

BLESSED MOURNING

(Sermon Summary)

Chris Hand

Sunday Morning – 13th November 2022

Reading: Matthew 5: 1-16. (v5:4)

The Beatitudes are part of one sermon preached on one occasion. All the things that are mentioned are not separable from each other but flow into each other. In The Beatitudes we are looking at who we are at heart.

1. A grief observed.

Nobody would willingly choose grief. There are lots of people who in the Bible grieve and we are to share their sense of loss. Abraham losing Sarah, Jacob losing Rachel, David losing Absalom, and our Lord losing Lazarus are examples. Some people never recover from the loss and resort to things like consulting mediums to try to recapture what they had.

The mourning that is spoken of here is mourning that is a sign of spiritual health. It tells us something about who we are in relation to God. It is mourning that is actually good for us. It is not the entirety of what we are to be as believers. Indeed, we have seen recently that there is much that we are to know about and feel that is immensely positive (See Ephesians 1:15-22).

2. Some fundamental conclusions.

This spiritual mourning does not then exclude joy. In fact, there is joy mentioned in v12. It speaks of good things in Matthew 7:11. 'Blessed' is a truly spoken word and not an insult to us. It takes something from the realms of human experience and gives it a spiritual setting and relates it to our spiritual wellbeing.

It is a call to us to go deeper in our walk with God. It is something profound yet simple. We are too often guilty of having a superficial view of God, ourselves and the world we are in. There are no depths to our souls, and we are cut off from what the Lord is

showing us. We are too feelings-centred and are led astray in a wrong search for spiritual fulfillment.

Sometimes our feelings are the result of superficial thinking and attitudes. We lack the self-awareness to understand how much we are influenced by the culture we are in. At other times we are too quick to affect a kind of joy that is not real. We do not want to look too closely at things or think too deeply about things. We fear that we might end up being depressed which is not what this verse is an invitation to us to do.

It does invite us to hold a deeper view of God, to believe in His judgments and the need for holiness. It is telling us to stop and look closely at the world that we are in and to evaluate it from God's perspective. We realize more and more that we are not at home here. We see that the culture we are in is deeply hostile to the things of God. A month or so back we were told that the 10 millionth baby in the UK had been aborted since the passing of the 1967 Act. The rise in divorce tells us that no-fault divorce is making this sad phenomenon easier. From family breakdown we see the effects traceable from this in the lives of the children at school and elsewhere. In the rise of transgenderism we see false promises made to impressionable young people sending them from an early age on a journey involving irreversible changes to their bodies. That so many young people see no future but consider suicide as a way out is a tragedy of our age. How God views the destruction of children and young people is discernible from Jeremiah 6:26-29 and Jeremiah 19:4-5.

As we evaluate society more deeply, we also look more deeply at ourselves to find the battles within that are still unacknowledged or indeed the battles we should have been fighting. We conclude of ourselves that we are so self-centred, always concerned about how anything will affect us. Our spiritual hopes are infected by prevailing views of success or progress. These can actually leave us stunted and spiritually empty. We have to sometimes consign false spiritual aims and hopes to the dust.

3. A time to weep.

The book of Lamentations in the Bible shows us that there is a time for the Lord's people to weep. It is where we capture the lostness of people who do not listen and who have forfeited heaven. It is where we allow the reality of our lost time and sins of omission to seep into our consciousness. We meet with God unfettered by wrong ideas of joy and allow the weight of sin to affect us.

This mourning is actually blessed by God. We share God's insights and perspectives and draw closer to Him. We see more clearly into the character of God and dispense with trivia. We have joy that we are saved from the world's futility, that we are being saved from our sin and that we are going to heaven. We underestimate the power of sin to our own cost, but we should never underestimate the power of the cross to deliver us.

We are saved from the wrong kind of mourning to participate in true spiritual mourning.
True spiritual grief is the way to true spiritual joy.