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Pataskala Church
March 26, 2006

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

Matthew 5:4

“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.”

II Corinthians 7:10

“Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.”

Isaiah 61:1-2

***“The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,***

***2 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn”***

The Kids sometime play a little game called,
“let's pretend.”

Do you remember that?

It really was a great game.

2

I remember when I was a little guy I used to play let's pretend.

The game is so much fun because you can become anything you want to be.

You can become a fireman, nurse, doctor, policeman, astronaut or a farmer.

You can be the richest person in the world or a king living in a castle.

Believe it or not when I was young, we use to play church. I was always the preacher. We had a song leader and others who pretended.

We used to play it for hours.

And then you grow up.

But even as adults, while we may not play this little game in its overt form, we do play a version of it more often than we may think.

You see, there are times when we are not altogether satisfied with who we are and how we are behaving.

So we decide to play a “let’s pretend” game.

3

Perhaps we are not satisfied with how others are treating us.

In any event, there are those times when we like to escape the reality of our current situation and imagine that things are different.

This is not necessarily a bad thing to do.

Sometimes it can be the first step in making things different.

It's not bad to dream, especially when they are good dreams and when we make a commitment to translate those dreams into reality.

In the book, **Back to Methuselah**, George Bernard Shaw wrote, "'you see things; and you say, 'why?' but I dream things that never were; and I say, 'why not?'"

So sometimes dreams can be a positive thing.

On the other hand, sometimes we pretend, not in order to consider what could be but in order to ignore the reality of our own situation.

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This can be a bad thing, especially when we need to deal with our situation by facing it squarely.

There are times when God desires to bring us face to face with who we really are in order to change us in to who He wants us to be.

This is precisely what the Sermon on the Mount does.

Jesus' great sermon pierces our hearts of who we really are.

Jesus breaks through the veil of pretense and reveals a true perspective on our life.

The Sermon on the Mount shows us who God is.

It brings us into His presence and by that very act reveals who we really are.

You see – now understand with me – there is no way we can pretend before God.

He knows our deepest thoughts, our fantasies, and knows our desires.

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And because God knows who we really are then it challenges us to deal with the reality of our situation in light of God's holiness.

The first beatitude confronted us with our deep need. ***"Blessed are the poor in spirit."***

The first step towards God is the recognition that we have a deep poverty when it comes to our spiritual life and condition before God.

We are sinners in desperate need of a Savior.

You see – now understand this that idea is frowned upon by the world today.

However it is the first step in becoming a blessed person.

The second beatitude is also frowned upon by the world. *"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."*

Once again the world considers this as utterly ridiculous.

"Happy are those who mourn." You've got to be kidding me. Why this is crazy! It's lunacy!

Why would anyone think that mourning is a key to happiness.

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Yet Jesus gave this beatitude as one of the keys of a blessed life.

Note the progression.

- The first step of a blessed life is the recognition that we are ***poor in spirit***, and that we have a deep need in our lives, a need caused by our sin.
- The second step is to mourn over our sin.
- I want to remind you that the first four of these beatitudes deal with our relationship with God.
- The second four of the beatitudes deal with our relationships with others.

As we meditate on this verse, I want us to look at mourning from at least three different directions.

I. THERE IS THE MOURNING CAUSED BY PERSONAL LOSS.

All of us, at least those of us who have been around for a while know what it is to mourn over some personal loss.

Many of you have grieved more than once in your life.

In the past few months, there have been so many people in Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi who are grieving over the loss of loved ones and their homes because of hurricanes.

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Perhaps you grieved at the death of a parent,
Perhaps you grieved over the death of a child,
Perhaps you've grieved over the death of a mate,
Perhaps you've grieved over the death of a friend.

Others of you have grieved over the loss of a job,
Or you've grieved over a personal rejection,
And you've grieved over the loss of your health.

It could be sorrow over the death of a pet.

I remember crying when my dog, Bingo had to be
put to sleep

I remember when I was a in Vietnam I grieved when
I heard that a close friend had crossed over a
spiritual line.

Many of the heroes in the Bible knew what it meant
to grieve.

King David grieved deeply when his rebellious son
Absalom was killed in battle.

He cried over and over **"O my son Absalom-my
son, my son Absalom-if only I had died in you
place! O Absalom my son, my son!"**

But you would have to be a father or a mother who
could identify with David's deep pain, only if you
have lost a son or a daughter in death.

