



BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

a repentance guide



Blessed Are Those Who Mourn.

The second Beatitude or the second step of Jesus' Playbook in pressing deeper into him is this: *Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted* (Matthew 5:4).

We mourn, we grieve, and we are sad over a loss. What kind of loss is Jesus thinking about? Jesus is inviting us to mourn the loss of our innocence. We mourn and lament how spiritually sick we are. We are deeply saddened by our sin, the depth of our pride, and how pervasive our selfishness is. When we come to the honest awareness of how deeply ingrained sin is within us, we can't help but be sorry. In this state, we realize how much we've sinned against God, others, and yes, ourselves. We hate what we see inside us. We don't rationalize away how bad we are, but rather we mourn the poverty of our spiritual condition.

Sorrow That Leads to Repentance

The mourning Jesus invites into isn't just regret. This isn't just saying 'I'm sorry.' It isn't enough even to admit we are wrong. Yes, we need to confess our sin. But the mourning Jesus is talking about is this: Mourning moves from confession to repentance. The mourning Jesus is speaking of is so real, so deep, that not only do we regret what we've done wrong or failed to do, but we are moved to change. This is spiritual mourning - Sorrow over our sin that leads to change - a sorrow of repentance.

But here's a proven reality; there's no change until the pain is great enough to cause us to want to change. That's what the Apostle Paul teaches us after confronting the Corinthian church forcefully:

*Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while—yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because **YOUR SORROW LED YOU TO REPENTANCE.** For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. **GODLY SORROW BRINGS REPENTANCE** that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*

- 2 Corinthians 7:8-10

Paul says that feeling bad about our sin doesn't necessarily lead to repentance or real change. It is godly sorrow that leads to repentance. Godly sorrow seeks God. It knows that our wrongdoing hurts our relationship with God most of all. It's being heartbroken because God's heart is broken for us. It's godly sorrow because it knows that only God can help us change, and it pleads for God's help. It's not sorrow focused on us, and how messed up we are; it's focused on God.

There's also a worldly sorrow where we feel guilty and experience regret and shame, but it doesn't lead to change. Godly sorrow brings repentance which means there's a real change. Repentance is our escape from the prison of pride to enter the comfort of the Father.



How To Mourn

“Blessed are those that mourn” - Jesus.

We cry out to God for help because we know deep in our hearts that we are a mess! We mourn our sins and pitiful spiritual condition. Our pride and sin are so painful and revolting that we want to change. If we're deeply sorry for our sin and brokenness and are disgusted with it, then we'll look for a way to change. Here's how the process of repentance plays out...

1. Grieve and Mourn.

We are genuinely sorry for the pride and sin that has hurt God, ourselves, and others. It makes us sick. It's repulsive to us. We realize that it's so bad that we have to change. What is it in you that has gotten you to the point of utter disgust, so much so, that you are ready to make a change? Take uninterrupted time to pray and do a reflective inventory of your pride and sin. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict you and help you identify at least one thing you need to be mourning over. Will you allow yourself to mourn? What is keeping you from spiritual mourning?

2. Identify what's got to change.

Repentance is change. What's got to change? It could be what you believe, an attitude or behavior that needs to stop or that's lacking and needs to become a part of your life. Maybe you need to change your lifestyle or who you are hanging out with. Perhaps you need to change your habits. What are you specifically asking God to change in you or about you? What do you want to change?

3. Confess our sins.

We confess our sin(s) to God. We confess them to those our sin has affected when it's possible and safe to do so. We confess them to those we can trust. This is different from just saying 'I'm sorry' to God and others. Confession is when we specifically identify a wrong in us and/or a wrong we've done without excuses. What, how, and to whom do you need to confess? Have a plan.

4. Make amends.

We not only authentically apologize for our wrongdoing to those who we've sinned against, but we'll make amends. We make things right to the extent we are able. And a powerful way to make amends is to actually repent and move away from who you were to become the person who God wants you to be. Who have you sinned against, and how will you make things right, to the best of your ability?

5. Set up guardrails.

If we know we have a weakness, we find ways to keep ourselves from going off the rails. If we have an addiction, we find ways to help us avoid the situations that tempt us. For example, if it's pornography, we set up systems to help us prevent the temptation like internet filters, devices in public locations, avoiding situations that lend to the opportunity, accountability partners, and so on. What specific guardrails will you establish?

6. Establish a safe spiritual community.

We need others. We need a safe place with others where we can be honest. We need a few folks to whom we can confess our secrets. Secrets are a part of pride that keep us in spiritual prison to our sin. We need the prayers and encouragement of others. We need help from God, who often brings that help through others. Who makes up your spiritual community with whom you can spiritually mourn?

Repentance is our escape from the prison of pride to enter the comfort of the Father. Blessed are those who mourn!





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