



MATTHEW

The Savior-King and His Kingdom

Kingdom Character - Those Who Mourn

Matthew 5:4

Message #8 of 80 – S1037

Sermon given on March 12, 2023



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Kingdom Character - Those Who Mourn

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Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Matthew 5**
- Today, we continue a series through the gospel of Matthew – **The Savior-King and His Kingdom**
- Sadness is a part of the human condition.
- Because we care about things, those things can make us sad.
- That is especially true about people.
- Because we love, it hurts when they are gone, either through physical separation or by death.
- My mother went to be with the Lord a few years ago.
- On an almost daily basis she comes to my mind by something that reminds me of her.
- Yesterday was her birthday. I want to hug her and wish her a happy birthday, but I can't. That makes me sad.
- Whenever I feel sad about her not being here, I try to lean back into God's arms and experience His comfort.
- One of the names of the Holy Spirit is the Comforter.
- When we are sad, if you are sad today, turn to God for comfort.
- Today's beatitude promises comfort.
- But sadly, most people limit that promise to the kind of comfort we have just been talking about and miss the true riches that are promised in this one verse.
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts! - **Pray**

Teaching

- **Kingdom Character - Those Who Mourn**
- We live in the world and are usually having to deal with the influence of the culture we are living in.
- As Christians, we are called to live in God's kingdom and conform ourselves to the culture of the kingdom of God.
- The Beatitudes describe that culture.

- To live in the culture of the kingdom of God we must choose to abandon the culture of the world **Romans 12:2**.
And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
- This is hard because human nature tends to seek acceptance by those we are living around.
- The beatitudes of Jesus are seemingly simple, proverb-like statements.
- But they are so much more than that.
- They are meant to teach us the Christ-like character traits of someone living in the Kingdom of God.
- You can learn these beatitudes in an afternoon, but you will spend a lifetime trying to master them.
- Last time we learned that to be poor in spirit meant that we understand and accept that we are spiritually bankrupt before God.
- We can bring nothing to God that is worthy of God's amazing grace.
- The only thing we have to bring to God is our sin.
- And when we do, He forgives our sin and cleanses us of all unrighteousness.
- Let's look at the second beatitude.
- **Matthew 5:4**
- There are things in this life that will cause us to mourn like the death of a loved one.
- People would much rather be happy than they would to be sad.
- There is nothing wrong with being happy, even in church.
- One of the signs of a healthy Christian and church is joy and laughter.
- Solomon said being happy is good for you **Proverbs 17:22a**.
A merry heart does good, like medicine...
- He also said there was a right time for laughing and weeping
Ecclesiastes 3:4.
A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance...
- When we gather, we might encounter all of these, and Paul says we should respond accordingly **Romans 12:15**
Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.
- What Jesus is calling us to is much deeper than that. **Nick Wilson**

“Jesus is calling His people to grieve over the very things that grieve Him, and He pronounces a blessing on those who will mourn over the things that cause anguish in the heart of God.”

• What grieves the heart of God? In a word, sin! **Genesis 6:5-6**

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

- Mankind was created to be in intimate communion fellowship with God.
- Sin separates Creator God from His beloved creation.
- I grieve my mother’s passing because we have been separated – the relationship has been interrupted.
- My grief is proportional to my love.
- One of the things that grows as our faith grows is our understanding of how much God loves us.
- His love for me is infinitely greater than my love for my mom.
- It grieves God’s heart when my sin interferes with His love for me.
- We might be tempted to believe that Jesus forgave us for our sin, so there is nothing between us and God.
- The problem is not that we have sinned – we have all done that and Christ’s blood cleanses us of that.
- Our problem is that we have a nature that is inclined to sin. (Repeat)
- The Apostle John has some strong words for those who disagree with that statement **1 John 1:8**.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

- Jesus is calling us to an honest evaluation of our own heart.
- And if we are honest, we will agree with **Jeremiah 17:9**.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?

• The Apostle Paul looked at his heart and said **Romans 7:24**.

O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

- Paul is expressing both first two beatitudes.
- As spiritually mature as Paul was, he knew that nature inclined to sin was still there and active.
- He knew he was utterly helpless to do anything about it – he understood his spiritual poverty.
- And his response was to cry out to God in desperation.
- It broke Paul’s heart that he was not perfect like Christ.

- Jesus said, “Blessed are those who mourn...”
- And remember from last time, blessed does not mean happy, it means approved by God.
- God approves of the person who can see their own sin and be heartbroken by it.
- And in His approval God does something for those who mourn over their sin and sins – He comforts them.
- When our heart is broken for the things that break God’s heart, and we respond in humble faith by crying out to God for Him to act, He will give us His comfort, helping us to trust Him as we wait for Him to act.
- What does it mean to be comforted?
- The comfort comes from the removal of guilt our sins bring to our hearts.
- It is the sense of full and free forgiveness of sins that God gives by His grace to those who are broken over their sin and recognize their poverty before God.
- By acknowledging our sins and mourning over them, knowing there is nothing we can do to be forgiven releases God’s grace and we are forgiven through faith in Christ.
- Though we mourn over our daily encounter with our own sin, we are comforted by the cleansing blood of Christ washing us clean of that sin **1 John 1:9**.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- David understood this truth **Psalm 32:1**.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

- A healthy Christian moves regularly between mourning and comfort.
- Paul lived in this reality **2 Corinthians 6:10 a**.
...as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing...

- As our faith grows, we grow in our knowledge of God and His holiness and justice.
- For those truly seeking God, that knowledge will remind them of their poverty before God and their failure to live up to God’s perfect holiness.
- That realization should cause the Christian to mourn – to have a deep abiding sense of how far they are from God.

- It is then that the believer should experience God's comfort – to have the sense of His loving and accepting presence in their lives.
- Because of Christ we are allowed into God's presence **Hebrews 4:16**. **Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**
- And in God's presence is the joy our hearts long for **Psalm 16:11**. **You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**
- The beatitudes are paradoxical – the pathway to joy is mourning.
- The pathway to the life you really want is by living the life God approves of, not the life you think will make you happy.
- Maybe it is my personality or the way I was raised or a combination of both, but I have seldom sensed a need to seek anyone's approval.
- But as I have grown up in the faith, I am sensing a deep, abiding need for God's approval.
- I want God to approve of my life, I want to know His smile.
- These beatitudes point the way to God's blessing.
- These are the character traits of someone who can know God approves of them and their life.
- These are the traits that unleash the fulness of God's amazing grace into our lives, marriages, families, church, and community.
- We were recently stirred by the revival taking place at Asbury College.
- People might ask, 'Why don't we see revival happening?'
- Revival can begin in the mind when we accept our spiritual poverty – when we become poor in spirit.
- It must then move down to the heart with a desperate cry of confession of our own sin.
- Revival is not a church thing – it is a heart thing.
- Revival will end up in the church, but it begins in one heart, and then spreads by the moving of the Holy Spirit.
- Sadly, that is where most revivals die.
- The price of spiritual poverty and being broken by your own sin is just too much.

- We shouldn't expect revival in the church until there is revival in our own hearts.
- Let God revive your heart, and then trust the Holy Spirit to do the rest.
- But it is our belief that God wants to bring revival in these last days.
- As we prepare for Communion, let's pray that God would begin that radical work in our own hearts today! - **Pray**