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Many Christian parents are in grief over the
rebellion of their children.

Yet the good news is that Jesus came to heal the
broken hearted.

Jesus quoted **Isaiah 61:1** which says

***"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because
the Lord has anointed Me to preach good
tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the
brokenhearted....."***

The psalmist said, ***"Weeping may endure for a
night, but joy comes in the morning."***

Hallelujah – I can rejoice this morning and you can
rejoice this morning because many of us have gone
through that Great Night of darkness that seemed
would conclude

And on the other side of it, Jesus came and gave
you and gave me JOY that only He could give.
Amen!

That young King of Israel, David cried out to God -
***"You have turned for me my mourning into
dancing; you have put off my sackcloth and
clothed me with gladness...."***

Psalm 30:5a; 11.

Do you remember friend, when God came to your side and said, "It's time to take off the garment of grief and put on the garment of Rejoicing."

So there is Mourning over Personal Loss - This brings us to our second point

II. Friends - THERE IS THE MOURNING CAUSED BY THE SIN - SORROW - AND SUFFERING IN THE WORLD.

A. The Problem of not being sensitive.

One of our problems today is that we have become too desensitized to the problems of the real world.

Over a period of time we have allowed ourselves to become calloused to these problems that are facing our world and our communities.

For example, we have seen so many bloated stomachs of starving children; we are no longer moved by their tragic plight.

We have become so desensitized to gory violence on television and in the movies that many could care less for human life.

We even gone so far as to make heroes out of those who commit such horrible acts.

We have come to the place where those who really care about human life have become the enemies of society.

If we stand against abortion today in our society we are enemies of society.

Listen to what Jeremiah said about his day.

"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time I punish them, they shall be cast down," says the Lord. (Jeremiah 6:15; 8:12)

Jeremiah knew how to mourn and grieve over his day.

Jeremiah was known as the weeping prophet.

It seems that he was about the only one who literally wept over the persistent sin and the coming destruction because of that sin.

He wrote ***"Oh, that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the slain of the daughter of my people."***

Folks, listen to me carefully, every believer in this church and around this world should mourn and grieve over the condition of our world.

We should be distraught over the sin that has so captured our nation and communities.

Our hearts should be broken over the lostness of people we love and care about.

Our hearts should ache over their impending doom with no rescue in sight except for chance that we might step aside from our fears and our selfishness and tell them again there is hope for them if they will come to Jesus.

Our Lord also grieved over his world.

The Bible never tells us that Jesus laughed.

The Bible also tells us that Jesus became angry, That Jesus experienced hunger and thirst.

And the Bible tells us that Jesus experienced the emotion of Great Sorrow.

- On at least two occasions the Word tells us that Jesus wept.
- Jesus wept at the death of a friend. Lazarus had died and he wept with Mary and Martha. He enters into our pain. Do we weep with others in their sorrow and pain.

- Jesus wept over a lost city. (Luke 19:41-44)

"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, 'if you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for you peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side. and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, BECAUSE YOU DID NOT KNOW THE TIME OF YOUR VISITATION."

Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem because they rejected the opportunity to experience His peace.

He wept because they remained in their lost condition.

As a result of their rejection of Him they faced impending judgment.

Because of this Jesus wept.

Do we weep over the things that caused Jesus to weep?

Jesus wept for people who were lost!

Do we weep anymore for people who are lost?

Illustration:

In our Wednesday class my heart was so moved because after our study, people began to talk about how comfortable we had become as a church.

They talked about what we had to do to once again start caring about the unsaved and the unchurched.

They talked about getting all of you to experience what they had experienced Wednesday night and the feeling was they wanted me to move my class to Sunday night so more of you could experience what they were experiencing.

One person owned up that all of had become satisfied with our church.

I stood and watched a man, who hasn't been a Christian believer all that long, I watched tears run down his face because he cared for his wife and his friends and didn't want to see them go to hell.

I sensed a mourning and grieving from this group of people about the lostness of Pataskala, Kirkersville, Pickerington, Reynoldsburg, Ohio ...

Jesus was moved by the plight of the multitudes: **"When He (Jesus) saw the multitudes, He was**

moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd."

I ask you this morning Are you moved by the things that moved Jesus?

