

“Blessed Are Those Who Mourn”

Matthew 5:4

December 29, 2024

INTRO: As we get ready to close out 2024...

**What are your biggest regrets, & even more importantly,
what are you going to do with them?**

I pray you'll be blessed to deeply mourn every sinful regret you have.

PRAYER

CONTEXT:

- Matthew's Gospel on *The Gospel of Jesus Christ*
- **CREATOR CHRIST & KING** is preaching/teaching
- We're told His first preached word was *“Repent!”*
- We are at the onset of the Sermon On The Mount
- **Here** His first preached word was *“Blessed”*
- We are about to go to the **2nd of 8 Beatitudes...**
- We've learned *the Scripture's structure is key!*
- **Scripture + Structure + Savior = Comfort**

VIDEO:

*Miraculous Structure of Matthew's Gospel
(part 1)*

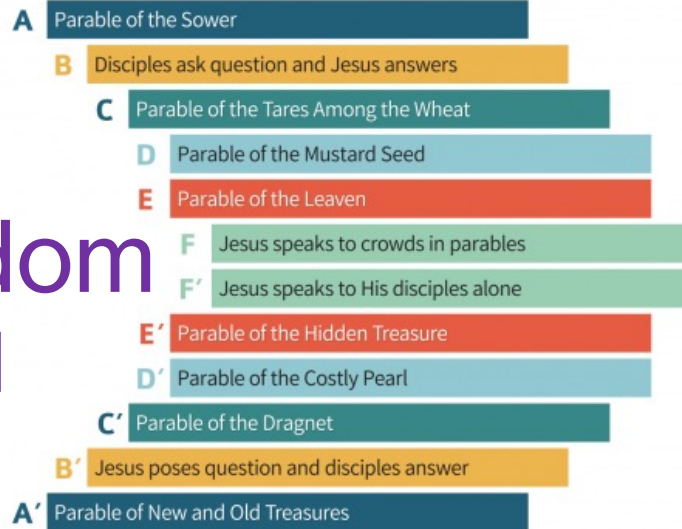
Matthew

Ch. 13

The Kingdom of God

Chiastic Arch

Arch



VIDEO:

*Miraculous Structure of Matthew's Gospel
(part 2)*

BIG IDEA: It is better for us to live & die in God's hard blessings... than to compromise with our own soft, worldly, self-preservation, self-satisfaction, & self-actualization.

PREVIEW:

1. God's BLESSED
2. God's BLESSING
3. God's BUILDING

TEXT:

Matthew 5:4

*“Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.”*

I. God's BLESSED

➤ *“Blessed...”*

- DEFINE
- DESCRIBE
- DISTINGUISH
- DEFEND
- DEPLOY!

➤ *“Blessed are...”*

- PRESENT tense
- FUTURE tense
- ETERNAL tense

➤ *“Blessed are those...”*

- Kingdom CITIZENS
- The King's CHILDREN
- Christ's biblical CHURCH family
- **NOT...**
 - Cultural church (**Rev. 3:17**)
 - Constructive compromisers
 - Corrupt counterfeits (**false religions**)

- Cancerous & corrosive “chacklers”
 - *Grumpy-grumblers* (2 Thess. 5:16-18)
 - *Garbagy-gossips*
 - *Grace-perverters*
 - *Gospel-changers*
 - *Glory-stealers*
- Cunning Church-killers
 - The *Devil*
 - 1 Peter 5:8; 1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 11:14
 - The *Demons*
 - 2 Corinthians 11:15; Acts 19:14-38
 - The *Deceivers*
 - Matthew 7:15; & Acts 20:29
 - Titus 1:5,11,16; & 2:15

➤ ***“Blessed are those who mourn...”***

Biblically mourning over biblical sin...
is the first biblical birthmark of the truly poor in spirit,
& the 2nd of Christ’s progressive beatitudes.

(See King David’s mourning & comforted-heart in **Psalm 51.**)

- MOURN
 - **APPROPRIATE** (biblical) Mourning
 - **INAPPROPRIATE** (sinful) Mourning
 - **DEVILISH** Mourning
 - **GODLY** Mourning

- God's (vs. ANY other form)
- Guardrail-defined
- Gospel-centric
- Grace-empowered
- Glory-giving (vs. seeking)

○ mourn-ING (this verse implies ongoing action..)

To understand & biblically BE the 2nd beatitude

we MUST MOURN SIN, especially our own; in so doing, we're actively mourning the Messiah's sin-LESS death, **BECAUSE...** it paid for our sin-FULL lives.

Biblical mourning is our loving DNA.

Biblical mourning is our daily blessing.

Biblical mourning is our cultural contrast.

Biblical mourning is our missional witness.

Biblical mourning is our personal thank You.

Biblical mourning is our supernatural apology.

Biblical mourning is our eternal heart-tenderizer.

Biblical mourning is our transformational anchor.

(WHEN YOU'RE NOT MOURNING SIN... YOU ARE DRIFTING AWAY!)

VIDEO:

Blessed Are Those Who Mourn

(Paul Washer)

Our blessing mirrors & magnifies
our missional mourning.

- JDP

Luke's parallel & complementing passage reveals more...

CHRISTIANS

Luke 6:21b & 25b

"Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh (later)."
"Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn & weep (later)."

CHRIST

Hebrews 12:1-3a

*"...For **the joy** set before Him,*
He endured the cross...
Consider Him..."

II. God's BLESSING

➤ ***...for they will be***

- FOR = because...
- **God's promises are our guarantees!**
- **THEY** = God's kingdom citizens (exclusively)
- There is an **introductory** kingdom blessing.
- There is an **eternal** kingdom guarantee too!

➤ *...for they will be comforted."*

○ COMFORT

— Biblical (12 definitive helps)

- **Understandable!** (2nd Timothy 3:16-17)
- **Etymological** (let's study God's Word...)
 - Comfort is a **compound** word:
 - **Para = come along side**
(see the English "parallel")
 - **Kaleo = to call out**
 - **Call to one's side...**
 - **NOTE** the **blessed** "**with-ness**"
 - See **John 14:16** **PARACLETE!**
 - *Our come alongside Comforter!*

Our blessed comfort
literally comes from our closeness to Christ!

- JDP

- **Intentional** (by divine design)
- **Personal** (for every true Christian)
- **Providential** (under sovereign authority)
- **Sacrificial** (Christ's cross & our crosses)
- **Substitutional** (Christ alone paid our price)
- **Missional** (our comfort is for His commission)
- **Tactical** (never confuse comfort & complacency)
- **Consequential** (our comfort shines Christ!)
- **Incomparable** (...unconquerable comfort!)
- **Eternal** (The grace of Gospel comfort is forever!)

— Cultural

- MAN-MADE VS. GOD-GIFTED
- FORCED WORK VS. FOUND GRACE
- SUPERFICIAL VS. SUPERNATURAL
- MECHANICAL VS. MIRACULOUS
- TEMPORARY VS. ETERNAL
- PAPER-THIN VS. ROCK-SOLID
- DECEPTIVE VS. GUARANTEED
- COMPROMISE VS. ABIDE & OBEY
- RATIONALIZING VS. REPENTING
- NEGOTIATED VS. BLOOD-BOUGHT
- SELLS SOULS VS REDEEMS SOULS
- CIRCUMSTANTIAL VS. CONSTANT

○ comfort – ED

- **WHO** does the comforting?
- The Comforter! (John 14:16)

God's loving gift of comfort is found in HOW His comfort comes

- In the PERSON of Christ
- In the PRESENCE (*with-ness*) of Christ
- In the POWER of Christ (Acts 1:8)
- In the PURPOSES of Christ
- In the PROMISES of Christ

VIDEO:

Comfort For Those Who Mourn
(UN-Learned)

Mark 12:28ff = *Love the LORD your God with ALL of your heart, soul, mind, & strength. And love your neighbor as your self.*

Galatians 5:22-24 = fruit of comfort

Gal. 2:20 = **comfort of crucifixion!**

2nd Peter 1:3 & **Philippians 4:13**

Matthew 6:33 = Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness & all these things (essentials) will be added to you...

Matthew 11:28 Come to Me all you who are weak and heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Psalm 34:18 God is close to those who are broken hearted...

Matthew 28:20 And I will be WITH YOU ALWAYS...

John 8:32 & 36... we are set free with truth in love

T/S: NOTE the broader movement in the midst of the beatitudes... Jesus is dividing the crowds and unifying His counter-cultural, shockingly-contrasted Church!

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----|--------------------|
| ➤ Kingdom Citizens | vs. | Kingdom Criminals |
| ➤ Born again | vs. | Dead in sin |
| ➤ Faithful followers | vs. | Lukewarm liars |
| ➤ Biblical disciples | vs. | Cultural deceivers |
| ➤ Sheep & shepherds | vs. | Goats & Wolves |

III. God's BUILDING

He's building His biblical blueprint...
that will be used to build His biblical body.

– JDP

Our LORD is defining His standards, recruiting His followers,
and building His body (*His faith-family & army of ambassadors*).

A. Biblical-building: **See God's DIVINE DESIGN!**

a. Zoom all the way in and all the way out...

i. **Beginning & Ending**

1. Genesis 1:1 & John 1:1

2. Genesis 3:15 & John 3:3; 16; 36

3. Jesus is The Alpha & The Omega

B. **Blessed, Beatitudes** (1 + 2) **building...**

C. **BODY-building**

a. Spirit-led

b. Seeking to fulfill all righteousness

c. Promising kingdom...

i. **Citizenship**

ii. **Commandments (Great)**

iii. **Commission (Great)**

iv. **Church-Closeness/Koinonia**

1. Koinonia (**vertically**) see John 17:21ff

2. Koinonia/**(horizontally)** see John 17

v. **Comfort in ALL circumstances!** (2 Cor. 1:3ff)

REVIEW:

Don't let today be reduced to time spent in a classroom...
I pray it was more like an operating room...
where healing heart surgery took place!

VIDEO:

Blessed Are Those Who Mourn
(Enduring Words)

CLOSE:

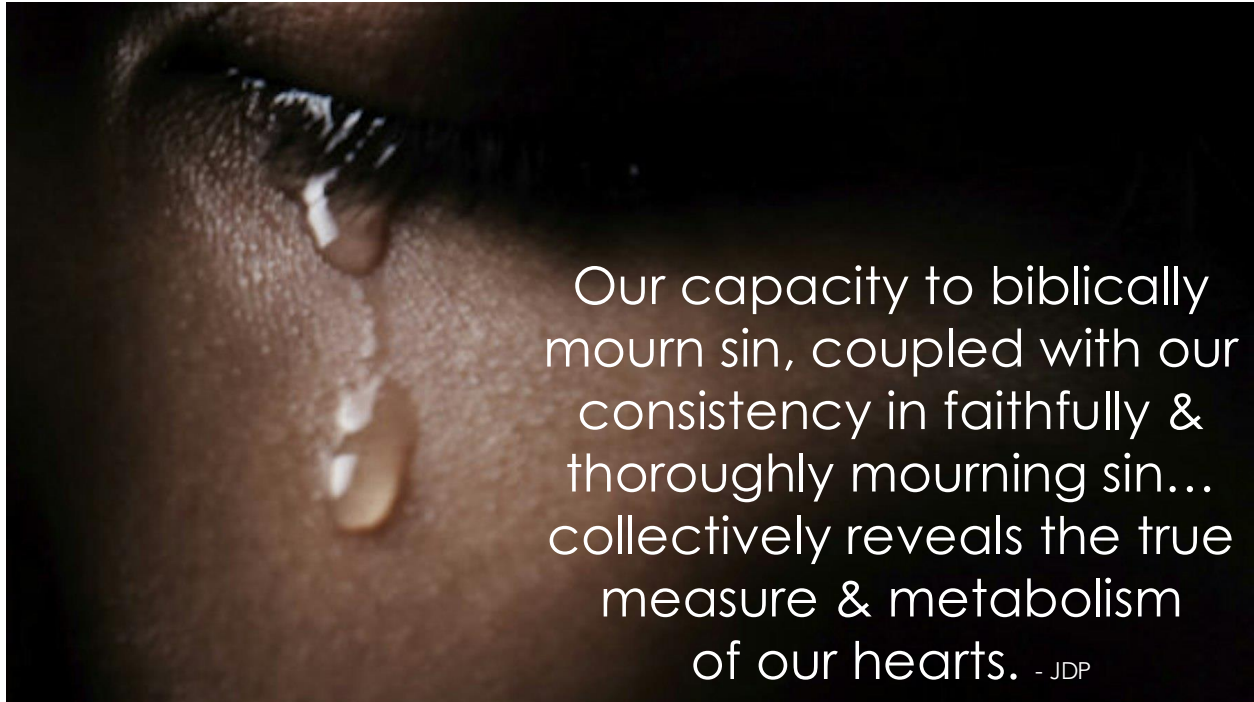
John 14:16

*"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another
Comforter/Advocate/Helper, that He may be with you
forever;"*



1 Peter 4:19

Therefore, let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.



