

Blessed are they that Mourn Happiness Through Sorrow (Matthew 5:4)

Introduction:

This week we are going to continue our series in the Sermon on the Mount!
AND TODAY WE FIND OURSELVES COMING TO THE 2ND OF THE BEATITUDES THAT JESUS
USES TO START OF THIS INCREDIBLE SERMON!!!!

Just a quick recap of what we mentioned last week:
The Beatitudes are all about God's desire and God's way for us to have a happy life!!!

BLESSED = HAPPY!

And last week we mentioned:
This message of Jesus goes against everything the world tries to tell us about happiness!!!
It isn't about self!
It isn't about stuff
It is all about our Saviour!!!!

AND SO AS WE LOOK AT THIS IDEA OF A 'HAPPY LIFE' FROM A KINGDOM PERSPECTIVE,
RATHER THAN A WORLDLY PERSPECTIVE - WE FIND THAT THE WHOLE PICTURE LOOKS
UPSIDE DOWN!!!!

And you can see that very quickly as Jesus starts off with His beatitudes!!!!

To name a few:
HAPPINESS IS:
Being poor in spirit - THE MAIN THRUST OF THIS VERSE IS ABOUT HUMILITY
Mourning!
Meek
Persecuted, Reviled, Falsely accused

THIS IS CRAZY TALK - Or so it seems!!!!

But what we are going to find as Jesus continues through His teachings on the Beatitudes is that:
His ways are right!
His ways are true!
His ways are best!
His ways are perfect!!!

**AND TODAY DEAR FRIENDS - WE CAN TRUST THE WORDS AND THE WAYS OF JESUS
CHRIST!!!**

And I am looking forward to being able to continue through His teachings on the Beatitudes, and
His teachings of happiness this morning!!!

This morning we are going to delve right in to the second of these key statements about happiness
from the perspective of Jesus:

Matthew 5:4 - *'Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted'*

THIS IS WHAT JESUS IS SAYING HERE:
Happiness comes from mourning

Happiness comes from weeping
Happiness comes from crying

THINK ABOUT THIS FOR A MINUTE:
JESUS IS LITERALLY SAYING HERE:
Happiness comes from sorrow!

IF THIS WAS ANYONE BUT JESUS SPEAKING
IF ANYONE ELSE HAD HAVE SAID THOSE WORDS - I would say that it is the craziest, silliest
thing I ever heard!!!!

BUT AS IT COMES FROM THE MOUTH OF JESUS - WE KNOW THAT HE IS RIGHT!
WE KNOW THAT ALL HIS WORDS ARE TRUE, AND CAN BE RELIED UPON!

Now all that is left to do - is spend the rest of our time together this morning figuring out how on
earth happiness and a happy life comes from:

MOURNING
WEEPING
CRYING
SORROW!!!!

**Look at these pictures for a minute - This is what Jesus is challenging us to think about this
morning!!!**

THIS PARADOX THAT HE HAS LAID BEFORE US TODAY:
Happiness is Sorrow

It is hard to imagine what this verse can mean at first, but as we think through the meaning of the
words of Jesus - THIS MESSAGE COULD BE EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEED THIS MORNING!!!!

Are you hurting?
Are you grieving?
Are you mourning?
Are you holding back tears?
Are you putting on a brave face?

DEAR FRIEND THIS MORNING - THE PROMISE FROM JESUS THIS MORNING IS:
'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted'

BLESSED
MOURN
COMFORTED!

Very important words in which Jesus is going to teach us a great deal about:

Happiness through Sorrow

Which is the title of our message this morning!!!

LET'S PRAY!!!

Matthew 5:4 - *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

Where do we start with such a startling verse?
LET'S BEGIN WITH THE WORD 'MOURN'!!!!

Face the verse straight on this morning!
Maybe you're thinking this morning:

Maybe the word Jesus is using for 'mourn' means different to what I am imagining
Maybe in Jesus day the word meant something else
Maybe it's not what it sounds like!!!

I AM HERE TO TELL YOU TODAY:

It is exactly what it sounds like

It means exactly what we think it means!

IN FACT - IT MEANS EXACTLY WHAT WE THINK IT MEANS - IN THE FULLEST SENSE OF THE WORD!!!!

