

Text: Matthew 5:4 (Pew Bible pg.958)

Title: “Blessed Brokenness”

INTRODUCTION

Before we get started this morning I want to remind you that next Sunday is Father’s Day and we’ll have one combined service at 11:00. It’ll will be a special day as we honor our fathers, but more importantly as we honor our Lord in sharing the Lord’s Supper. Now open your Bibles to Matthew 5 as we continue our study of the Beatitudes, the opening statements of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. Let’s all stand together as I read Matthew 5:1-12. Jesus is talking about the radical life of Kingdom people living with Kingdom priorities. Just let your eyes rest on those radical statements for just a moment.

- While the world is self-confident Kingdom people are poor in spirit.
- While the world parties on, Kingdom people mourn sin and suffering.
- While the world values self-determination Kingdom people are meek.
- While the world craves pleasure Kingdom people hunger and thirst for righteousness.
- While the world kicks you when you’re down Kingdom people show mercy.
- While the world settles for impurity Kingdom people are pure in heart.
- In a world filled with conflict Kingdom people are peacemakers.
- While the world persecutes and insults righteousness Kingdom people faithfully endure persecution and insults for the sake of King Jesus. Radical!

As you’re seated please keep your Bibles open to Matthew 5 as we focus today on the second Beatitude.

Matthew 5:4 - Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

ILLUSTRATION – There are high school and college graduations going on this time of the year and we often will say to the graduates: “Congratulations! You’ve accomplished something great.” And it’s a time filled with happiness. Well that’s that the word “blessed” means ... congratulations are in order for the person who has these qualities in their life.

Remember that Jesus is describing life in the Kingdom of God for a Christ-follower. These are not things we *ought* to do in order to get into heaven. These are things we are *meant* to do because we are Kingdom people with Kingdom priorities.

The Beatitudes describe a person who is ruled by Christ. And we look at these qualities and realize how far short we fall and we realize we can only be these kinds of people by grace and by the transforming power of Jesus Christ. And when we are saved the Spirit of God begins His work of producing this radical life in us.

The Beatitudes are spoken by our Lord not in a haphazard way. They build one on the other. There is a spiritual and logical sequence to them. Last week we talked about being poor in spirit ... blessed bankruptcy where I realize that I am powerless to save myself and to change myself. I have to cast myself on Jesus. And the next statement of Jesus builds on that.

Matthew 5:4 - Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

When I come to this realization I am broken ... but it is a blessed brokenness. So here's what we learn. As a follower of Jesus Christ living in His Kingdom...

1. I AM BROKEN OVER SIN AND SUFFERING

Matthew 5:4a - Blessed are those who mourn...

The word for "mourn" is the strongest word in the Gk. language that Jesus could have used to describe a person's sadness, despair and brokenness. Mourning is not pouting ... it is not just being negative ... it isn't just feeling sorry for ourselves. It is a very real emotion that comes from a very real understanding of loss.

ILLUSTRATION - Imagine walking into a funeral home where a family is mourning the death of a husband and a father, and you walk up to the widow and say, "Congratulations." Well that just doesn't make sense. And this statement of Jesus doesn't make sense if you see it just as a standalone statement by Jesus. But when we understand how it fits into Jesus' vision for our fullness of life in the Kingdom of God it makes more sense.

ILLUSTRATION – A couple of years ago I developed pneumonia. For several days I was feeling bad ... my body was weak and I had a bad cough. But I wasn't miserable enough to make me go to the doctor. Instead I found stuff at the pharmacy to treat the symptoms ... to help me sleep, to soothe my sore throat. Those things did nothing toward making me well ... just to keep me comfortable in my sickness. It wasn't until I was miserable enough (mourning) about my condition that I went to the doctor to get help. While I didn't explain my stubbornness to my doctor, if I had he might have said to me, "Mike, you're miserable. Congratulations! You've taken the first step to healing ... you've let yourself be broken enough by this that now you will let me help you."

EXAMPLE: Now suppose I come to the realization by the conviction of the Holy Spirit that I have a sin sickness. Let's say it's uncontrolled anger. I know it's wrong and that it is a spiritual sickness. But there's something in my selfish, sinful humanness that won't let me admit that it's sin sickness. For a while I might deny that I'm sick. Then I am forced to admit that I'm sick with this sin, but I think I can control the symptoms on my own. I bite my lip when I want to tell somebody off, but I'm still raging with anger on the inside. I might even get a little passive/aggressive thing going. Finally, with the help of the Holy Spirit I come to a place where I am sick of being sick with this sin. I reach a point of despair where I know that as hard as I try I cannot change myself. And I run to the Great Physician of my soul ... Jesus Christ.

You see, if I'm not constantly broken over sin and the suffering that sin brings, I will not value Christ as the One who delivers me.

QUOTE: John Piper describes it this way: "Blessed are the poor in spirit who mourn. Blessed are the people who feel keenly their inadequacies and their guilt and their failures and their helplessness and their unworthiness and their emptiness—who don't try to hide these things under a cloak of self-sufficiency, but who are honest about them and grieved and driven to the grace of God."