2 Corinthians 1:3-7

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and **God of all comfort** ⁴who **comforts us in all our affliction** **so that** we may be able to **comfort those** who are **in any affliction** with **the comfort** with which we ourselves **are comforted by God** ⁵For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we **share abundantly in comfort** too. ⁶If we are afflicted, it is **for your comfort** and salvation; and **if we are comforted**, it is **for your comfort**, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer ⁷Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also **share in our comfort**.

2 Corinthians 6:10

(NLT)

Our hearts ache,
but we always have joy.

We are poor, but
we give spiritual riches to
others. We own nothing,
and yet
we have everything.

PRAYER

WORSHIP: *It Is Well With My Soul & Lord Lead Me Home*

STUDY NOTES:

◀ Matthew 5:4 ▶

Text Analysis

[Go to Parallel Greek](#)

Strong's	Greek	English	Morphology
3107 [e]	Μακάριοι makarioi	Blessed [are]	Adj-NMP
3588 [e]	οἱ hoi	those	Art-NMP
3996 [e]	πενθοῦντες, penthountes	mourning,	V-PPA-NMP
3754 [e]	ὅτι hoti	for	Conj
846 [e]	αὐτοὶ autoi	they	PPro-NM3P
3870 [e]	παρακληθήσονται. paraklēthēsontai	will be comforted.	V-FIP-3P

◀ 3996. pentheó ▶

Strong's Lexicon

pentheó: To mourn, to lament, to grieve

Original Word: [πενθέω](#)

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: [pentheó](#)

Pronunciation: pen-theh'-o

Phonetic Spelling: (pen-theh'-o)

Definition: To mourn, to lament, to grieve

Meaning: I mourn, lament, feel guilt.

Word Origin: Derived from πένθος (penthos), meaning "mourning" or "grief."

Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries: - H56 אָבַל (abal) - to mourn, lament

- H5594 סָפַד (saphad) - to wail, lament

Usage: The verb "pentheó" is used in the New Testament to describe the act of mourning or expressing deep sorrow. It often conveys a profound emotional response to loss, sin, or repentance. The term can refer to both personal grief and communal lamentation.

Cultural and Historical Background:

In the ancient Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures, mourning was a significant social and religious practice.

It involved various expressions of grief, such as weeping, wearing sackcloth, fasting, and other outward signs of sorrow.

Mourning was not only a personal experience but also a communal one, often observed in response to death, national calamity, or sin.

The act of mourning was seen as a way to honor the deceased, express repentance, or seek divine intervention.

3996 *penthéō* – properly, grieve over a *death*; (figuratively) **to grieve over a personal hope (relationship) that dies**, i.e. *comes to divine closure* ("ends").

3996 /*penthéō* ("mourn over a death") refers to "***manifested grief***" (WS, 360) – **so severe it takes possession of a person and cannot be hid.** (This is the same meaning of 3996 /*penthéō* throughout *antiquity*, cf. LS, R. Trench, *Synonyms*.)

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from *penthos*

Definition

to mourn, lament

NASB Translation

mourn (6), mourned (1), mourning (3).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 3996: *πενθέω*

πενθέω, *πένθω*; future *πενθήσω*; 1 aorist *ἐπένθησα* (*πένθος*); from Homer down; the Sept. chiefly for *לָנַח*; **to mourn**;

a. intransitive: [Matthew 5:4](#) (); ; [1 Corinthians 5:2](#); *πενθεῖν καὶ κλαίειν*, [Mark 16:10](#); [Luke 6:25](#); [James 4:9](#); [Revelation 18:15, 19](#); *ἐπὶ τίνι*, over one, [Revelation 18:11](#) R G L ([Isaiah 66:10](#)); *ἐπὶ τινα*, *ibid.* T Tr WH ([2 Samuel 13:37](#); [2 Chronicles 35:24](#), etc.).

b. transitive, **to mourn for, lament, one**: [2 Corinthians 12:21](#) (cf. *Winers Grammar*, 635f (590); *Buttmann*, § 131, 4. *Synonym*: see *θρηνέω*, at the end.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

mourn, bewail.

From [penthos](#); to grieve (the feeling or the act) -- mourn, (be-)wail.

see GREEK [penthos](#)

◀ 3870. parakaleó ▶

Strong's Lexicon

parakaleó: To call to one's side, to exhort, to encourage, to comfort, to urge

Original Word: παρακαλέω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: parakaleó

Pronunciation: pah-rah-kah-LEH-oh

Phonetic Spelling: (par-ak-al-eh'-o)

Definition: *To call to one's side, to exhort, to encourage, to comfort, urge*

Meaning: (a) I send for, summon, invite, (b) I beseech, entreat, beg, (c) I exhort, admonish, (d) I comfort, encourage, console.

Word Origin: From παρά (para, "beside") and καλέω (kaleo, "to call")

Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries: - H5162 (נָחַם, nacham): To comfort, console

- H7121 (קָרָא, qara): To call, proclaim

Usage:

The verb "parakaleó" is used in the New Testament to convey a range of meanings centered around the idea of calling someone to one's

side for the purpose of exhortation, encouragement, comfort, or urging.

It is often used in contexts where believers are encouraged to live out their faith, comfort one another in times of distress, or be urged to adhere to the teachings of Christ.

The term reflects both a personal and communal aspect of the Christian life, emphasizing the importance of mutual support and encouragement within the body of Christ.

Cultural and Historical Background:

In the Greco-Roman world, the concept of "parakaleó" would have been understood in various contexts, such as legal, military, and personal relationships.

In a legal sense, it could refer to calling someone to testify or advocate on one's behalf. In a military context, it might involve rallying troops or encouraging them before battle.

WITHIN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES, "PARAKALEÓ" TOOK ON A DISTINCTLY SPIRITUAL DIMENSION, REFLECTING THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THE "PARACLETE" OR "COMFORTER" (JOHN 14:16), WHO COMES ALONGSIDE BELIEVERS TO GUIDE AND SUPPORT THEM.

(READ: [John 14:15-17](#) *Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit*)

[15](#) "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. [16](#) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, [17](#) even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.)

HELPS Word-studies

[3870](#) *parakaléō* (from [3844](#) /*pará*, "from close-beside" and [2564](#) /*kaléō*, "to call")

– properly, "make a call" from being "close-up and personal." [3870](#) /*parakaléō* ("personally make a")

call") refers to believers offering up evidence that stands up in God's court.

[3870 (*parakalēō*), the root of 3875 /*paráklētos* ("legal advocate"), likewise has *legal* overtones.]

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

from **para** and **kaleó**

Definition

to call to or for, to exhort, to encourage

NASB Translation

appeal (4), appealed (1), appealing (2), beg (1), begging (2), beseeching (1), comfort (5), comforted (11), comforts (2), conciliate (1), encourage (6), encouraged (4), encouraging (3), entreat (1), exhort (8), exhortation* (1), exhortations (1), exhorted (2), exhorting (3), exhorts (1), given (1), implore (4), implored (9), imploring (5), invited (2), making an appeal (1), plead (1), pleaded (1), pleading (1), preach (1), requested (1), urge (17), urged (5), urging (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 3870: παρακαλέω

παρακαλέω, παρακαλῶ; imperfect 3 person singular παρεκάλει, 1 and 3 person plural παρεκάλουν; 1 aorist παρεκάλεσα; passive, present παρακαλοῦμαι; perfect παρακέκλημαι; 1 aorist παρεκλήθην; 1 future παρακληθήσομαι; from Aeschylus and Herodotus down;

I. as in Greek writings **to call to one's side, call for, summon**: τινά, with an infinitive indicating the purpose, Acts 28:20 (others (less naturally) refer this to II. 2, making the accusative the subjunctive of the infinitive).

II. **to address, speak to** (call to, call on), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc.; hence, result a variety of senses, on which see Knapp, Scripto varii arg. edition 2, p. 117ff; cf. Fritzsche, Ep. ad Romans, i., p. 32f.

1. as in Greek authors, **to admonish, exhort**: absolutely, Luke 3:18; (Acts 20:1 (R G omit)); Romans 12:8; 2 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 10:25; 1 Peter 5:12; followed by direct

discourse, [2 Corinthians 5:20](#); followed by *λέγων* with direct discourse, [Acts 2:40](#); followed by an infinitive where in Latinut, [1 Timothy 2:1](#); *τινα*, [Acts 15:32](#); [Acts 16:40](#); [2 Corinthians 10:1](#); [1 Thessalonians 2:12](#) (); ; [1 Timothy 5:1](#); [Hebrews 3:13](#); *τινα λόγῳ πολλῶ*, [Acts 20:2](#); *ἰντα* followed by direct discourse, [1 Corinthians 4:16](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:14](#); [Hebrews 13:22](#) (here L WH marginal reading infinitive); [1 Peter 5:1f](#); *τινα* followed by an infinitive where in Latinut (cf. Buttman, §§ 140, 1; 141, 2; Winer's Grammar, 332 (311); 335 (315) n.): infinitive present, [Acts 11:23](#); [Acts 14:22](#); [Philippians 4:2](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:10](#); [Titus 2:6](#); [1 Peter 2:11](#) (here Lachmann adds *ὑμᾶς* to the infinitive, and WH meg. with manuscripts A C L etc. read *ἀπέχεσθε*); [Jude 1:3](#); infinitive aorist, [Acts 27:33](#); [Romans 12:1](#); [Romans 15:30](#); [2 Corinthians 2:8](#); [2 Corinthians 6:1](#); [Ephesians 4:1](#); [1 Timothy 1:3](#); [Hebrews 13:19](#); *τινα* followed by *ἵνα* with subjunctive (cf. Buttman, § 139, 42; Winer's Grammar, 335 as above), [1 Corinthians 1:10](#); [1 Corinthians 16:15](#); [2 Corinthians 8:6](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:1](#); [2 Thessalonians 3:12](#); to enjoin a thing by exhortation (cf. Buttman, § 141, 2), [1 Timothy 6:2](#); [Titus 2:15](#).

