**Lesson 3—Good Grief**

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

***Lesson Notes:***

Greetings and welcome back to our study of the Beatitudes. As we move today to the second of Jesus’ nine introductory statements to the Sermon on the Mount, we need to note an interdependence that exists between each of Jesus’ statements. These are not stand-alone, individual statements that Jesus made. There’s actually a flow of thought here. Each subsequent statement to Matthew 5:3--*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom*--is dependent on the thought of the previous verse and advances the thought to the next one.

Jesus is describing a process. As we discuss Matthew 5:4 today, we’ll talk for a few minutes about its connection to Matthew 5:3. Basically the mourning and comfort Jesus described in verse 4 are a direct result of the brokenness Jesus talked about in verse 3.

We’ll see this interdependence throughout the rest of the Beatitudes.

***Questions:***

1. What does it mean to mourn? When you hear the word *mourn*, do you have positive or negative thoughts and feelings? List some synonyms for *mourning*.
2. The word that Matthew used for *mourn* means to *grieve or lament out loud*. It speaks to a public, rather than a private, display of grief. Can you think of a time when your grief was out loud and even public?
3. What’s curious or even odd about Jesus connecting open grief to being blessed?
4. Taken as a standalone statement, verse 4 is still true. If we aren’t able and willing to mourn over what grieves us, then we won’t feel any comfort. Mourning is the gateway to comfort.

But Jesus isn’t just talking about our mourning over the things that hurt us or make us sad. He’s talking about the deep grief and sadness that flow out of our complete brokenness and desperation before God (see verse 3.) The mourning to which Jesus refers in verse 4 is the result of our spiritual brokenness described in verse 3. We mourn because we realize how far we are from God.

How well do you think we as Christians mourn over our brokenness today? I mean specifically in our culture. It’s very visible in other cultures. What about ours?

1. What are some ways we can learn to mourn well, specifically over our sin and brokenness before God?
2. Remember, every Beatitude consists of a condition and a promise. In this Beatitude, while the condition is *mourning*, the promise is *comfort*. What a great promise! The word for comfort is *parakaleo*. *Para* is a preposition that means *alongside or next to*, and *kaleo* is a verb that means *to call or summons*.

Thus, when we mourn, what we need is provided to us. It shows up right next to us. If you see or hear someone grieving, your tendency is to come alongside of them. That’s comfort. God does the same for us. As we grieve over our failed spiritual condition before him, he sends his Spirit to comfort and restore us.

List some examples of comfort you’ve either given or received recently. Can you list a time when you have felt specifically comforted by the Holy Spirit?

1. Just by way of reminder, the condition in verse 4 that draws the comfort Jesus promised is *mourning*. Good, honest, guttural and even out loud mourning.

What is a key ingredient in honest mourning? I’ll give you a hint: It’s spelled T-I-M-E.

Talk about the relationship between time, mourning and receiving God’s comfort? What might you need to change personally in order to be equipped to both mourn and receive God’s comfort?

1. And now by way of a teaser for next week: Those whom God comforts are marked by Jesus’ spirit of humility and gentleness. And to them, God offers an amazing promise. See you next week.