Question: Where does this knowledge of sin that causes us to be poor in spirit come from? It comes from the Spirit of God and the Word of God. As we read, study and hear the Gospel proclaimed with understand the doctrine of sin that runs right through the world. And by the conviction of the Holy Spirit we understand that it is not just sin ... it is *my* sin.

RADICAL THOUGHT – Jesus takes the disease that we hate most, namely, helplessness and brokenness, and He makes it the doorway to heaven.

PRIOR TO OUR SALVATION – No one is ever saved without going down the pathway of being poor in spirit and mourning. This is called conviction of sin. We have to be mournfully poor in spirit before we can experience the joy of salvation.

AFTER SALVATION – I live in daily awareness of my sin and in repentance to where any sin grieves me as it grieves God. Note: In the original text the word “mourn” means continuous mourning.

So anything that grieves the heart of God must grieve our heart ... our sin and suffering, or the sin and suffering of the world. When I sin, if I'm walking with God I will come under conviction which will bring me low and cause me to mourn over my sin, which then drives me back to Christ.

We see it in Peter when he denied Jesus three times...

Matthew 26:75 – Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: “Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.

We see this spirit in Paul...

Romans 7:24 – What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

So here is a man so stricken by grief about his sinful condition that he cries out in agony. That's mourning. Paul wrote these words at the height of his ministry. He was a mature believer, but the more mature he was the more grief-stricken he was over his own sin.

You see, the mark of spiritual maturity is not sinlessness. That will only happen when we get to heaven. The Bible says that if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. The closer we get to Jesus in our walk with Him the more completely we see His perfections, which causes us to see our imperfections even more. This in turn keeps us mourning over our sin.

Let me encourage you to do a little spiritual exercise at the end of the day. Look back on the day and examine yourself: what have I done, what have I said, what have I thought? And we will most certainly remember things and ask ourselves: Why do I behave like that? Why is it so easy for me to lose my temper or to be impatient? What do I struggle with lustful thoughts? Why am I unkind to people? Why am I jealous of others or materialistic? What makes me this way? And as I do this kind of daily audit of my life it should inevitably produce godly sorrow in me.

2 Corinthians 7:10a – Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret...

So that's why James would say:

James 4:8 - Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

James 4:9 - Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.

James 4:10 - Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

That leads us to the second half of Jesus' statement.

2. I AM SUSTAINED BY THE COMFORT ONLY GOD CAN GIVE

Matthew 5:4 - Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

It's only those who mourn their sin who will experience the comfort that only God can give. You see we often think, "I've sinned, I've failed, I've blown it. God doesn't want anything to do with me." No! It's the exact opposite. When I sin and stumble and fall, then let that break me ... when I come to Him broken over my sin ... God moves toward me.

James 4:10 - Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

"Comfort" means to come alongside to support. It's the word that was used in...

1 John 2:1 - My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have *one who speaks to the Father in our defense*—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

And in...

John 14:16 - And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another *Counselor* to be with you forever—

Jesus said that the person who mourns over sin is to be congratulated because they will find comfort from God that others will not find.

You haven't been really comforted until God comforts you.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4a - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles...

I've learned through the years that many of our problems with sin are due to our need for comfort. There's this brokenness in us that we just don't want to admit. So we go looking for comfort in all the wrong places. We look for it in alcohol or drugs. We look for it in pornography or some other kind of sexual immorality. We look for comfort in overeating. We look for comfort in compulsively trying to control our circumstances. We look for comfort in possessions or pleasures or work. And it works for a little while until the buzz wears off, and we need it again.

But when that brokenness drives us to Jesus, then we understand why Jesus would say blessed are those who mourn; they will be comforted. They will be sustained by a comfort that only God can give.

We see the mourning in Paul's cry...

Romans 7:24 - What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

We see the comfort that follows...

Romans 7:25a Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

But there is a comfort that still awaits us ... a comfort that we taste a little in this life, and every time we taste it we are reminded that there's an even greater comfort awaiting us. As we go through this life we see so much sin and suffering ... so much of our sin and suffering, as well as the sin and suffering of others. We look for some glimmer of hope that things might be getting better in our nation or in our world, and there doesn't seem to be much encouragement that things will get better. And we mourn. Paul put it this way:

Romans 8:23 - Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

I sense in these words a man who is weary of sin ... tired of fighting the sin in his own nature ... tired of fighting sin in the church ... weary of the effects of sin on God's creatures and creation.

But there is a day coming when the temporary light rays of comfort will give way to our being absolutely and completely engulfed by the comforting arms of great Father in heaven. And the Bible says ...

Revelation 21:4 - He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

You see the Bible is filled with all the rich promises of God's comfort for us today. And His comfort is real and it sustains us ... it gets us through the hardest days of our lives. But listen, the best is yet to come. You see today we may be comforted by God as we are broken before Him because of sin or the suffering that sin causes. But it won't be long and there will be another fall, another failure, another setback. And we will find ourselves once again before the Lord ... broken.

But know this: There is a day on the horizon when God will wipe away every tear ... and there will be no more tears. Why? Because there will no more death or mourning or crying or pain. This world and all its sin and suffering will have passed away when God makes all things new.

CONCLUSION

Christ comes to fill our lives with eternal blessings, but if our lives are already full of our own righteousness and our own self-esteem and our own strength, then there is no room for what He wants to give us.