2. to beg, entreat, beseech (Josephus, Antiquities 6, 7, 4; (11, 8, 5); often in Epictetus cf. Schweighäuser, Index graecit. Epictetus, p. 411; Plutarch, apophth. regum, Mor. ii, p. 30, Tauchn. edition (vi. 695 edition Reiske; examples from Polybius, Diodorus, Philo, others, in Sophocles' Lexicon, under the word); not thus in the earlier Greek authors except where the gods are called on for aid, in the expressions, *παρακαλεῖν Θεούς*, so *Θεόν* in Josephus, Antiquities 6, 2, 2 and 7, 4; (cf. Winer's Grammar, 22)): (absolutely, [Philemon 1:9](#) (yet see the commentaries at the passage)); *τινα*, [Matthew 8:5](#); [Matthew 18:32](#); [Matthew 26:53](#); [Mark 1:40](#); [Acts 16:9](#); [2 Corinthians 12:18](#); *πολλά*, **much**, [Mark 5:23](#): *τινα περί τίνος*, [Philemon 1:10](#); followed by direct discourse, [Acts 9:38](#) L T Tr WH with *λέγων* added and direct discourse, [Matthew 18:29](#); [Mark 5:12](#); ([Luke 7:4](#) (Tdf. *ἠρώτων*)); without the accusative. [Acts 16:15](#); *τινα* followed by an infinitive (Winer's Grammar, and Buttman's Grammar, as above), [Mark 5:17](#); [Luke 8:41](#); [Acts 8:31](#); [Acts 19:31](#); [Acts 28:14](#) (1 Macc. 9:35); *τινα* followed by *ὅπως*, [Matthew 8:34](#) (here Lachmann *ἵνα* (see above)); [Acts 25:2](#) (4 Macc. 4:11; Plutarch, Demetr c. 38); *τινα* followed by *ἵνα* (Winer's Grammar, § 44, 8 a.; Buttman, § 139, 42), [Matthew 14:36](#); [Mark 5:18](#); [Mark 6:56](#); [Mark 7:32](#); [Mark 8:22](#); [Luke 8:31f](#); ([2 Corinthians 9:5](#)); *τινα ὑπέρ τίνος*, *ἵνα*, [2 Corinthians 12:8](#); *πολλά* (**much**) *τινα*, *ἵνα*, [Mark 5:10](#); [1 Corinthians 16:12](#); followed by *τοῦ μή* with an infinitive (Buttman, § 140, 16 δ.; Winer's Grammar, 325 (305)), [Acts 21:12](#); by an infinitive [Acts 9:38](#) R G; by an accusative with an infinitive, [Acts 13:42](#); [Acts 24:4](#); ([Romans 16:17](#)). **to strive to appease by entreaty**: absolutely, [1 Corinthians 4:13](#); *τινα*, [Luke 15:28](#); [Acts 16:39](#) (2 Macc. 13:23).

3. to console, to encourage and strengthen by consolation, to comfort, (the Sept. for $\square\pi\iota$; very rarely so in Greek authors, as Plutarch, Oth. 16): absolutely, [2 Corinthians 2:7](#); *τινα*, [2 Corinthians 1:6](#); [2 Corinthians 7:6f](#); *ἐν* with a dative of the thing with which one comforts

another, [1 Thessalonians 4:18](#); [τινα διά παρακλήσεως](#), [2 Corinthians 1:4](#); with an accusative of the contents, [διά τῆς παρακληθῆναι ἧς](#) (for ἧν, see [ὅς, ἡ, ὁ](#), II. 2 c. [α.](#)) [παρακαλούμεθα](#), *ibid.*; in the passive, **to receive consolation, be comforted**, [Matthew 2:18](#); [2 Corinthians 13:11](#); [ἐπί τίνι](#) over (in) a thing (see [ἐπί](#), B. 2 a. [δ.](#)), [2 Corinthians 1:4](#); of the consolation (comfort) given not in words but by the experience of a happier lot or by a happy issue, equivalent to **to refresh, cheer**: passive, [Matthew 5:4 \(5\)](#); [Luke 16:25](#); [Acts 20:12](#); [2 Corinthians 7:13](#) (where a full stop must be put after [παρακεκλήμεθα](#); [ἐν τίνι](#), by the help of a thing, [2 Corinthians 7:6f](#); [ἐπί τίνι](#), [1 Thessalonians 3:7](#); with ([ἐν](#)) [παρακλήσει](#) added, [2 Corinthians 7:7](#).

4. to encourage, strengthen (i. e. in the language of A. V. **comfort** (see Wright, Bible Word-Book, 2nd edition, under the word)) (in faith, piety, hope): [τάς καρδίας](#), your hearts, [Ephesians 6:22](#); [Colossians 2:2](#); [Colossians 4:8](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:17](#), (also [χεῖρας ἀσθενεῖς](#), [Job 4:3](#) for [רַיָּה](#); [γόνατα παραλελυμένα](#), [Isaiah 35:3f](#) (see the Hebrew) for [רַגְלִים](#)).

5. it combines the ideas of exhorting and comforting and encouraging in [Romans 12:8](#); [1 Corinthians 14:31](#); [1 Thessalonians 3:2](#).

6. to instruct, teach: [ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ](#), [Titus 1:9](#). (Compare: [συμπαρακαλέω](#).)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

beseech, call for, urge

From [para](#) and [kaleo](#); to call near, i.e. Invite, invoke (by imploration, hortation or consolation) -- **beseech, call for, (be of good) comfort**, desire, (give) exhort(-ation), intreat, pray.

see GREEK [para](#)

see GREEK [kaleo](#)

[From Luke 6:21 & 25](#)

WEEP-ING

◀ 2799. klaió ▶

Strong's Lexicon

klaió: To weep, to cry, to mourn

Original Word: κλαίω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: klaió

Pronunciation: klah'-yo

Phonetic Spelling: (klah'-yo)

Definition: **To weep, to cry, to mourn**

Meaning: **I weep, weep for, mourn, lament.**

Word Origin: A primary verb

Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries: - H1058 (בָּכָה, *bakah*): To weep, to lament

- H1065 (בָּכָה, *bekiy*): Weeping, lamentation

Usage:

The Greek verb "κλαίω" (*klaió*) is used in the New Testament to describe the act of weeping or crying, often in the context of mourning or expressing deep sorrow.

It conveys a sense of emotional outpouring, whether due to personal grief, compassion for others, or repentance.

Cultural and Historical Background:

In the ancient Near Eastern culture, expressions of grief and mourning were often public and communal. Weeping was

a common response to death, loss, or calamity, and it was not unusual for mourners to wail loudly as a sign of their sorrow.

In Jewish tradition, professional mourners might be hired to lament at funerals, and periods of mourning were observed with specific customs and rituals.

HELPS Word-studies

2799 *klaíō* – properly, **weep aloud, expressing uncontainable, audible grief** ("audible weeping," *WP*, 2, 88).

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

a prim. verb

Definition

to weep

NASB Translation

weep (18), weeping (17), wept (4).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 2799: κλαίω

κλαίω; imperfect ἔκλαιον; future κλαύσω (Luke 6:25; John 16:20; and Tr WH text in Revelation 18:9, for κλαύσομαι. more common in Greek writ, especially the earlier, and found in Leviticus 10:6; Joel 2:17, and according to most editions in Revelation 18:9; cf. Krüger, § 40 under the word, i., p. 175f; Kühner, § 343, under the word, i., p. 847; (Veitch, under the word); Buttmann, 60 (53); (Winer's Grammar, 87 (83))); 1 aorist ἔκλαυσα; the Sept. frequently for כָּרַעַ; (from Homer down); **to mourn, weep, lament**;

a. intransitive: Mark 14:72; Mark 16:10; Luke 7:13, 38; John 11:31, 33; John 20:11, 13, 15; Acts 9:39; Acts 21:13; Rev. (); ; **πολλά**, for which L T Tr WH **πολύ**, Revelation 5:4; **πικρῶς**, Matthew 26:75; Luke 22:62; weeping as the sign of pain and grief for the thing signified (i. e. for pain and grief), Luke 6:21, 25 (opposed to **γελαῖν**); John 16:20; Romans 12:15 (opposed to **χαίρειν**); Philippians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 7:30; James 4:9; James 5:1; of those who mourn the dead: Mark 5:38; Luke 7:32; Luke 8:52; **ἐπί τίνι**, over anyone, Luke 19:41 R G (Sir. 22:11); also joined with **πενθεῖν**, Revelation 18:11 R G L; **κλαίειν ἐπί τινα**, Luke 19:41 L T Tr WH; ; joined with **κόπτεσθαι** followed by **ἐπί τινα**, Revelation 18:9 T Tr WH.

b. transitive, **τινα**, **to weep for, mourn for, bewail**, one (cf. Buttmann, § 131, 4; Winer's Grammar, 32, 1 γ.): Matthew 2:18, and Rec. in Revelation 18:9. [SYNONYMS: **δακρῶω**, **κλαίω**, **ὀδύρομαι**, **θρηνέω**, **ἀλαλάζω** (**ὀλολύζω**), **στενάζω**: strictly, **δακρῶω** denotes **to shed tears, weep** silently; **κλαίω** to weep audibly, **to cry** as a child; **ὀδύρομαι** to give verbal expression to grief, **to lament**; **θρηνέω** to give formal expression to grief, **to sing a dirge**; **ἀλαλάζω** **to wail** in oriental style, **to howl** in a consecrated, semi-liturgical fashion; **στενάζω** to express grief by inarticulate or semi-articulate sounds, **to groan**. Cf. Schmidt chh. 26, 126.]

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

bewail, weep.

Of uncertain affinity; to sob, i.e. Wail aloud,
(whereas dakruo is rather to cry silently)
-- bewail, weep.

NOW:

◀ 3568. nun ▶

Strong's Lexicon

nun: now, at present, at this time

Original Word: νῦν

Part of Speech: Adverb

Transliteration: nun

Pronunciation: noon

Phonetic Spelling: (noon)

Definition: now, **at present, at this time**

Meaning: adv. (a) of time: just now, even now; just at hand, immediately, (b) of logical

connection: now then, (c) **in commands and appeals: at this instant.**

Word Origin: A primary particle of present time

Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries: The Hebrew equivalent often used in similar contexts is הָעַתָּה (H6258 - 'attah), which also means "now" or "at this time."

Usage: The Greek adverb "νῦν" (nun) is used to denote the present moment or the current time.

It often contrasts with past or future events, emphasizing the immediacy or urgency of the situation.

In the New Testament, "nun" is frequently used to highlight a transition or a new phase in God's redemptive plan, often

marking a shift from the old covenant to the new covenant through Christ.

Cultural and Historical Background: In the Greco-Roman world, time was often viewed cyclically, but the New Testament introduces a more linear perspective, emphasizing the unfolding of God's plan in history. **The use of "νῦν" reflects this linear progression, marking significant moments in the narrative of salvation history.** The term underscores the present reality of God's work through Jesus Christ and the immediate implications for believers.

