrote: "Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death... For to me, to live is Christ, & to die is gain" (Phil. 1:20-21). Paul knew how to mourn & he came to experience the blessedness promised by his Lord & ours. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

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