William Barclay writes this about the word used for 'mourn' in Matthew 5:4:

'The Greek word used for to mourn, used here, is the strongest word for mourning in the greek language. It is the word which is used for mourning the dead, for the passionate lament for on who was loved'

He goes on to say:

'In the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, it is the word which is used of Jacob's grief when he believed that Joseph, his son, was dead (Genesis 37:34)

FRIENDS:

This is the kind of grief that takes such a hold that it cannot be hidden

It is not only the sorrow which brings an ache to the heart; it is the sorrow which brings un-restrainable tears to the eyes.

IT IS FROM THAT DESCRIPTION OF THE WORD THAT THEN READ:

'Blessed are they which mourn, for they shall be comforted'

This isn't a mourning or sadness in a shallow sense!

This isn't like mourning when:

Your favourite sports team loses the cup final

Your favourite TV programme gets cancelled

When you finish a pancake at My Old Dutch and all you can see in front of you is an empty plate

When you drop your iphone and the screen smashes

You lose your favourite toy

FRIENDS - IN MATTHEW 5:4 - THE PAIN IS REAL!

The agony is raw!

The sorrow is striking

The mourning is massive!

YOU THINK OF THE WORDS BARCLAY USED TO DESCRIBE IT:

It is the equivalent of the pain that Jacob felt whenever he thought Joseph was dead!

It is the equivalent - of grief and mourning over the body of a dead loved one!

It is the kind of mourning which cannot be hid!

It is the kind of mourning which brings un-restrainable tears to the eyes, and an ache to the heart!

THAT IS THE KIND OF 'MOURNING' THAT JESUS IS GETTING AT HERE IN MATTHEW 5:4!!!

A deep contrition of the heart!

Gut-wrenching sorrow!

Where it feels like your falling and it's never going to stop!

THAT IS THE KIND OF MOURNING THAT JESUS IS SPEAKING OF HERE IN MATTHEW 5:4!!!!

And you say for a minute:

Where is the happiness in that?

There is nothing great about that kind of agony, that kind of pain and turmoil, and emotional agony!!!

FROM A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE - IT FLAT OUT SUCKS!!!

I wonder today - have you felt that kind of 'mourning'?
Have you come to that point in life where there are 'un-restrained tears' in your eyes!
That aching that seems to rise up within you from your very soul?

I THINK MANY OF US IN HERE CAN SAY HONESTLY - WE HAVE BEEN THERE IN SOME SHAPE OR FORM!!!!

We can all think of an events, or events, in our lives - THAT HAVE BROUGHT US TO THAT PLACE!!!!

What Kyle Idleman calls it 'The End of Yourself moments'!

What is yours?

6 WORD STORIES ILLUSTRATION:

Ernest Hemingway made a bet with a group of authors over lunch. The guys bet him ten dollars he couldn't come up with a short story only six words long. Hemingway took that bet, pulled out a napkin, and wrote the following story on it:

'For sale, baby shoes, never worn.'

Hemingway knew the power of words, even in just 6 short words - it speaks of a 'Matthew 5:4' story!!!

WE CAN BE IN AWE OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY AND HIS GIFT WITH WORDS - BUT TODAY I KNOW THAT YOU TO COULD COME UP WITH YOUR OWN '6 WORD STORY'!!!

A 6 word story that speaks of the kind of 'mourning' found in Matthew 5:4.
KYLE IDLEMAN WRITES DOWN A NUMBER OF THESE 6 WORD STORIES FOR US IN HIS BOOK 'The End of Me'!

MAYBE YOU CAN RELATE TO ONE OF THESE 6 WORD STORIES:

- *There has been a terrible accident
- *I'm leaving. The marriage is over
- *Your position is no longer needed
- *I just want to be friends
- *The cancer isn't responding to treatment
- *You are not able to conceive

What is your '6 word story'?:

The surgeon saying 'Sorry, we did everything we could'
Your parents saying 'Kids, we are getting a divorce'
Your boss saying 'You're fired, pack up your things'
Your doctor saying 'I have bad news. It's cancer'

WHAT IS YOUR 6 WORD STORIES?

I want to share with you a few of my own!

I am not going to lie - I don't find these easy to talk about so bear with me!
These are my Matthew 5:4 - 6 word short stories:

Text - 'Gary died in a car crash'
Phone call from Myles - 'It's Steve Walker/Gary's Dad. He committed suicide'
Dad phone call - 'Its your granny son, she's gone'

I AM SHARING ALL THIS BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO SUGAR COAT THE TRUTH BEHIND
MATTHEW 5:4!!!