HELPS Word-studies

3568 *nyn* (an adverb) – *now*, as the *logical result* of what precedes; *now, in light of* what has *gone before*.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

a prim. particle of pres. time

Definition

now, the present

NASB Translation

actually (1), just now (1), now (130), present (11), present case (1), since (1), this time (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 3568: νῦν

νῦν, and νυνί (which see in its place), adverb **now**, Latinnunc (the Sept. for נון; (from Homer down));

1. adverb of Time, **now**, i. e. **at the present time**;

a. so used that by the thing which is now said to be or to be done the present time is opposed to past time: [John 4:18](#); [John 9:21](#); [Acts 16:37](#); [Acts 23:21](#); [Romans 13:11](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:6](#); [2 Corinthians 7:9](#); [2 Corinthians 13:2](#); [Philippians 1:30](#); [Philippians 2:12](#); [Philippians](#)

3:18; Colossians 1:24, etc.; frequently it denotes a somewhat extended portion of present time as opposed to a former state of things: Luke 16:25; Acts 7:4; Galatians 1:23; Galatians 3:3; specifically, the time since certain persons received the Christian religion, Romans 5:9, 11; Romans 6:19, 21; Romans 8:1; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 4:29; 1 Peter 2:10, 25; or the time since man has had the blessing of the gospel, as opposed to past times, equivalent to **in our times, our age**: Acts 7:52; Romans 16:26; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Ephesians 3:5, 10; 2 Timothy 1:10; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 Peter 3:21,(cf. Epistle ad Diogn. 1 [ET]).

b. opposed to future time: John 12:21; John 13:36 (opposed to ὕστερον); ; Romans 11:31; 1 Corinthians 16:12; νῦν καί εἰς πάντας τοὺς αἰῶνας, Jude 1:25; used to distinguish this present age, preceding Christ's return, from the age which follows that return: Luke 6:21, 25; Ephesians 2:2; Hebrews 2:8; 2 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:28; with ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ added, Mark 10:30.

c. Sometimes νῦν with the present is used of what will occur **forthwith or soon**, Luke 2:29; John 12:31; John 16:5; John 17:13; Acts 26:17. with a preterite, of what has just been done, Matthew 26:65; John 21:10; or **very lately** (but now, just now, hyperbolically, equivalent to a short time ago), νῦν ἐζήτουν σε λιθάσαι οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, John 11:8; cf. Kypke at the passage; Vig. ed. Herm., p. 425f with a future, of those future things which are thought of as already begun to be done, John 12:31; or of those which will be done instantly, Acts 13:11 (here others supply ἔστι; Winer's Grammar, § 64, 2 a.); or **soon**, Acts 20:22 (here πορεύομαι merely has inherent future force; cf. Buttmann, § 137, 10 a.).

d. with the imperative it often marks the proper or fit time for doing a thing: Matthew 27:42; Mark 15:32; John 2:8. Hence, it serves to point an exhortation in ἄγε νῦν, **come now**: James 4:13; James 5:1 (where it is more correctly written ἄγε νῦν, cf. Passow, ii., p. 372).

e. with other particles, by which the contrast in time is marked more precisely: καί νῦν, **even now** (now also), John 11:22; Philippians 1:20; **and now**, John 17:5; Acts 7:34 (cf. 2 below); (Winer's Grammar, § 43, 3 a.); ; ἀλλά νῦν, Luke 22:36; ἀλλά καί νῦν, **but even now**, John 11:22 (T Tr text WH omit; L Tr marginal reading brackets ἀλλά); ἔτι νῦν, 1 Corinthians 3:2(3) (L WH brackets ἔτι); νῦν δέ (see νυνί below) **but now**, John 16:5; John 17:13; Hebrews 2:8; τότε ... νῦν δέ, Galatians 4:9; Romans 6:21f (here νυνί δέ); Hebrews 12:26; πότε ... νῦν δέ, Romans 11:30 (WH marginal reading νυνί); Ephesians 5:8; 1 Peter 2:10; νῦν ἤδη, **now already**, 1 John 4:3. νῦν οὖν, **now therefore**, Acts 10:33; Acts 15:10; Acts 16:36; Acts 23:15 (Genesis 27:8, 43; Genesis 31:13, 30; Genesis 45:8; 1 Macc. 10:71). τό νῦν ἔχον, see ἔχω, II.

b. f. with the article; *α.* with neuter accusative absolutely of the article, **τά νῦν**, **as respects the present; at present, now** (in which sense it is written also **τανῦν** (so Grab. always, Rec. twice; classic editions often **τανῦν**; cf. Tdf. Proleg., p. 111; Chandler, Accent, § 826)): [Acts 4:29](#); [Acts 17:30](#); [Acts 20:32](#); [Acts 27:22](#) (2 Macc. 15:8; often in classical Greek; also **τό νῦν**, 1 Macc. 7:35 1 Macc. 9:9; cf. Krüger, § 50, 5, 13; Bernhardt (1829), p. 328; Alexander Buttmann (1873) Gram. § 125, 8 Anm. 8 (5)); **the things that now are, the present things**, Judith 9:5; the accusative absolute, **as respects the things now taking place**, equivalent to **as respects the case in hand**, [Acts 5:38](#). *β.* **ὁ, ἡ, τό νῦν**, **the present**, joined to substantives: as **ὁ νῦν αἰών**, 1 Timothy 6:17; 2 Timothy 4:10; Titus 2:12; **καιρός**, [Romans 3:26](#); [Romans 8:18](#); [Romans 11:5](#); (2 Corinthians 8:14 (13)); **νῦν ἱεροσολημ**, [Galatians 4:25](#); **οἱ νῦν οὐρανοί**, 2 Peter 3:7; **μου τῆς πρὸς ὑμᾶς νῦν** (or **νυνί**) **ἀπολογίας**, [Acts 22:1](#). *γ.* **τό νῦν** with prepositions: **ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν** (the Sept. for **מֵעַתָּה**)' **from this time onward** (A. V. **from henceforth**), [Luke 1:48](#); [Luke 5:10](#); [Luke 12:52](#); [Luke 22:69](#); [Acts 18:6](#); 2 Corinthians 5:16; **ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν**, [Romans 8:22](#); [Philippians 1:5](#); **ἕως τοῦ νῦν** (the Sept. for **ἕως** **מֵעַתָּה**), [Matthew 24:21](#); [Mark 13:19](#).

2. Like our **now** and the Latinnunc, it stands in a conclusion or sequence; "as things now are, as the matter now stands; under these circumstances; in the present state of affairs; since these things are so; as it is": [Luke 11:39](#) (**νῦν** i. e. since ye are intent on observing the requirements of tradition; (but others take **νῦν** here of time — a covert allusion to a former and better state of things)); [Colossians 1:24](#) (others, of time; cf. Meyer, Lightfoot, Ellicott at the passage); **καί νῦν**, 1 John 2:28; 2 John 1:5; **καί νῦν δεῦρο**, [Acts 7:34](#). **νῦν δέ** (and **νυνί δέ** see, **νυνί**, **but note; now however; but as it is**; (often in classical Greek; cf. Vig. edition, Herm., p. 426; Matthiae, ii., p. 1434f; Kühner, § 498, 2 (or Jelf, § 719, 2)): [1 Corinthians 7:14](#); [James 4:16](#), and R G in [Hebrews 9:26](#); especially after a conditional statement with **εἰ** and the indicative preterite, [Luke 19:42](#); [John 8:40](#); [John 9:41](#); [John 15:22, 24](#); [John 18:36](#); [1 Corinthians 12:20](#); (cf. Buttmann, § 151, 26). In Revelation **νῦν** does not occur. (Synonym: see **ἄρτι**.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

henceforth, hereafter, now

A primary particle of present time; "now" (as adverb of date, a transition or emphasis); also as noun or adjective present or immediate -- henceforth, + hereafter, of late, soon, present, this (time). See also [tanun](#), [nuni](#).

see GREEK [tanun](#)

see GREEK [nuni](#)

You will LAUGH:

◀ **1070** **gelaó** ▶

Strong's Lexicon

gelaó: To laugh

Original Word: γελάω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: gelaó

Pronunciation: gheh-LAH-oh

Phonetic Spelling: (ghel-ah'-o)

Definition: **To laugh**

Meaning: I laugh, smile.

Word Origin: A primary verb

Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries: The Hebrew equivalent often associated with laughter is שָׂחַ (sachaq - Strong's H7832), which also means to laugh or to play. This term appears in various Old Testament contexts, such as in Genesis 21:6, where Sarah says, "God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me."

Usage: The Greek verb "gelaó" means "to laugh." It is used in the New Testament to describe the act of laughing, often in contexts that convey joy, disbelief, or scorn.

THE TERM CAN IMPLY A RANGE OF EMOTIONS FROM GENUINE JOY TO DERISION, DEPENDING ON THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT IS USED.

Cultural and Historical Background:

In the ancient Greco-Roman world, laughter was a common human expression, much like today. It could signify joy, mockery, or even a philosophical stance on the absurdity of life.

In Jewish culture, laughter was also seen in various lights, from the joy of Sarah upon the birth of Isaac to the scornful laughter of enemies. Understanding the context of laughter in biblical times helps to discern the nuances of its use in Scripture.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

a prim. word

Definition

to laugh

NASB Translation

laugh (2).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 1070: γελάω

γελάω, γελῶ; future γελάσω (in Greek writings more common γελάσομαι (Buttmann, 53 (46); Winers Grammar, 84 (80))); (from Homer down); **to laugh**: Luke 6:21 (opposed to κλαίω), 25. (Compare: καταγελάω.)

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

laugh.

Of uncertain affinity; to laugh (as a sign of joy or satisfaction) -- laugh.

WOE:

◀ 3759. ouai ▶

Strong's Lexicon

ouai: Woe, alas

Original Word: οὐαί

Part of Speech: Interjection, Noun, Indeclinable, Other Type

Transliteration: ouai

Pronunciation: oo-ah'-ee

Phonetic Spelling: (oo-ah'-ee)

Definition: **Woe, alas**

Meaning: **woe!, alas!, uttered in grief or denunciation.**

Word Origin: **A primary exclamation of grief**

Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries: The Hebrew equivalent often used in similar contexts is וָאֵ (H188), which also conveys a sense of lamentation or impending judgment.

Usage:

The Greek word "οὐαί" (ouai) is an interjection used to express deep

distress, lamentation, or
denunciation.

It is often translated as "woe" or "alas" in English.

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, IT IS FREQUENTLY USED BY JESUS TO PRONOUNCE JUDGMENT OR EXPRESS SORROW OVER THE SPIRITUAL STATE OF INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS, PARTICULARLY THE PHARISEES AND CITIES THAT REJECTED HIS MESSAGE.

Cultural and Historical Background: In the ancient Near Eastern context, expressions of woe were common in both secular and religious texts. They were used to lament misfortune or impending doom and were often part of prophetic literature to warn of divine judgment.

In the Greco-Roman world, such expressions were understood as serious pronouncements, often linked to the moral and spiritual failings of individuals or societies.

NAS Exhaustive Concordance

Word Origin

a prim. interj.

Definition

alas! woe! (an expression of grief or denunciation)

NASB Translation

woe (46), woes (1).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

STRONGS NT 3759: οὐαί

οὐαί, an interjection of grief or of denunciation; the Sept. chiefly for וְיָאֵל and וְיָאֵל; "Alas! Woe!" with a dat of person added, [Matthew 11:21](#); [Matthew 18:7](#); [Matthew 23:13-16, 23, 25, 27, 29](#); [Matthew 24:19](#); [Matthew 26:24](#); [Mark 13:17](#); [Mark 14:21](#); [Luke 6:24-26](#); [Luke 10:13](#); [Luke 11:42-44, 46f, 52](#); [Luke 21:23](#); [Luke 22:22](#); [Jude 1:11](#); [Revelation 12:12](#) R G L, small edition. (see below) ([Numbers 21:29](#); [Isaiah 3:9](#), and often in the Sept.); thrice repeated, and followed by a dative, [Revelation 8:13](#) R G L WH marginal reading (see below); the dative is omitted in [Luke 17:1](#); twice repeated and followed by a nominative in place of a vocative, [Revelation 18:10, 16, 19](#) ([Isaiah 1:24](#); [Isaiah 5:8-22](#); [Habakkuk 2:6, 12](#), etc.); exceptionally, with an accusative of the person, in [Revelation 8:13](#) T Tr WH text, and L T Tr WH; this accusative, I think, must be regarded either as an accusative of exclamation (cf. Matthiae, § 410), or as an imitation of the construction of the accusative after verbs of injuring (Buttmann, § 131, 14 judges otherwise); with the addition of ἀπό and a genitive of the evil the infliction of which is deplored (cf. Buttmann, 322 (277); Winer's Grammar, 371 (348)), [Matthew 18:7](#); also of ἐκ, [Revelation 8:13](#). As a substantive, ἡ οὐαί (the writer seems to have been led to use the feminine by the similarity of ἡ θλίψις or ἡ ταλαιπωρία; cf. Winer's Grammar, 179 (169)) **woe**, **calamity**: [Revelation 9:12](#); [Revelation 11:14](#); δύο οὐαί, [Revelation 9:12](#) (οὐαί ἐπὶ οὐαί ἔσται, [Ezekiel 7:26](#); οὐαί ἡμᾶς λήψεται Evang. Nicod c. 21 (Pars ii., 5:1 (edited by Tdf.))); so also in the phrase οὐαί μοι ἔστιν, **woe is unto me**, i. e. divine penalty threatens me, [1 Corinthians 9:16](#), cf. [Hosea 9:12](#); ([Jeremiah 6:4](#)); Epictetus diss. 3, 19, 1 (frequent in ecclesiastical writings).

