

THE BEATITUDES: Our King — His Kingdom — His Citizens

3. Blessed Are Those Who Mourn

Matthew 5:4

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones spent 30 consecutive Sundays teaching through “The Sermon on the Mount. In 1959 those sermons were published in print form. Lloyd-Jones made it clear as to *why* he was going to spend time teaching through those three chapters in the Gospel according to Matthew.

Martyn Lloyd Jones — *“We are concerned about the state and life of the Church at the present time. I have no hesitation again in asserting that the failure of the Church to have a greater impact upon the life of men and women in the world today is due entirely to the fact that her own life is not in order.”*¹

I believe the same can be said of the church today. The church will never get it right if it doesn’t get Jesus right.

QUOTE: Ray Ortlund — *The most urgent question before us American Christians is not whether we have the right politics but whether we have the real Jesus. We don’t seem blown away by Him, floored by Him, satisfied in Him. We freak out too readily, get angry too easily. The real Jesus settles us.*

It’s crucial that we get back to what Jesus actually says about His nature — the culture of His Kingdom and for His citizens.

This morning is our third installment in our study to the prologue to the Sermon on the Mount. That twelve-verse prologue has come to be known as THE BEATITUDES.

THE BEATITUDES are **the words of our King** that clearly define the culture of His Kingdom — a culture that in its essence expresses His nature, His heart, His ways, His values, His agenda.

Put another way — in **Matthew 5:3-12** Jesus tells us **in His own words what happens** in the hearts of men and women who come under His rule; how His

¹ David Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Studies in the Sermon on the Mount

ways, His values, His agenda are **formed in** and **expressed through** the lives of the men and women who have embraced Him as Savior and King.

In the Beatitudes, the King paints a portrait of what happens when Jesus Christ rules over our hearts and lives; over our families and church — the result is a *way of being* in the world that the King Himself describes as **“Blessed”**.

Last week we looked at the *divinely designated starting point* for us to understand the truth about our King, His Kingdom and those who are citizens of His Kingdom.

Matthew 5:3 (ESV) ³**“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

We considered what *poor in spirit* does not mean — and then we spent the rest of our time looking at what it does mean. We learned how in the time of Jesus that word “*poor*” described the man or woman who was not **just** poor; they were totally destitute — reduced to begging — and here’s the key: They were totally dependent on the mercy of others for life itself! They would be so ashamed of being in that state that they would cover their face and hold out one hand asking for money.



When the Holy Spirit reveals to us the truth about God, we finally see who and what we are before God — spiritually we are THAT person!

Jesus says: *Blessed — makarios — flourishing* are those who realize that they are spiritually destitute; guilty before God and they are utterly dependent upon God and His mercy.

Jesus says that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them and them alone!

WITHOUT coming to the realization that you are a sinner who is hopelessly guilty before the Holy God of the universe, you will NEVER see your NEED for a SAVIOR!

DON'T MISS THIS — Jesus tells us that entrance into His Kingdom — and the life that flourishes — **begins with a way of being** that Jesus calls *poor in spirit*.

But it doesn't stop there! As citizens in the Kingdom of our humble King, *“poor in spirit”* is how we access the life that Jesus died for us — and that life can only be described as “flourishing!”

REMEMBER — NOBODY was anticipating that the Messiah would introduce Himself and the Kingdom of God with the words, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*.

What Jesus said next was just as unexpected — just as disorienting — as the first beatitude! He said something that the world cannot grasp.

Matthew 5:4 (ESV) *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

No small side note here — Jesus wants us to know that His Kingdom is **totally upside down** from the world that we live in. In the Kingdom of God the way up is down — the way to gain life is to lose your life — the first is last — the greatest is the least! The world says that the way to be truly happy — the way to flourish — is to eliminate ALL sorrow. Everyone in the world is spending his or her lives in an attempt to AVOID sadness and find happiness. How many here want to be HAPPY? How many here want to be SAD? Fortunes are being made on the BE HAPPY industry. AMUSEMENT reigns in American (even amongst Christians).

A = without **MUSE** = to think.

Amusement = Feel good without thinking!!

Jesus is not saying that the only way to be “blessed” — Makarios — to flourish is to shun any kind of happiness and immerse yourself in constant sadness.

He is saying that genuine flourishing involves a sorrow, a weeping, a mourning over something specific that opens us up to be comforted in a way that causes us to FLOURISH.

THIS IS SO HUGE — The King of the Kingdom is showing us a **perfect progression** in the **formation** of the ATTITUDES — the CHARACTER — the WAY OF BEING that marks His Kingdom and His citizens.

