

Blessed Are Those Who Mourn

by Anton Bosch

Anton Bosch's sermon emphasizes the blessing found in spiritual mourning and the comfort that follows from recognizing our need for God.

Scripture: Isaiah 6:5, Isaiah 53:3, Matthew 5:4, Romans 7:18, 2 Corinthians 7:10, Ephesians 5:27, 1 Thessalonians 5:6, Revelation 11:15, Revelation 21:3

Topics: "Spiritual Mourning", "Godly Sorrow"

Description

Anton Bosch preaches on the paradoxical blessing of mourning, explaining that it is not about worldly sorrow but a deep spiritual mourning over sin and spiritual poverty. He contrasts the modern emphasis on happiness in the church with the biblical teaching that those who mourn are blessed. The sermon delves into the reasons for godly mourning, including understanding our own failings, the abuse of God's grace, and the state of the church. Bosch highlights that true comfort comes from being transformed into the image of Christ and the hope of a future where sorrow will turn to joy in God's eternal presence.

Transcript

"Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4).

This really seems like a contradiction. How can we be happy or blessed when we mourn? Once again we must set aside the world's way of looking at things and see things from God's perspective.

The modern church emphasizes celebration, joy, happiness and a fun time in God's presence. Yet the Bible does not teach anything like that. Those who mourn are blessed not those who are happy.

The mourning Jesus spoke about in the Sermon on the Mount is not mourning over the loss of a loved one, or the loss of a prized possession - it is a spiritual mourning over spiritual matters. Neither is this a call to be morose, miserable or pessimistic. This kind of mourning is very deep and very real but it is entirely different to the world's kind of sorrow that produces death - godly mourning leads to life (2Corinthians 7:10).

A number of artists have tried to create images of the "laughing Jesus" and the Crystal Cathedral boasts a number of these effigies. Yet the Bible does not paint such a picture of Jesus. He is rather shown as "A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). The gospel writers record a number of times when Jesus wept, yet they do not mention one time when Jesus laughed. I am sure He had a sense of

humor and occasionally laughed but with the weight of the world's sin soon to be placed on Him, the cross before Him and a nation which rejected and misunderstood His message, there was not much to laugh about and a lot to be sorrowful about.

When we look at the accounts of Paul's life as well as his writings, we also do not find a happy character, but a man who is weighed down by his responsibilities and his own shortcomings (Romans 7:18). Paul does not teach a happy-go-lucky form of Christianity but rather, calls on all to be sober-minded (1Thessalonians 5:6,8; 1Timothy 3:2,11; Titus 2:6 etc.).

Mourning flows from the previous beatitude - blessed are the poor in spirit. When we realize our spiritual need and poverty, we will find much reason to mourn. Only those who have not honestly examined themselves in the light of God's Word and His holy requirements can find reason not to mourn. It is easy to feel good about ourselves until we see ourselves the way God sees us or until we truly see Him. Once that reality dawns we can only respond with Isaiah "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5).

No one who has stopped to see how his actions and words hurt others or who have given thought to how much his disobedience and sin pains the heart of God can go about feeling happy within himself. Only those who are ignorant of their frequent and on-going failings, or who have a misguided understanding of God's grace, can pass through life happy with themselves.

Mourning is also a result of understanding how mankind continues to abuse God's grace. Jesus wept (and continues to do so) over Israel who rejected God's overtures and who killed His prophets. I believe He still weeps over the state of the churches and the carnal state of the believers and their leaders. His heart is broken over continued divisions, bickering and arguing amongst "Christians" and especially, over the blind leaders who lead His people astray. I do not think that He finds much to rejoice over when He looks at the present state of the church. Should we not be mourning with Him over a church that prefers wallowing in the mud to walking with Him in white and who prefers to return to its vomit than to feast on the bread of heaven!

Yes, we rejoice over the one sinner who comes to repentance, but we weep, sorrow and mourn over a world that actively and willingly chooses to go to hell! If watching the news or reading the newspaper does not cause you to cry out to God "how long more Lord?" then you have sunk to a lower level than Lot who at least was vexed over the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah!

Seeing the unrighteousness of men, judges and churches has to cause us deep pain. As we daily witness the abuse of power, especially by so-called leaders in churches who use their positions to victimize the weak and disenfranchised, we should be weeping before the Lord for justice to come. Daily, we are confronted by church leaders who use their positions to feed their egos, pockets and lust for sex, money and power. Do you honestly think Jesus is amused by all this? I don't think so and neither should we be, but we should rather be mourning.

So how can we be blessed when we are beset within and without with so much gloom and darkness? The text says "For they shall be comforted". We will be comforted when we finally are transformed fully into His image! When sin in our own lives is finally vanquished and His glorious nature comes forth in us sorrow will turn to joy and mourning to rejoicing.

We will be comforted when finally, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Revelation 11:15) and when "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does his successive journeys run".

We will be comforted when He finally "present(s) her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27). Yes, on that glorious day there will be rejoicing, celebration and eternal happiness as we are comforted for ever in the arms of our Saviour.

"And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:3,4).

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