The Psalmist David said,

"He who goes out weeping, carrying seed (The Gospel of Jesus Christ) to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves (souls of man) with him." Psalm 126:6

We live in a world that is lost but somehow we who are Christians have forgotten that people are lost without Jesus Christ.

Years ago, someone preached a sermon entitled, **"A DRY EYED CHURCH IN A HELL BOUND WORLD."**

Is that an accurate description of this church today?

Where are the believers who weep over the lostness of our world?

"Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him." Psalm 126:5-6

Let's look at our next thought here:

III. THERE IS ALSO THE MOURNING CAUSED BY OUR OWN SIN.

It is not only the sins of others that should cause tears, for we have our own sins to weep over as well.

Our sins grieve God and therefore should grieve us as well.

None of us who are saved really want to sin.

We really want to live pure lives OF HOLINESS before God and before the world.

But we try and we fail.

What makes us behave the way we do.

We don't want to get irritable but we do.

We want to control our temper but sometimes we fail.

We don't want to speak unkind words to others but they just seem to come out of us.

Why does there seem to be such a war in us.

Even Paul faced the same struggle.

In Romans 7 he wrote of his struggles even as a believer. ***"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Then he added, "I thank God-through Jesus Christ our Lord!"*** (Romans 7:24-25)

The very fact that we can still grieve and mourn over our sin is a good sign because that godly grief will lead us to repentance.

In the Old Testament, God was grieved over the sins of His people.

Prior to the flood the Bible said, ***"And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart."*** (Genesis 6:6)

The Prophet Isaiah said of Jesus that He was ***"a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."*** (Isa 53:3)

Yet, Our Lord grieved over our sins for he had no sins of His own.

Moreover, the Holy Spirit can be grieved.

Paul writes, ***"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."*** (Ephesians 4:30)

The surrounding verses contain a list of the things we allow in our lives which grieve the Holy Spirit.

- Lying,
- anger,
- stealing,
- corrupt communication,
- bitterness,
- wrath,
- clamor,
- evil speaking,
- all kinds of malice.

These things plus many others cause grief to the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Are we grieved over the indwelling sin in our own lives, in our church?

Are we grieved over the things which grieve Him?

The man or woman who can no longer grieve over sin is in a serious condition.

The person whose heart is broken because of sin is ready to be comforted.

“O the Joy and Happiness of the man or the woman who can still grieve and mourn over any sin that is in their life, because they will receive comfort from God.”

This is true for the lost person.

His sorrow over sin drives him to the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. It's called Prevenient Grace.

It's the Grace of God that chases after us and when we are caught, the Holy Spirit begins to do a work of making us feel guilty of our sin and we have to do something about it.

This is also true for the believer who sins.

He sins, and is guilty.

He feels cast down and remorseful.

He mourns over his sin.

This drives him back to Jesus in repentance.

- Peace returns,
- Joy is restored.
- His spirit is revived and
- he is comforted.

He can say with David, ***"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered...."*** (Psalm 32:1)

Conclusion:

1. The first step in repentance and restoration is recognition of our sinful condition before God.
2. Step two is to mourn, to grieve, to sorrow over it.

Such "godly sorrow" drives us to Jesus.

Paul wrote **"Godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death."**

Repentance brings the comfort of restoration to fellowship with God.

We use to sing an old song that goes like this:

Would you be free from your burden of sin?
There's power in the blood, power in the blood,
There is power in the blood of Jesus.

Would you be free from this burden of sin?

Would you know the comfort of forgiveness?

Jesus said ***"blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted."***

"Oh the Joy and the Happiness and the Release of the burden of sin when a person comes to Mourn and grieve over their lostness, their Spiritual Poverty and they come to know the

forgiveness of Jesus, because when they do, they inherit the Kingdom of Heaven."

The reason those who mourn are blessed is because of the comfort available.

Our grief and our sorrow drive us to the source of all comfort, our Lord himself who gives us the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit.

The good news is that you and I don't have to continue mourning over our own sins.

We can come to Jesus right now and He will meet us and forgive us and free us from our burden of sin.

SONG:

Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night,
Jesus I come, Jesus I come;
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus I come to Thee.

Out of my sickness into Thy health,
Out of my want and into Thy wealth,
Out of my sin and into Thyself,
Jesus I come to Thee.

Invitation:

Friend, would you come to Jesus this morning? It doesn't matter whether you are a believer or someone who hasn't come to Jesus yet, I ask you to come.