Here’s what I mean when I say a “PROGRESSION in the FORMATION of that way of being.”

The “mourning” in this second Beatitude is the outcome of the absolute necessity and pre-requisite for entering the Kingdom: Discovering who I am and what I am in light of who God is!

Remember how last week we looked at the prophet Isaiah? Isaiah had a vision of the Lord. There is one thing I didn’t point last week that we need to see. In the Gospel of John we’re told that the glory Isaiah saw was **Jesus’ glory**.²

Isaiah saw the preincarnate glory of Jesus and said,

*Isaiah 6:5 (CSB) ⁵Then I said: **Woe** is me **for** I am **ruined**... because I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips, and **because** my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Armies.*

Isaiah 6:5 (NLT) ⁵Then I said, “It’s all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man....”

² Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 319). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Jesus seated on His throne in absolute glory and perfection resulted in an existential crisis for Isaiah. I think the way the **King James** translates **Isaiah 6:5** will help explain what I mean

Isaiah 6:5 (KJV) ⁵Then I said: Woe is me for I am undone...

In the eyes of the rest of Israel, Isaiah was a man of unmatched integrity. But when he saw Jesus seated on His throne in absolute glory and perfection — so Holy, so majestic in perfection that the angelic beings cried out without ceasing “Holy! Holy! Holy is the Lord!” Isaiah said “I’m undone!” I love that language. He essentially said

“I have NO integrity!”

“I am not the fully integrated man everyone thinks I am!”

“I am not the fully integrated man I thought myself to be!”

“In light of who Jesus is — I am DIS-integrated!”

“In a way that is essential to my existence — I am totally disordered in the sight of God.”

“I am hopelessly and utterly spiritually bankrupt!”

I am not for a moment saying that you can only become a Christian if you have the exact same vision of God as Isaiah. I am saying that a real encounter with Jesus leaves you painfully aware of who you are — and that breaks your heart.

THAT is why **Blessed are those who mourn** follows **Blessed are the poor in spirit**

William Barclay — *The Greek word for to mourn, used here, is the strongest word for mourning in the Greek language. It is the word which is used for mourning for the dead, for the passionate lament for one who was loved.*

When you see how beautiful Jesus really is, it breaks your heart that you presumed to live for your own kingdom and your own glory. It breaks your heart when you see the depth of your own sin. It breaks your heart that Jesus had to die in your place for your sins — that Jesus was wounded for *your* transgressions and crushed for *your* iniquities — the tiniest of them. It breaks your heart that you broke His heart a million times.

WHEN I have come to the end of myself, and I am finally facing the facts that I have no strength, no ability, no power, no way of being right with God, I then begin to cry out to God.

Psalm 51:8 (CSB) ⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

The *way of being* that grieves over my own sin is the place of flourishing because God is **near** the brokenhearted.

Psalm 51:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.

The *way of being* that grieves over your own sin leads to flourishing **because** it is there that I discover His glorious grace and mercy!

Psalm 32:1–2 (NKJV) ¹Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. ²Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

In the Greek translation of those verses the word blessed is the word Jesus used in the Beatitudes: makarios.

The *way of being* that grieves over my own sin is where I discover His glorious POWER to do in my life what I could have never done for myself. That is when I can say the exact opposite of “I’m undone”; it’s then that I can say: “It is well with my soul!” That is the place of makarios — flourishing and true happiness that is independent of happenings!

In the past when I've taught through the Beatitudes, I always moved straight from this point directly into "**Blessed are the meek**" because being that *way of being* is formed by **poor in spirit** and **mourning over sin**.

GUYS — I pray that we will never be static in what we know about the Bible. We can NEVER exhaust the truth of Scripture. The truth about what we just looked at doesn't change. But as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus — as we read, prayerfully read and study the Scriptures — we discover not new truth — but we discover that those old, unchanging truths possess depth and breadth and nuance that we have not yet mined out. This is one of those places.

This *way of being* that mourns over sin should not stop at my own sin.

Dave Guzik — *The weeping is for the low and needy condition of both the individual and society.... Those who mourn actually mourn over sin and its effects.*³

Follow me here.

My heart (and the heart of anyone who is a citizen of the Kingdom of God) is not only under the rule of our King — our hearts are now joined to His. Our King put it like this.

John 15:5 (CSB) *⁵I am the vine; you are the branches.*

Our King not only knows the depth of our personal sin; He knows the depth of the world's sin and all of the resulting suffering.

Our King is intense! He models for His citizens grief and mourning for the world that desperately needs Him. He invites us to join in his grief and his sorrow, and in His tears over our broken world.

The world without Jesus should break *our* hearts like it breaks *His* heart!

