



# **Lights and Perfection, Inc.**

**Go and make disciples!**

E-votional 43

## **Mourning**

Matthew 5:4 (ESV),

*“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

This is really a peculiar thing in relation to our culture of pride today and because of this we rarely see one truly mourn in a biblical way. This teaching is going to piggyback off of the last teaching about being poor in spirit, maybe not directly, but in a way, that will still hold true to some of the underlying principles. The truth is that many of these sayings hold a similar line of thought in Matthew 5:3-9.

What I would like to bring to the forefront here is what Jesus meant in this passage here. For this, we will look to something that He said pertaining to the impenitent religious leaders He was continually confronted with. One such place is in Matthew 11:21 (ESV), where Jesus said,

*“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”*

To explain the context here, Jesus was rebuking those impenitent religious leaders of their hardness of hearts. Here comes Jesus doing the mighty works of God and the people still rejected Him as the Messiah. In short, this group of people He was rebuking refused to mourn over their sinful state and so repent. Instead, through pride, they chose their own arrogance and rejected the Gospel of peace that would comfort their souls.

To go a little further I would like to talk about Daniel. Even though there are surely a lot of biblical characters that could fit in this puzzle neatly, I find that Daniel is an amazing testimony of one who mourned before God.

What I would like to do with this is to make a brief contrast with true mourning as opposed to false mourning with Daniel being the true example.

Let us look at Daniel 9:3 (ESV),

*“Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.”*

Remember the context here was that God’s people were in captivity because they rebelled against God by refusing to take heed to His servants the prophets whom He sent to challenge the people to turn back to God before destruction came upon them (Daniel 9:3-15).

Now, all that the prophets had spoken came to pass so Daniel was making pleas for mercy so that God would restore His people back to their previous glory (Daniel 9:16-19). So we can see from this amazing example, Daniel truly mourned before God and was not just offering lip service, for he truly had a heart to return to God. (Drawn near to God and He will draw near to you)

The contrast to this would be Judas Iscariot. Judas betrayed the Lord and when the time came to repent took his own life instead (Matthew 27:3-5). He attempted to change what he had done by giving back the very money he was paid to betray the Lord with in the first place.

Another contrasting example is of Esau when he is mentioned in Hebrews 12:17 (ESV),

*“For you know that afterward when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.”*

Neither of these two men were comforted by their version of mourning because it was not coupled with true repentance. Or in other words a turning away from sin and turning to God anew.

Daniel, however, went on to grow with God and accomplish great things in the Lord and got to experience God in a way that many of us can only dream of. Daniel was therefore comforted by God in his mourning.

But at the very heart of this true mourning was sin and the effects of it. We all have those places in us from time to time where the Spirit of the Lord yearns jealously over us and we become aware of a deep spiritual need within us that only God can soothe and comfort. It is in these moments where we bring our mourning to God and He, in turn, promises comfort. I am reminded of what the prophet Isaiah said in 61:2-3 (NKJV),

*“To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give*

*them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.”*

God is more than willing to take us from ashes to glory. Granted we desire to be lifted by Him from our lowly estate. I must say, then, that anything worth mourning over would be all that is in us that rebels against God and His ways. We all surely have areas from time to time where we feel less than perfect or even a complete failure before God. This statement is true because we all have stuff in us that is opposed to God. In short, our sin can burn us from within to a heap of ashes. But, to God be the glory when He takes one from ashes to beauty.

Therefore, we ought to bring our ashes and mourning to God in humility, for God exalts the humble (James 4:10). May the Lord of glory grant to all who mourn in this way the glorious freedom of His comfort. Let us never again be satisfied with anything else this world has to offer us which will only mask the ashes we feel inside. Bring it all to Jesus who is waiting to comfort you!

Isaiah 51:3 (ESV),

*“For the Lord will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the Lord; Joy and gladness will be found in it, Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.”*

Hear the lyrics to this song that says it all titled, ‘Rescue Story,’ by Zach Williams (2019),

*You were the voice in the desert*

*Calling me out in the dead of night*

*Fighting my battles for me*

*You are my rescue story*

*Lifted me up from the ashes*

*Carried my soul from death to life*

*Bringing me from glory to glory*

*You are my rescue story*

Lord Jesus, when the cares of our hearts are many, it is you who bring comfort to

our soul (Psalm 94:19). Help us to never again fear our own inconsistencies and frailties but to bring them to You as ashes in exchange for Your beauty. We are absolutely enamored by Your great love for us. Heal us and deliver us in new and amazing ways that express Your true nature and character, that we may be called trees of Your righteousness. Thank You, Father, for Your acceptance and compassion. It is in the name of Jesus that we ask for these things. Amen.

In Christ's Love,  
Chris and Jeanne  
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