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

alas, woe.

A primary exclamation of grief; "woe" -- alas, woe.

TO YOU (personal; individually & collectively)

LAUGH / LAUGH-ING (same)

NOW: (same)

You will MOURN (same)

AND (same)

WEEP. (same)

MacArthur Commentary on Matthew:

Happy Are the Sad

(5:4)

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

In Psalm 55 David cries out, “Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. Behold, I would wander far away, I would lodge in the wilderness. I would hasten to my place of refuge from the stormy wind and tempest” (vv. 6–8).

Such a cry comes from the lips of almost everyone at some time or another. David echoes the cry of humanity—a cry for release, a cry for freedom, a cry for escape from things that weigh heavy on us. When we face great sorrow, disappointment, tragedy, or failure, we wish that we could escape the trouble like we escape a thunderstorm by running inside. But comfort from the troubles of life is much harder to find than shelter from rain. **The deeper the sorrow, the harder the pressure, the worse the despair, the more elusive comfort seems to be.**

As pointed out in the previous chapter,

all of the Beatitudes are paradoxical, because what they promise for what they demand seems incongruous and upside down in the eyes of the natural man.

THE PARADOX OF THE SECOND BEATITUDE IS OBVIOUS. WHAT COULD BE MORE SELF-CONTRADICTIONARY THAN THE IDEA THAT THE SAD ARE HAPPY, THAT THE PATH TO HAPPINESS IS

SADNESS, THAT THE WAY TO REJOICING IS IN MOURNING?

In the routine of ordinary, day-by-day living, the idea seems absurd. The whole structure of most human living—whether by the primitive or sophisticated, the wealthy or the poor, the educated or the uneducated—is based on the seemingly incontrovertible principle that the way to happiness is having things go your own way. Pleasure brings happiness, money brings happiness, entertainment brings happiness, fame and praise bring happiness, self-expression brings happiness. On the negative side, avoiding pain, trouble, disappointment, frustration, hardships, and other problems brings happiness. Sidestepping those things is necessary before the other things can bring full happiness.

Throughout history a basic axiom of the world has been that favorable things bring happiness, whereas unfavorable things bring unhappiness.

The principle seems so self-evident that most people would not bother to debate it.

BUT JESUS SAID, “HAPPY ARE THE SAD.” HE EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO SAY, “WOE TO YOU WHO LAUGH NOW, FOR YOU SHALL MOURN AND WEEP” (LUKE 6:25)—THE CONVERSE BEATITUDE OF MATTHEW 5:4.

Jesus turned the world’s principles exactly upside down. He reversed the path to happiness.

To discover what Jesus meant, and did not mean, in this beatitude **we will look at the meaning of mourning as it is used here, the result of mourning, the way to mourn as Jesus teaches, and the way to know if we are truly mourning.**

THE MEANING OF MOURNING

Certain kinds of sorrow are common to all mankind, experienced by believer and unbeliever alike.

Some of these sorrows are normal and legitimate, sorrows which concern the Lord and for which He knows our need. Others are abnormal and illegitimate, brought about solely because of sinful passions and objectives.

IMPROPER MOURNING

Improper mourning is the sorrow of those who are frustrated in fulfilling evil plans and lusts, or who have misguided loyalties and affection. To those who mourn in that way the Lord offers no help or solace.

David's son "Amnon was so frustrated because of his sister Tamar that he made himself ill, for she was a virgin, and it seemed hard to Amnon to do anything to her" (2 Sam. 13:2). Amnon's grief was caused by incestuous, unfulfilled lust.

Others carry legitimate sorrow to illegitimate extremes.
When a person grieves so hard and so long over the loss of a loved one that he cannot function normally, his grief becomes sinful and destructive. Such depressing sorrow is usually related to guilt, essentially selfish, and, for a Christian, is a mark of unfaithfulness and lack of trust in God.

David grieved that way, in part to try to atone for his guilt. When the rebellious Absalom, another of David's sons, was killed, his father went into inconsolable mourning (2 Sam. 18:33–19:4). Joab finally rebuked the king, saying, "Today you have covered with shame the faces of all your servants, who today have saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters, the lives of your wives, and the lives of your concubines, by loving those who hate you, and by hating those who love you. For you have shown today that princes and servants are nothing to you; for I know this day that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased" (19:5–6). The wickedly ambitious Absalom had raised a rebel army, driven the king—his own father—out of Jerusalem, and taken over the palace.

David's love for his son was understandable, but his judgment had been perverted. Probably because of his great feeling of guilt for having been such a poor father, and because he knew that Absalom's tragedy was part of the judgment God sent because of David's adulterous and murderous affair with Bathsheba, the king's mourning over Absalom was abnormal. The judgment that came on Absalom was entirely deserved.

PROPER MOURNING

There are also, of course, other kinds of sorrow, legitimate sorrows that are common to all mankind and for which reasonable mourning is appropriate.

To express these sorrows and to cry over them opens an escape valve that keeps our feelings from festering and poisoning our emotions and our whole life. It provides the way for healing, just as washing out a wound helps prevent infection.

An Arab proverb says,

“All sunshine makes a desert.”

The trouble-free life is likely to be a shallow life.

We often learn more and mature more from times of sorrow than from times when everything is going well.

A familiar poem by Robert Browning Hamilton expresses the truth:

*I walked a mile with Pleasure,
She chattered all the way,
But left me none the wiser
For all she had to say.
I walked a mile with Sorrow,
And ne'er a word said she,
But, oh, the things I learned from her
When Sorrow walked with me.*

(Cited in William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew* [rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975], 1:94)

Sarah's death caused Abraham to mourn (Gen. 23:2). But the "father of the faithful" did not weep from lack of faith but for the loss his beloved wife, which he had every right to do.

Loneliness for God, from whom he felt separated for a time, caused the psalmist to declare, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for Thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" " (Ps. 42:1–3).

Defeat and discouragement caused Timothy to mourn, leading Paul, his spiritual father, to write, "I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day, longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy" (2 Tim. 1:3–4).

Anguished concern about the sins of Israel and God's coming judgment on His people caused Jeremiah to mourn. "Oh, that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears," he cried, "that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jer. 9:1).

Concern for the spiritual welfare of the Ephesian believers had caused Paul to mourn. "Night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears," he said (Acts 20:31). Because of their great love for him the elders from the Ephesus church later mourned for Paul as he prayed with them on the beach near Miletus, "grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they should see his face no more" (v. 38).

The earnest love of a father caused him to be grief-stricken over his demon-possessed son, even as he brought him to Jesus for healing. No doubt tears ran down the man's face as He implored Jesus to help, confessing "I do believe; help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24).

Repentant, worshipful devotion caused a woman to mourn over her sins as she went into the Pharisee's house and washed Jesus' feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. To the proud host who resented her contaminating his

house and interrupting his dinner party, **Jesus said, “I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little”** (Luke 7:47).

Immeasurable divine love caused our Lord to weep at the death of Lazarus (John 11:35) and over the sinning people of Jerusalem, whom He wanted to gather into His care as a mother hen gathers her chicks (Matt. 23:37).

GODLY MOURNING

The mourning about which Jesus is talking in the second beatitude, however, has nothing to do with the types just discussed, proper or improper.

The Lord is concerned about all of the legitimate sorrows of His children, and He promises to console, comfort, and strengthen us when we turn to Him for help. But those are not the kind of sorrow at issue here.

JESUS IS SPEAKING OF GODLY SORROW, GODLY MOURNING, MOURNING THAT ONLY THOSE WHO SINCERELY DESIRE TO BELONG TO HIM OR WHO ALREADY BELONG TO HIM CAN EXPERIENCE.

Paul speaks of this sorrow in his second letter to Corinth. “For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you” (2 Cor. 7:10–11).

The only sorrow that brings spiritual life and growth is godly sorrow, sorrow over sin that leads to repentance. Godly sorrow is linked to **(CONFESSION, WHICH IS LINKED TO)** repentance, and repentance is linked to sin.

As the first beatitude makes clear, entrance into the kingdom of heaven begins with being “poor in spirit,” with recognition of total spiritual bankruptcy. The only way any person can come to Jesus Christ is empty-handed, totally destitute and pleading for God’s mercy and grace.

Without a sense of spiritual poverty no one can enter the kingdom. And when we enter the kingdom we should never lose that sense, knowing “that nothing good dwells in [us], that is, in [our] flesh” (Rom. 7:18).

Spiritual poverty leads to godly sorrow;
the poor in spirit become
those who mourn.

After his great sin involving Bathsheba and Uriah, David repented and expressed his godly sorrow in Psalm 51: *“For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, and done what is evil in Thy sight”* (vv. 3–4).

Job was a model believer, “blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil” (Job. 1:1). Yet he still had something to learn about God’s greatness and his own unworthiness, about God’s infinite wisdom and his own very imperfect understanding. Only after God allowed

everything dear to Job to be taken away and then lectured His servant on His sovereignty and His majesty, did Job finally come to the place of godly sorrow, of repenting of and mourning over his sin. He confessed, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees Thee; therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes” (42:5–6).

God loves and honors a morally righteous life, but it is no substitute for a humble and contrite heart, which God loves and honors even more
(Isa. 66:2).

As seen in the discussion of the first beatitude, *makarios* (**blessed**) means to be happy, blissful. That happiness is a divine pronouncement, the assured benefit of those who meet the conditions God requires.

The condition of the second beatitude is mourning: **blessed are those who mourn.**

(9) DIFFERENT GREEK WORDS ARE USED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TO SPEAK OF SORROW, REFLECTING ITS COMMONNESS IN MAN’S LIFE.

It is woven into the cloth of the human situation. The story of history is the story of tears. And before the earth’s situation gets better it will get worse. Jesus tells us that before He comes again, “nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes. But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs” (**Matt. 24:7–8**). **Until the Lord returns, history is destined to go from tragedy to greater tragedy, from sorrow to still greater sorrow.**

OF THE NINE (9) TERMS USED FOR SORROW, THE ONE USED HERE (*PENTHEŌ*, MOURN) IS THE STRONGEST, THE MOST SEVERE.

It represents the deepest, most heart-felt grief, and was generally reserved for grieving over the death of a loved one. It is used in the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) for Jacob’s grief when he

thought his son Joseph was killed by a wild animal (Gen. 37:34). **It is used of the disciples' mourning for Jesus before they knew He was raised from the dead (Mark 16:10).** It is used of the mourning of world business leaders over the death of its commerce because of the destruction of the world system during the Tribulation (Rev. 18:11, 15).

The word carries the idea of deep inner agony, which may or may not be expressed by outward weeping, wailing, or lament.

When David stopped hiding his sin and began mourning over it and confessing it (Ps. 32:3–5), he could declare, “How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit!” (vv. 1–2).