³ Guzik, D. (2013). [Matthew](#) (Mt 5:4). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

We should mourn over sin and its effects. We should be like our King, who only days before dying on the cross for our sins, looked over the city of Jerusalem and began to weep (literally: sob convulsively).

My observation over the years, and especially last year, is that there is a massive chunk of American Christianity that is either flat out angry against fallen culture — or they are totally gripped with a fear of fallen culture.

PLEASE HEAR ME — I am **not** in any way saying that we abdicate Biblical moral positions. I am **not** in any way saying there aren't things that make our King angry. I am **not** in any way saying that there aren't things that should deeply concern us. I **am** saying that we should look at that mess like our King! Everything broken, messed up and menacing should move us to grieve and mourn over the suffering that sin has brought into the world (physical illness, mental illness, death). We should grieve and mourn over the suffering, violence and brokenness that personal sin brings into the world. Our hearts should break — we should mourn over a world filled with broken promises, broken hearts, broken families, broken minds {rape, sexual abuse, physical and psychological abuse} broken bodies {substance abuse, sexually transmitted disease}, broken justice, broken governments.

We should ache over the stark absence of shalom (shalom = the way things are supposed to be).

Psalm 119:136 (CSB) ¹³⁶My eyes pour out streams of tears because people do not follow your instruction.

When THAT is our *way of being* in our broken world we are “blessed” — we are “Makarios” — we flourish because

Psalm 34:18 (CSB) ¹⁸The Lord is near the brokenhearted

Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as “the Comforter” (from the same word Jesus uses in Matthew 5:4) I can attest to this — Valerie can attest to this — countless Christians through the ages can testify that in their moments of deepest despair over sin and its effects (in their own life and in the world around them) the presence of God just exploded in their heart.

Because the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, lives in us we are able to give comfort to others.

2 Corinthians 1:3–4 (CSB) ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all **comfort**. ⁴He **comforts** us in all our affliction, **so that** we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

ONE LAST POINT OF VIEW ON BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

Our King not only invites us to join in His grief and his sorrow and in His tears — He even invites us to Join Him in His suffering!

Those who embrace the rule of Jesus will be opposed and even suffer because they are ruled by Jesus. Our King made it very clear that the world that hated Him, opposed Him, and rejected Him would do the same to all who embrace Him as Savior and King. We don't know much of that at all.

Ever since the book of Acts there have been followers of Jesus who have mourned because they suffered great loss for the sake of their King.

Acts 8:1–2 (CSB) ¹Saul agreed with putting him to death. On that day a severe persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the land of Judea and Samaria. ²Devout men buried Stephen and mourned deeply over him.

Stephen was the first of millions who would be killed for their faith in Jesus. Men and women are still mourning over friends and loved ones who were beaten, maimed and even murdered because they embraced Jesus as Savior and King.

How can THAT kind of grief and mourning have anything to do with flourishing? Dave Guzik explains —

But when we do suffer for the King we know something special of God; ¹ the fellowship of His sufferings (Philippians 3:10), ² a closeness to the Man of Sorrows who was acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3).⁴

That kind of grief and sorrow is not a destination — it's a path that ends in Makarios — flourishing.

I NEED YOU TO HEAR ME — The Christian life includes tremendous joy!! The joy of discovering that God made you to do what you do (me and coaching — now pastoring the flock of God and teaching the Word). The joy of knowing and being known by your spouse. The joy of being in the Kingdom of God (The kingdom of God is not about food and drink — it is about righteousness, JOY and peace in the Holy Spirit. The joy of our salvation — the joy of knowing God!)

But Jesus didn't save us from our own sin and brokenness — rescue us from domain of death and darkness for us to retreat from the world.

There are men and women who profess faith in Jesus who get to the place where they say with their lives:

I'm in the King's castle! Pull up the draw bridge!

Jesus didn't save you so you could retreat into a Christian subculture. Jesus NEVER intended church to be a place to spare us from being painfully confronted by what is ruined in the world.

He saved you to be in His Kingdom and connect you to His heart that is crushed by the sin and brokenness of the world (and we must never forget that our sin has contributed to that brokenness).

He has always intended for the church “gathered” to be the staging platform for His mission — the launching pad from which His people are equipped to scatter into their families, neighborhoods, schools, the workplace and the market place with Him on HIS rescue mission.

⁴ Guzik, D. (2013). [Matthew](#) (Mt 5:4). Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Are we joining our King — who actually inserted Himself into a world infected with sin and all the pain that follows from it? Jesus never tried to extricate Himself from it.

If our King is close to the brokenhearted — we want to be close to the brokenhearted too.