



Matthew 5:4

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

Some of you are mourning, and you don't feel very blessed right now. You might be mourning at the sudden loss of someone very dear to you, a lump in your throat, eyes tearing up at the most inconvenient moments; some days are fine but other days are really tough right now. You miss them and it hurts deep inside. In these moments it's really important

to remember that God knows exactly what it feels like to lose someone close to you. God lost his son. His one and only precious son died. And so God knows exactly what you're going through right now. Romans 12:15 says to weep with those who weep and God is weeping with you right now at the loss of your loved one. He's mourning your loss.

Our God is no stranger to mourning. He mourns at a great many things. He mourns what sin has done to his good creation; to his people and his earth. When he looks at our world God mourns. He mourns that so many of his children have turned their backs on him and live their lives as if he doesn't even exist. He mourns at the things we do to each other. He mourns at the way we treat each other. He mourns at all the social evils he sees in our world: oppression, persecution, domes-

tic violence, the plight of refugees, the poverty and destitution of some nations compared to the wealth and excess of others. Our God is no stranger to mourning.

And so Jesus is saying here, don't see the world through the world's eyes. See it through God's eyes. The kingdom of this world will tell you to focus on self, that charity begins at home, that you have to look after number one. But being a member of the kingdom of God is about seeing the world through God's eyes, seeing humankind as he sees us. And when God looks at the world he mourns what sin has done to it, and he mourns when he sees your sin and mine as well.

A few years ago our neighbours were having a huge party. Our street was filled with cars, the surrounding streets were also full, you

couldn't park anywhere. And it was pretty noisy, but they were good neighbours and so we didn't make a fuss. But you know the party just went on later and later into the night. They quieted down a bit but it was almost like no-one wanted to leave. Well anyway, about mid-morning the next day I walked out onto the street and was shocked to see that most of the cars were still there. And I almost tripped over their bins, filled to overflowing with empty beer and wine bottles, with empty cases of beer and wine piled up alongside their bins – so much alcohol. And a few couples stumbling from the house to their car to head home. It turns out it wasn't a party but a wake. A good friend had died and there was nowhere to turn except to alcohol. They were mourning as people who had no hope.

But we do not mourn as people who have no

hope. We do not grieve like the rest of mankind who have no hope as 1 Thessalonians 4:13 reminds us.

When we live as members of the kingdom of God and look all around us, not just at the devastation of death, but at the devastation of sin that ruins everything, including the devastation of our own personal sin, we mourn but not as people who have no hope. Because Jesus says, 'Blessed are those who mourn, blessed are those who see clearly, blessed are those who see this world the way my father sees it, you're blessed because you will be comforted.' That's Jesus' promise.

Yesterday the Sermon on the Mount began with Jesus showing us the importance of being poor in spirit. But this is just the first step. Today he's showing us the next. It's one thing to be spiritually poor and acknowledge it, but

the next stage is to grieve and mourn over it. To grieve and mourn over the sin of this world and your own personal sin just as God does.

And so here are two questions to for us to think over this morning. Do you mourn? And do you bring comfort? Do you mourn? It's so easy to get so caught up in the day to day of life that we just focus on our own immediate needs and situations. It may be that we're so busy that we don't even take the time to confess our sins each day to God. We don't even mourn our personal sins regularly. Let alone stop and reflect with God's eyes on the state of our extended family, the plight of our friends and colleagues at work, or the injustice that is occurring on an incredible scale in many parts of the globe, or the darkness that fills many parts of the internet. Do you

mourn sin's effects on your own heart and on our world? And do you bring comfort? As Christians we have the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who lives inside us as our sign, and seal and guarantee of the future hope we have in Jesus. Revelation 7 tells us one day he will return and wipe every tear from every eye. He will bring comfort to his people. Do you bring comfort to God's people in their time of need by reminding them of this? Do you bring comfort to the comfortless, to people who have nowhere better to turn than alcohol in the face of life's tragedies? Can you bring hope to the hopeless by sharing with them the good news of the hope available in Jesus?

Now's the time, before your day gets away from you, to take a few moments and think over these two questions. Do you mourn and

do you bring comfort? And then please take some time to confess your sins to our God, mourn over them, feel their weight for a time, and then experience the joy and comfort in knowing that they have been fully, finally, and forever forgiven because of Jesus. And then pray that you might bring comfort to those around you by sharing and living out the good news of Jesus Christ today.

From poor in spirit, to mourning, and tomorrow it's meekness. I'm looking forward to it. See you then.