Happiness, or blessedness, does not come in the mourning itself. Happiness comes with what God does in response to it, with the forgiveness that such mourning brings. Godly mourning brings God's forgiveness, which brings God's happiness. Mourning is not merely a psychological or emotional experience that makes people feel better. It is a communion with the living, loving God who responds to the mourner with an objective reality—the reality of divine forgiveness!

David experienced and expressed many kinds of common human sorrow, both proper and improper. He mourned over being lonely, over being rejected, over being discouraged and disappointed, and over losing an infant child. He also mourned inordinately over the death of Absalom, whom God had removed to protect Israel and the messianic throne of David. But nothing broke the heart of David like his own sin. No anguish was as deep as the anguish he felt when he finally saw the awfulness of his offenses against the Lord. That is when David became happy, when he became truly sad over his transgressions.

The world says, “Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile, smile, smile.” Hide your problems and pretend to be happy. The same philosophy is applied to sin. But Jesus says, “Confess your sins, and mourn, mourn, mourn.” When we do that, our smiles can be genuine, because our happiness will be genuine. Godly mourning brings godly happiness, which no amount of human effort or optimistic pretense, no amount of positive thinking or possibility thinking, can produce.

Only mourners over sin are happy because only mourners over sin have their sins forgiven. Sin and happiness are totally incompatible. Where one exists, the other cannot. Until sin is forgiven and removed, happiness is locked out. Mourning over sin brings forgiveness of sin, and forgiveness of sin brings a freedom and a joy that cannot be experienced in any other way.

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you,” James tells us. “Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you” (James 4:8–10).

There is great need in the church today to cry instead of laugh. The frivolity, silliness, and foolishness that go on in the name of Christianity should themselves make us mourn. God's counsel to the frivolous happy, the self-satisfied happy, the indulgent happy is: "Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into gloom."

The faithful child of God is constantly broken over his sinfulness, and the longer he lives and the more mature he becomes in the Lord, the harder it is for him to be frivolous. He sees more of God's love and mercy, but he also sees more of his own and the world's sinfulness. To grow in grace is also to grow in awareness of sin. Speaking to Israel, the prophet Isaiah said, "In that day the Lord God of hosts called you to weeping, to wailing, to shaving the head, and to wearing sackcloth. Instead, there is gaiety and gladness, killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine." Following the world's philosophy, which still prevails today, God's ancient people said, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die" (Isa. 22:12-13).

We follow that philosophy vicariously, if not actually, when we laugh at the world's crude and immoral jokes even though we do not retell them, when we are entertained by a sin even though we do not indulge in it, when we smile at ungodly talk even though we do not repeat the words. To joke about divorce, to make light of brutality, to be intrigued by sexual immorality is to rejoice when we should be mourning, to be laughing when we should be crying. To "rejoice in the perversity of evil" is placed alongside "delight in doing evil" (Prov. 2:14). To take "pleasure in wickedness" (2 Thess. 2:12) is to be a part of the wickedness, whether or not we commit the specific sin.

Much of the church today has a defective sense of sin, which is reflected in this defective sense of humor. When even its own members make the church the butt of jokes, make light of its beliefs and ordinances, caricature its leaders as inept and clownish, and make its high standards of purity and righteousness the subject of humorous commentary, the church has great need to turn its laughter into mourning.

The Bible recognizes a proper sense of humor, humor that is not at the expense of God's name, God's Word, God's church, or any person, except perhaps ourselves. God knows that "a joyful heart is good medicine" (Prov. 17:22), but a heart that rejoices in sin is taking poison, not medicine. The way to happiness is not in ignoring sin, much less in making light of it, but rather in sorrow over it that cries to God.

We can react to our spiritual bankruptcy in one of several ways. Like the Pharisees we can deny our spiritual destitution and pretend we are spiritually rich. Or, like monastics and advocates of moral rearmament, we can admit our condition and try to change it in our own power and by our own efforts. Or we can admit our condition and then despair over it to such a degree that we try to drown it in drink, escape it by drugs or by activity, or give up completely and commit suicide, as Judas did. Because they can find no answer in themselves or in the world, these people conclude that there *is* no answer. Or, like the prodigal son, we can admit our condition, mourn over it, and turn to the heavenly Father to remedy our poverty (see Luke 15:11-32).

Mourning over sin is not being engulfed in despair. Even the person who has been severely disciplined by the church should be forgiven, comforted, and loved, "lest somehow such a one be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow" (2 Cor. 2:7-8). Nor is godly mourning wallowing in self-pity and false humility, which are really badges of pride.

True mourning over sin does not focus on ourselves, not even on our sin. It focuses on God, who alone can forgive and remove our sin. It is an attitude that begins when we enter the kingdom and lasts as long as we are on earth. It is the attitude of Romans 7. Contrary to some popular interpretation, Paul is not here speaking simply about his former condition. The problems of

chapter 7 were not one-time experiences that were completely replaced by the victories of chapter 8. The apostle clearly says, “For that which I am doing I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate” (7:15). Here he uses the present tense, as he does throughout the rest of the chapter: “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; ... for the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish” (vv. 18–19); “I find then the principle that evil is present in me” (v. 21); “Wretched man that I am!... So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin” (vv. 24–25).

Paul wrote those words at the height of his ministry. Yet righteousness and sin were still fighting a battle in his life. As he acknowledges in verse 25, the way of victory is “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” but the rest of the verse makes clear that, at that time, the victory was not yet complete. He knew where the victory was, and he had tasted the victory many times. But he knew that, in this life, it is never a permanent victory. The presence of the flesh sees to that. Permanent victory is assured to us now, but it is not given to us now.

Paul not only spoke of the creation anxiously longing for restoration, but of his own longing for complete restoration. “And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:19, 22–23). Paul was tired of sin, tired of fighting it in himself, as well as in the church and in the world. He longed for relief. “For indeed in this house we groan,” he said, “longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven.” He greatly preferred “rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:2, 8).

The mark of the mature life is not sinlessness, which is reserved for heaven, but growing awareness of sinfulness. “If we say that we have no sin,” John warns, “we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8–9). The subjects of God’s kingdom—the forgiven ones, the children of God and joint heirs with the Son—are characterized by continual confession of sin.

Several years ago a college student said to me, “I’ve been liberated. Someone explained to me the true meaning of 1 John 1:9, and now I realize that I no longer have to confess my sins.” I asked him, “Well, do you still confess your sins?” “I just told you that I don’t have to anymore,” he replied. “I know you did,” I said, “but do you still confess your sins?” When he replied, “Yes, that’s what bothers me,” I stopped being bothered. I said, “I’m very glad to hear that,” and then told him that I knew that, despite the false teaching to which he had been exposed, he was a genuine Christian. His redeemed nature refused to go along with the false teaching his mind had temporarily accepted.

Penthountes (**mourn**) is a present participle, indicating continuous action. In other words, those who are continually mourning are those who will be continually comforted. In his ninety-five theses Martin Luther said that the Christian’s entire life is a continuous act of repentance and contrition. In his psalms David cried out, “For my iniquities are gone over my head; as a heavy burden they weigh too much for me” (38:4) and, “I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me” (51:3).

There is no record in the New Testament of Jesus laughing. We are told of His weeping, His anger, His hunger and thirst, and many other human emotions and characteristics. But if He laughed, we do not know of it. We do know that, as Isaiah predicted, He was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3). Yet today we often hear of another Jesus, who laughs and cajoles and draws people into the kingdom by His nonjudgmental spirit and His winsome way.

The fun-loving, escapist world of comedians is found plying its trade even in the church—and finding ready acceptance.

THE RESULT OF MOURNING

The result of godly mourning is comfort: **they shall be comforted**. That is why they are **blessed**. It is not the mourning that blesses, but the comfort God gives to those who mourn in a godly way.

The emphatic pronoun *autos* (**they**) indicates that only those who mourn over sin will be comforted. The blessing of God's comfort is reserved exclusively for the contrite of heart. It is only those who mourn for sin who will have their tears wiped away by the loving hand of Jesus Christ.

Comforted is from *parakaleō*, the same word that, as a noun, is rendered Comforter, or Helper, in John 14:16, where we are told that Jesus was the first Helper, and the Holy Spirit is “another Helper.”

The Old Testament also speaks of God comforting those who mourn. Isaiah tells of the Messiah's coming, among other things, “to comfort all who mourn, to grant those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning” (Isa. 61:2–3). David was comforted by the rod and staff of his divine Shepherd (Ps. 23:4).

As our mourning rises to the throne of God, His unsurpassed and matchless comfort descends from Him by Christ to us. Ours is the “God of all comfort” (2 Cor. 1:3), who is always ready to meet our need, admonishing, sympathizing, encouraging, and strengthening. God is a God of comfort, Christ is a Christ of comfort, and the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of comfort. As believers we have the comfort of the entire Trinity!

Shall be does not refer to the end of our lives or the end of the age. Like all other blessings of God, it will be completed only when we see our Lord face-to-face. In the eternal heavenly state God “shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain” (Rev. 21:4).

But the comfort of Matthew 5:4 is future only in the sense that the blessing comes after the obedience; the comfort comes after the mourning. As we continually mourn over our sin, we **shall be** continually comforted—now, in this present life. God is not only the God of future comfort but of present comfort. “God our Father” already has “given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace” (2 Thess. 2:16).

Even God's written Word is a present comforter, given for our encouragement and hope (Rom. 15:4). And as God Himself gives us comfort and His Word gives us comfort, we are called to comfort each other with the promises of His Word (1 Thess. 4:18; cf. 2 Cor. 1:6; 7:13; 13:11; etc.).

Happiness comes to sad people because their godly sadness leads to God's comfort. “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden,” Jesus says, “and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). He will lift the burden from those who mourn over sin, and He will give rest to those who are weary of sin. As often as we confess our sin, He is faithful to forgive, and for as long as we mourn over sin He is faithful to comfort.

HOW TO MOURN

What does true mourning over sin involve? How can we become godly mourners?

ELIMINATE HINDRANCES

The first step requires removing the hindrances that keep us from mourning, the things that make us content with ourselves, that make us resist God's Spirit and question His Word, and that harden our hearts. A stony heart does not mourn. It is insensitive to God, and His plow of grace cannot break it up. It only stores up wrath till the day of wrath.

Love of sin is the primary hindrance to mourning. Holding on to sin will freeze and petrify a heart. *Despair* hinders mourning because despair is giving up on God, refusing to believe that He can save and help. Despair is putting ourselves outside God's grace. Of such people Jeremiah writes, "They will say, 'It's hopeless! For we are going to follow our own plans, and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of his evil heart' " (Jer. 18:12). The one who despairs believes he is destined to sin. Because he believes God has given up on him, he gives up on God. Despair excuses sin by choosing to believe that there is no choice. Despair hides God's mercy behind a self-made cloud of doubt.

Another hindrance is *conceit*, which tries to hide the sin itself, choosing to believe that there is nothing over which to mourn. It is the spiritual counterpart of a doctor treating a cancer as if it were a cold. If it was necessary for Jesus Christ to shed His blood on the cross to save us from our sin, our sin must be great indeed!

Presumption hinders mourning because it is really a form of pride. It recognizes the need for grace, but not much grace. It is satisfied with cheap grace, expecting God to forgive little because it sees little to be forgiven. Sins are bad, but not bad enough to be confessed, repented of, and forsaken. Yet the Lord declared through Isaiah, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:7). No pardon is offered to the unrepentant, presumptuous person who refuses to forsake his sin. The gospel that teaches otherwise has always been popular, as it clearly is in our own day; but it is a false gospel, "a different gospel" (Gal. 1:6), a distortion and contradiction of the gospel of Scripture.

