

Beautiful Attitudes
The Christian's Character
"The Mourners"
Matthew 5:4

Introduction - "A 12 year old girl by the name of Lisa Lester from Winnipeg, Canada holds the world record for the longest smile. She held a smile on her face for 10 minutes. She broke the record of 7 hours and 32 minutes."

Many feel that the Christian life is to be marked by a perpetual grin and an unbroken laughter. Yet Jesus said in Matt. 5:4, "*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*"

How flatly Jesus words in this Beatitude contradict the popular views of the world, and sadly even the many in the church today!

His words are a paradox! C.K. Chesterton once defined a paradox as "*truth standing on its head calling for attention.*" Some have rendered verse four, "*Happy are the Un-happy.*"

So Jesus takes truth, stands it on its head to get our attention!

Does he have yours?

I. What Kind of Mourning is it that Jesus Call's Blessed?

1. Jesus is not teaching that all who mourn are blessed!

There is a kind of mourning that does not win approval of God.

A. The Pessimist - or a "forlorn disposition". The grim or the joyless Christian.

Illustration - "A lot of Christians look like they've been baptized in lemon juice."

Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote in His diary, "I've been to church today and am not depressed."

B. A Sinful Sorrow - a person who mourns because they can't satisfy some impure lust.

Illustration - Ahab mourned for Naboth's vineyard, I Kings 21.

C. A Mourning that is Born of Regret and Remorse - not mourning sin, but its consequences.

Illustration - Judas!

2. Jesus is teaching, blessed are they who mourn over "sin".

- To be "Poor in Spirit" is to know you are a sinner!
- To "mourn" is to weep over your sin!
- One is "intellectual" and the other is "emotional."

- It's a godly sorrow that produces repentance leading to salvation!
- It's not man-centered, it's God-centered.
- It's the work of the Holy Spirit.
- It's mourning over sin.

What ever happened to sin?

“The Bible is quite specific about sin. It doesn't imply that sin is failing to live up to one's potential or to think positively about oneself. The says, “Sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4) and “He who sins is of the devil” (1 John 3:8). Strong language for a mere character flaw, don't you think? In fact, God takes sin so seriously that He said, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8) and “For He [God the Father] made Him [God the Son] who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5: 21). -Woodrow Kroll, “*Back to the Bible*”

What Sin are We to Mourn Over?

1. My Personal Sin!

Mourning over Sin - R. Kent Hughes

A great day has come when we see our sinful state for what it is apart from God's grace and begin to mourn over its devastating dimensions in our souls, *words*, and *deeds* as described in Romans 3.

- *Souls*: “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” (vv. 10-12).
- *Words*: “Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit”; “the poison of vipers is on their lips”; “their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness” (vv. 13-14).
- *Deeds*: “Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways, and the way of peace they do not know” (vv15-17).

Illustration - David, Ps. 5:1-12

Don't deny it!
 Don't defend it!
 Don't try to cover it up!
 But do confess it! 1 John 1:9
 Don't delay!

Illustration - Luke 15, The Prodigal Son

It's a good grief!

“If you have never sorrowed over sin in your life (not just its consequences, but sin itself), then consider long and carefully whether you really are a Christian. Genuine believers, those who are truly born again, have mourned, and continue to mourn over sin.

For Christians, mourning over sin is essential to spiritual health. The verb used here is the most intensive of the nine verbs employed in the New Testament for mourning, and it is continuous. Godly believers, therefore, perpetually mourn, and thus perpetually repent of their sins.” - R. Kent Hughes

2. The Sins of the World!

What makes you cry? Jesus wept....at what? Unbelief and hardness of heart!

Illustration - At the grave of Lazarus and over Jerusalem.

No wonder some thought Jesus was Jeremiah the weeping prophet. Jer. 9:1 and Lam. 3:48.

Illustration - the Corinthians over a sinning member.

Weeping over the sins in our Nation.

True Christianity manifests itself in what we cry over and what we laugh about!

II. What Promise does Jesus give to those Who Mourn?

1. **“They shall be comforted.”**

2. **“Mourning comes before comforted!”**

Ps. 126:5 - “they that sow in tears shall reap in Joy”

Jesus said, “Woe unto you that laugh now, ye shall weep....”

3. **The comfort is sure “shall”**

John 16:20 - “your sorrow shall be turned to joy”

III. What Kind of Comfort Comes to those Who Mourn?

1. **The comfort of sins forgiven.**

The Christian is the only *person* forgiven and *free*!

Illustration - John 8, the sinful woman, “go...”

2. **The comfort of the Holy Spirit**

We get the word *comfort* from the greek word *paraclete*.

3. **The comfort of Christ's second coming**

Rom. 8, we groan.

“He shall wipe all tears from our eyes.”

Heaven - “fullness of joy....”

The saddest thing in all the world is a heart that sorrows not over sin!
For only the heart that mourns over sin will experience the comfort of sins forgiven!