Procrastination hinders godly mourning simply by putting it off. It says, "One of these days, when things are just right, I'll take a hard look at my sins, confess them, and ask God's forgiveness and cleansing." But procrastination is foolish and dangerous, because we "do not know what [our] life will be like tomorrow. [We] are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away" (James 4:14). The sooner the disease of sin is dealt with the sooner comfort will come. If it is not dealt with, we have no assurance that comfort will ever come, because we have no assurance we will have time to confess it later.

The most important step we can take in getting rid of hindrances to mourning, whatever they are, is to look at the holiness of God and the great sacrifice of sin-bearing at the cross. If seeing Christ die for our sins does not thaw a cold heart or break up a hardened heart, it is beyond melting or breaking. In her poem "Good Friday," Christina Rossetti gives these moving lines:

Am I a stone and not a sheep,
That I can stand, O Christ, beneath Thy cross,
To number drop by drop Thy Blood's slow loss
And yet not weep?

Not so those women loved
Who with exceeding grief lamented Thee;
Not so fallen Peter weeping bitterly;

Not so the thief was moved;

Not so the Sun and Moon

Which hid their faces in a starless sky.

A horror of great darkness at broad noon—

I, only I.

Yet give not oe'r

But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd of the flock;

Greater than Moses, turn and look once more

And smite a rock.

STUDY GOD'S WORD

The second step toward godly mourning is to study sin in Scripture, to learn what an evil and repulsive thing it is to God and what a destructive and damning thing it is to us. We should learn from David to keep our sin ever before us (Ps. 51:3) and from Isaiah to say, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5). We should learn from Peter to say, "I am a sinful man" (Luke 5:8) and from Paul to confess that we are the chief of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). As we hear those great men of God talking about their sin, we are forced to face the reality and the depth of our own.

Sin tramples on God's laws, makes light of His love, grieves His Spirit, spurns His forgiveness and blessing, and in every way resists His grace. Sin makes us weak and makes us impure. It robs us of comfort and, much more importantly, robs God of glory.

PRAY

The third step toward godly mourning is to pray for contriteness of heart, which only God can give and which He never refuses to give those who ask. It must always be recognized that humility depends on the working of the Lord. The way to godly mourning lies not in pre-salvation human works, but in God's saving grace.

HOW TO KNOW IF WE ARE MOURNING AS CHRIST COMMANDS

Knowing whether or not we have godly mourning is not difficult. First, we need to ask ourselves if we are sensitive to sin. If we laugh at it, take it lightly, or enjoy it, we can be sure we are not mourning over it and are outside the sphere of God's blessing.

The mock righteousness of hypocrites who make every effort to appear holy on the outside (see Matt. 6:1–18) has no sensitivity to sin, only sensitivity to personal prestige and reputation. Nor does the mock gratitude of those who thank God they are better than other people (Luke 18:11). Saul regretted that he had disobeyed God by not slaying King Agag and by sparing the best of the Amalekite animals. But he was not repentant; he did not mourn over his sin. He instead tried to excuse his actions by claiming that the animals were spared so that they could be sacrificed to God and that the people made him do what he did. He twice admitted that he had sinned, and even asked Samuel for pardon. But his real concern was not for the Lord's honor but for his own. "I have sinned; but please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel" (1 Sam. 15:30). Saul had ungodly regret, not godly mourning.

The godly mourner will have true sorrow for his sins. His first concern is for the harm his sin does to God's glory, not the harm its exposure might bring to his own reputation or welfare.

If our mourning is godly we will grieve for the sins of fellow believers and for the sins of the world. We will cry with the psalmist, "My eyes shed streams of water, because they do not keep Thy law" (Ps. 119:136). We will wish with Jeremiah that our heads were fountains of water that we could have enough tears for weeping (Jer. 9:1; cf. Lam. 1:16). With Ezekiel we will search out faithful believers "who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed" around us (Ezek. 9:4; cf. Ps. 69:9). We will look out over the community where we live and weep, as Jesus looked out over Jerusalem and wept (Luke 19:41).

The second way to determine if we have genuine mourning over sin is to check our sense of God's forgiveness. Have we experienced the release and freedom of knowing our sins are forgiven? Do we have His peace and joy in our life? Can we point to true happiness He has given in response to our mourning? Do we have the divine comfort He promises to those who have forgiven, cleansed, and purified lives?

The godly mourners "who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:5–6).¹

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

(4) **They that mourn.**—The verb is **commonly coupled with weeping** (Mark 16:10; Luke 6:25; James 4:9; Revelation 18:15-19). Here, as before, there is an implied, though not an expressed, limitation.

The "mourning" is not the sorrow of the world that worketh "death" (2Corinthians 7:10) for failure, suffering, and the

¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., *Matthew*, vol. 1, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 153–165.

consequences of sin, but the sorrow which flows out in the tears that cleanse, the mourning over sin itself and the stain which it has left upon the soul.

They shall be comforted.

– The pronoun is emphatic.

The promise implies the special comfort (including counsel) which the mourner needs;

“comforted” he shall be with the sense of pardon and peace, of restored purity and freedom.

We cannot separate the promise from the word which Christendom has chosen to express the work of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, still less from the yearning expectation that then prevailed among such of our Lord’s hearers as were looking for the “consolation”—*i.e.*, the “comfort”—of Israel (**Luke 2:25**).

Benson Commentary

Matthew 5:4. *Blessed* [or *happy*] *are they that mourn* — Namely, **for their own sins and those of other men, and are steadily and habitually serious, watchful, and circumspect;**

for *they shall be comforted* —

Even in this world, with the consolation that arises from a sense of the forgiveness of sins, peace with God, clear discoveries of his favour, and well-

grounded, lively hopes of the heavenly inheritance, and with the full enjoyment of that inheritance itself in the world to come.

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

5:3-12 Our Saviour here gives eight characters of blessed people, which represent to us the principal graces of a Christian. 1. The poor in spirit are happy. These bring their minds to their condition, when it is a low condition. They are humble and lowly in their own eyes. They see their want, bewail their guilt, and thirst after a Redeemer. The kingdom of grace is of such; the kingdom of glory is for them. **2. Those that mourn are happy. That godly sorrow which worketh true repentance, watchfulness, a humble mind, and continual dependence for acceptance on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, with constant seeking the Holy Spirit, to cleanse away the remaining evil, seems here to be intended. Heaven is the joy of our Lord; a mountain of joy, to which our way is through a vale of tears. Such mourners shall be comforted by their God.** 3. The meek are happy. The meek are those who quietly submit to God; who can bear insult; are silent, or return a soft answer; who, in their patience, keep possession of their own souls, when they can scarcely keep possession of anything else. These meek ones are happy, even in this world. Meekness promotes wealth, comfort, and safety, even in this world. 4. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are happy. Righteousness is here put for all spiritual blessings. These are purchased for us by the righteousness of Christ, confirmed by the faithfulness of God. Our desires of spiritual blessings must be earnest. Though all desires for grace are not grace, yet such a desire as this, is a desire of God's own raising, and he will not forsake the work of his own hands. 5. The merciful are happy. We must not only bear our own afflictions patiently, but we must do all we can to help those who are in misery. We must have compassion on the souls of others, and help them; pity those who are in sin, and seek to snatch them as brands out of the burning. 6. The pure in heart are happy; for they shall see God. Here holiness and happiness are fully described and put together. The heart must be purified by faith, and kept for God. Create in me such a clean heart, O God. None but the pure are capable of seeing God, nor would heaven be happiness to the impure. As God cannot endure to look upon their iniquity, so they cannot look upon his purity. 7. The peace-makers are happy. They love, and desire, and delight in peace; and study to be quiet. They keep the peace that it be

not broken, and recover it when it is broken. If the peace-makers are blessed, woe to the peace-breakers! 8. Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are happy. This saying is peculiar to Christianity; and it is more largely insisted upon than any of the rest. Yet there is nothing in our sufferings that can merit of God; but God will provide that those who lose for him, though life itself, shall not lose by him in the end. Blessed Jesus! how different are thy maxims from those of men of this world! They call the proud happy, and admire the gay, the rich, the powerful, and the victorious. May we find mercy from the Lord; may we be owned as his children, and inherit his kingdom. With these enjoyments and hopes, we may cheerfully welcome low or painful circumstances.

Barnes' Notes on the Bible

Blessed are they that mourn - This is capable of two meanings: either, that those are blessed who are afflicted with the loss of friends or possessions, or that they who mourn over sin are blessed. As Christ came to preach repentance, to induce people to mourn over their sins and to forsake them, it is probable that he had the latter particularly in view. Compare [2 Corinthians 7:10](#).

At the same time, it is true that **THE GOSPEL ONLY CAN GIVE TRUE COMFORT TO THOSE IN AFFLICTION**, [Isaiah 61:1-3](#); [Luke 4:18](#).

Other sources of consolation do not reach the deep sorrows of the soul. They may blunt the sensibilities of the mind; they may produce a sullen and reluctant submission to what we cannot help: but they do not point to the true source of comfort.

In the God of mercy only; in the Saviour; in the peace that flows from the hope of a better world, and there only, is there consolation... [2 Corinthians 3:17-18](#); & [5:1](#).

Those that mourn thus shall be comforted.

So those that grieve over sin; that sorrow that they have committed it, and are afflicted and wounded that they have offended God, shall find comfort in the gospel. Through the merciful Saviour those sins may be forgiven.

IN HIM THE WEARY AND HEAVY-LADENED SOUL SHALL FIND PEACE MATTHEW 11:28-30; AND THE PRESENCE OF THE COMFORTER, THE HOLY SPIRIT, SHALL SUSTAIN THEM HERE JOHN 14:26-27, AND IN HEAVEN ALL THEIR TEARS SHALL BE WIPED AWAY, REVELATION 21:4.

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary

***Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted*—THIS "MOURNING" MUST NOT BE TAKEN LOOSELY for that feeling which is wrung from men under pressure of the ills of life, nor yet STRICTLY FOR SORROW ON ACCOUNT OF COMMITTED SINS.**

Evidently it is that entire feeling which the sense of our spiritual poverty begets; and so the second beatitude is but the complement of the first. The one is the intellectual, the other the emotional aspect of the same thing.

It is poverty of spirit that says, "I am undone"; and it is the mourning which this causes that makes it break forth in the form of a lamentation—"Woe is me! for I am undone."

Hence this class are termed "*mourners in Zion,*" or, as we might express it, religious mourners, **in sharp contrast with all other sorts (Isa 61:1-3; 66:2).**

Religion, according to the Bible, is neither a set of intellectual convictions nor a bundle of emotional feelings, but a compound of both, the former giving birth to the latter.

Thus, closely do the first two beatitudes cohere. The mourners shall be "comforted."

Even now they get beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

**SOWING IN TEARS,
THEY REAP EVEN HERE IN JOY.**

Still, all present comfort, even the best, is partial, interrupted, short-lived.

But the days of our mourning shall soon be ended, and then God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Then, in the fullest sense, shall the mourners be "comforted."

Matthew Poole's Commentary

The world is mistaken in accounting the jocund and merry companions the only happy men; their mirth is madness, and their joy will be like crackling of thorns under a pot: but those are rather the happy men, who mourn; yea, such are most certainly happy, who mourn out of duty in the sense of their own sins, or of the sins of others, or who mourn out of choice rather to suffer afflictions and persecutions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. Though such sufferings do excite in them natural passions, yet **it is a blessed mourning, for those are the blessed tears which God will wipe at last from his people's eyes, and such are these.**

They shall be comforted, either in this life, with the consolations of the Spirit, or with their Master's joy in the life that is to come, [Isaiah 61:3](#) [John 16:20](#) [Jam 1:12](#). **So as this promise, and declaration of blessedness, is not to be extended to all mourners, but only to such as God hath made so, or who in duty have made themselves so, obeying some command of God, for sympathizing with God's glory, or with his afflicted people, [Romans 12:15](#), or** testifying their repentance for their sins; for **there is a mourning which is a mere natural effect of passion, and a worldly sorrow which worketh unto death**, as well as a godly sorrow working repentance to salvation, [2 Corinthians 7:10](#).

Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

Blessed are they that mourn,

For sin, for their own sins; the sin of their nature, indwelling sin, which is always working in them, and is a continual grief of mind to them; the unbelief of their hearts, notwithstanding the many instances, declarations, promises, and discoveries of grace made unto them; their daily infirmities, and many sins of life, because they are committed against a God of love, grace, and mercy, grieve the Spirit, and dishonour the Gospel of Christ: **who mourn also for the sins of others, for the sins of the world, the profaneness and wickedness that abound in it; and more especially for the sins of professors, by reason of which, the name of God, and ways of Christ, are evil spoken of: who likewise mourn under afflictions, spiritual ones, temptations, desertions, and declensions; temporal ones, their own, which they receive, either more immediately from the hand of God, or from men; such as they endure for the sake of Christ, and the profession of his Gospel; and who sympathize with others in their afflictions.**

THESE, HOW SORROWFUL AND DISTRESSED SOEVER THEY MAY APPEAR, ARE BLESSED

for they shall be comforted:

here in this life, by the God of all comfort, by Christ the comforter; by the Spirit of God, whose work and office it is to comfort; by the Scriptures of truth, which are written for their consolation; by the promises of the Gospel, through which the heirs of promise have strong consolation; by the ordinances of it, which are breasts of consolation; and by the

ministers of the word, who have a commission from the Lord to speak comfortably to them; and then are they comforted, when they have the discoveries of the love of God, manifestations of pardoning grace, through the blood of Christ, and enjoy the divine presence: and they shall be comforted hereafter; when freed from all the troubles of this life, they shall be blessed with uninterrupted communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, and with the happy society of angels and glorified saints. [Isaiah 61:1](#) seems to be referred to, both in this, and in the preceding verse.

Meyer's NT Commentary

[Matthew 5:4](#). Οἱ πενθοῦντες] **Comp. [Isaiah 61:2](#); [Isaiah 57:17](#)** f.

After Chrysostom, these have frequently been understood as those who mourned over their own *sins* and those of others. These are not excluded, but they are not exclusively or specially meant by the general expression (Keim). They are generally *those who are in suffering and distress*. Think, for example, of Lazarus, of the persecuted Christians ([John 16:20](#); [Hebrews 12:11](#)), of the suffering repentant ones ([2 Corinthians 7:9](#)), and so on; for that no unchristian πενθεῖν, no λύπη τοῦ κόσμου, is meant, is ([2 Corinthians 7:10](#)) understood of itself from the whole surroundings.

The πενθοῦντες shall, [Romans 8:18](#), [2 Corinthians 4:17](#), [John 14:13](#),

be *comforted* as a matter of fact in the Messiah's kingdom by the enjoyment of its blessedness ([Luke 2:25](#); [Luke 16:25](#)), therefore the Messiah Himself is also called מְנַחֵם (Schoettgen, Hor. II. p. 18; Wetstein, I. p. 665).

According to the beatitudes, which all refer to the Messiah's kingdom, **there is no mention of temporal comfort by the promise of the forgiveness of sins**, and so on. This in answer to Kienlen in the Stud. u. Kritik. 1848, p. 681.

Expositor's Greek Testament

Matthew 5:4. οἱ πενθοῦντες. Who are they? All who on any account grieve? Then this Beatitude would give utterance to a thoroughgoing optimism. Pessimists say that there are many griefs for which there is no remedy, so many that life is not worth living. Did Jesus mean to meet this position with a direct negative, and to affirm that there is no sorrow without remedy? If not, then He propounds a puzzle provoking thoughtful scholars to ask: What grief is that which will without fail find comfort?

THERE CAN BE NO COMFORT WHERE THERE IS NO GRIEF, for the two ideas are correlative.

But in most cases there is no apparent necessary connection. Necessary connection is asserted in this aphorism, which gives us a clue to the class described as οἱ πενθοῦντες. Their peculiar sorrow must be one which comforts itself, a grief that has the thing it grieves for in the very grief.

The comfort is then no outward good. It lies in a right state of soul, and that is given in the sorrow which laments the lack of it. **The sorrow reveals love of the good**, and that love is possession. In so far as all kinds of sorrow tend to awaken reflection on the real good and ill of human life, and so to issue in the higher sorrow of the soul, the second Beatitude may be taken absolutely as expressing the tendency of all grief to end in consolation.—**παρακληθήσονται**, future. The comfort is latent in the very grief, but for the present there is no conscious joy, but only poignant sorrow. The joy, however, will inevitably come to birth. No noble nature abides permanently in the house of mourning.

THE GREATER THE SORROW, THE GREATER THE ULTIMATE GLADNESS,

the “joy in the Holy Ghost” mentioned by St. Paul among the essentials of the Kingdom of God ([Romans 14:17](#)).

Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges

mourn] Those who mourn for sin are primarily intended; but the secondary meaning, “those who are in suffering and distress,” is not excluded.

The first meaning is illustrated by [2 Corinthians 7:10](#),

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

Bengel's Gnomon

Matthew 5:4. Παρακληθήσονται, *shall be comforted*)

The future tense indicates promises made in the Old Testament, and now to be performed; see [Luke 16:25](#), and [2 Thessalonians 2:16](#).

THE POOR AND THE MEEK ARE JOINED TOGETHER IN [Matthew 5:3](#); [Matthew 5:5](#),

as in the frequently-occurring עני ואביון, poor and needy, cf. also ch. [Matthew 11:29](#).

Pulpit Commentary

Verse 4. - In some, especially "Western" authorities, vers. 4, 5 are transposed (**vide** Westcott and Hort, 'Appendix'), possibly because the terms of ver. 5 seemed to be more closely parallel to ver. 3 (cf. Meyer, Weiss), and also those of ver. 4 fitted excellently with ver. 6. But far the greater balance of evidence is in favour of the usual order, which also, though not on the surface, is in the deepest connexion with the preceding and the following verses.

They that mourn (cf. [Isaiah 61:2](#)).

Our Lord does not define that which causes the mourning, but as the preceding and the following verses all refer to the religious or at least the ethical sphere, merely carnal and worldly mourning is excluded.

The mourning referred to must, therefore, be produced by religious or moral causes. Mourners for the state of Israel, so far as they mourned not for its political but for its spiritual condition (cf. similar mourning in the Christian Church, [2 Corinthians 7:9, 10](#)), would be included (cf. Weiss, 'Life,' 2:142); but our Lord's primary thought must have been of mourning over one's personal state, not exactly, perhaps, over one's sins, but over the realized poverty in spirit just spoken of (cf. Weiss-Meyer).

As the deepest poverty lies in the sphere of the spirit, so the deepest mourning lies there also.

All other mourning is but partial and slight compared with this ([Proverbs 18:14](#)).

For they shall be comforted.

WHEN? ON HAVING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (ver.3) i.e. during this life in measure (cf. [Luke 2:25](#)), but fully only hereafter. The mourning over one's personal poverty in spirit is removed in proportion as Christ is received and appropriated; but during this life such appropriation can be only partial. Matthew 5:4

Vincent's Word Studies

They that mourn (πενθοῦντες)

Signifying **grief manifested; too deep for concealment.**

Hence it is often joined with κλαίειν, to weep audibly (Mark 16:10; James 4:9).

Shall be comforted

See on [John 14:16](#).

NIV Application Commentary:

2. ***Blessed are those who mourn ...*** (5:4). Those who are bankrupt are also those who mourn. The loss of anything that a person counts valuable will produce mourning, whether it's one's financial support, or loved ones, or status in society, or even one's spiritual standing before God. The psalmist understands this latter kind of mourning, for he says, "Streams of tears flow from my eyes, for your law is not obeyed" (Ps. 119:136). **Those who are self-satisfied are tempted to rejoice in themselves and their accomplishments, but those who have reached the bottom of the barrel, whether it is spiritual or emotional or financial, or those who see the bankruptcy of those around them, will mourn.**

... **for they will be comforted.** But, "Comfort, comfort my people" (Isa. 40:1), God says to those who have realized their loss and mourn over it. **The arrival of the kingdom of heaven in Jesus' ministry brings the first taste of God's comforting blessing.**

The poor in spirit and those who mourn
now experience the fulfillment of the
messianic blessing promised in
Isaiah 61:1–3.

Jesus has come to save his people from their sins (Matt. 1:21; 11:28–30), but they will receive final comforting in the presence of the heavenly Lamb, when ***“God will wipe every tear from their eyes”*** (Rev. 7:17).

Mourning does not exclude the joy that is to typify Jesus’ followers, but instead characterizes life in the already-not yet presence of the kingdom.

We weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice (Rom. 12:15). But our mourning does not turn to the grief of those who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13).

We mourn oppression and persecution, but we do not despair, because we know the end of the story. We mourn over personal sin and social evil,

because we mourn the things that God mourns. But as we mourn, we become instruments of the good news of the kingdom of heaven as we bring the comfort of God with which we ourselves have been comforted (2 Cor. 1:3–7).²

GotQuestions.org

Who is the Comforter?

The Holy Spirit is called the “Comforter” in some English translations of the Bible. For instance, the American King James Version translates [John 14:26](#) as, “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said to you.” Similarly, the American Standard Version, King James Version, and English Revised Version all translate the Greek word *paraclete* as “Comforter.”

Paraclete, like many Greek words, is hard to translate into English because there is no perfect English equivalent. Basically, a *paraclete* is “one who is called alongside”; the implication is that a *paraclete* gives support or help of some kind. Used only by the apostle John in his gospel and first epistle, the word *paraclete* refers to the Holy Spirit ([John 14:16, 26; 15:26; and 16:7](#)) and, in one instance, for Jesus ([1 John 2:1](#)). In each case, the word can be translated as “Helper,” “Counselor,” “Comforter,” or “Advocate.” Translating the word as “Helper,” as the ESV and NKJV do in the gospel passages, provides a more encompassing term for the different aspects of the Holy Spirit’s ministries. He does more than comfort, after all; He also guides, seals, baptizes, regenerates, sanctifies, and convicts.

Jesus stated He would send “another” *paraclete* ([John 14:16](#)), meaning that He Himself had served as a *paraclete* during His earthly ministry. He had been the One guiding the disciples, but now He would send the Holy Spirit as their Guide and Counselor and Comforter. In context, Jesus is comforting the eleven faithful disciples during the [Last Supper](#), telling them not to be afraid and promising that their sorrow would turn to joy ([John 14:1; 16:21](#)). He would be leaving them, but another Helper or Comforter would be on the way—God would send the Holy Spirit (cf. [Luke 24:49](#)). When the word *paraclete* is used of Jesus in [1 John 2:1](#), translations are nearly unanimous in using the word [advocate](#).

² Michael J. Wilkins, [Matthew](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 206–207.

Jesus is our intercessor before the Father.

God comforts His children. He is the “[God of all comfort](#),” and we can know His peace even in the midst of trials: “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, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ” ([2 Corinthians 1:3-5](#)).

God comforts us in many ways: through the wonderful promises of His Word, through fellow believers, and of course through the Holy Spirit’s indwelling. The Spirit is our Comforter, and He is so much more: our Counselor, Encourager, and Helper. He is always present to bring comfort to the children of God ([Psalm 34:18](#); [139:7-8](#)).