This isn't a light, fluffy message!
This isn't some bumper sticker message!!!
BUT IT IS A MESSAGE FOR ALL THOSE WHO ALSO HAVE '6 WORD STORIES' OUT THERE
TODAY!
I look around the room and I don't know everyone here today as well as I should like!
AND I DON'T KNOW ALL THE '6 WORD STORIES' IN THE ROOM TODAY!!!

But I know many!!
I look at many of you - and behind the smile that you have on every week at church - I know the
pains of your past!
I know the mourning of your yesterdays!
I know the heartache you have felt!

**LIKE I SAY - I DON'T KNOW ALL OF THEM BY ANY MEANS - But as I look around this room I
can remember:**

Hospital visits
Funerals
Tearful dinners
Heart-wrenching stories
SO I KNOW THERE ARE A NUMBER OF '6 WORD STORIES' IN THIS ROOM TODAY - THAT
REPRESENT:

*Many tears
*Many heartaches
*Many sleepless nights
*Many difficult times
*Many gut-wrenching moments
AND I'M KIDDING MYSELF TO THINK THAT THERE AREN'T MANY, MANY, MANY MORE IN
THIS ROOM RIGHT NOW - THAT I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT - Yet as soon as I mentioned agony,
mourning, sorrow - it brought you right back to that memory and moment in life!

To all of you - Matthew 5:4:

While not a light fluffy message
While not a bumper sticker sermon
IT IS A MESSAGE FOR EVERYONE OUT THERE WITH A 6 WORD STORY!
IT IS A MESSAGE OUT THERE FOR EVERY TEAR THAT HAS BEEN SHED IN SORROW AND
MOURNING!!

And for you this morning - Matthew 5:4:
Is a message of hope!
It is a message of comfort!
It is a message - that you're pain, your suffering, your tearing, your mourning - WASN'T
MEANINGLESS!!!!

Because Matthew 5:4 has another very important word!!!
BLESSED = HAPPY!
MOURN = DEEP AGONY OF THE HEART
COMFORTED!!!!!!
That word comforted is soo important!!!

Friends - only Jesus can speak those words!!!

Only Jesus can bring us that kind of reassurance!

Only Jesus can promise 'comfort' to the 'mourning' heart!!!

Jesus that day - cast His eyes around the crowd!

THE 12 THAT WERE IMMEDIATELY WITH HIM LISTENING TO HIS EVERY WORD!

And halfway down the mountain, or off in the distance - there was the multitude of people he withdrew from to teach them!!!

I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT JUST BEFORE JESUS SPOKE THE WORDS OF MATTHEW 5 - He cast His eye around!

Face after face

Person after person

Life after life

And Jesus, as God in the flesh knew:

Sorrow after sorrow

6 word story, after 6 word story

Tear upon tear

AS HE CAST HIS EYES AROUND THE PEOPLE!

And it is with that in mind that Jesus opened His mouth to speak about:

HAPPINESS!!!

Blessed is...

Happy is.....

He gives us the first one:

Happy is the poor in spirit

IMMEDIATELY THE CROWD IS THINKING - What on earth?

Wasn't expecting that!!!

And then He speaks the second beatitude:

Blessed are..... those who mourn!!!

IMMEDIATELY WHEN YOU READ IT - It leaves us feeling confused, and only a little baffled!!!

Jesus is literally saying:

Happy are the sad!

Happy are the sorrowful

Happy are those who mourn and weep

Happy are those who have their own '6 word stories'!!!

From our perspective - THE FIRST WORD I USE TO DESCRIBE MY '6 WORD STORIES' OF LIFE - ISN'T HAPPY!!!

Yet Jesus from His perspective says:

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

FROM A WORLDLY AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE WE WOULD SAY THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE!!!!

Blessed are you when everything goes your way

Blessed are you when everything is going well

Blessed are you when all your dreams and plans come true!

Idleman says this:

'A blessed life, as any normal person would define it, would be a life free from mourning, not a life marked by it'

YET THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT JESUS IS GETTING AT!!!

Idleman goes on to say:

'Jesus is saying that when we mourn - when life gets extremely difficult, when we experience the deepest suffering we've ever encountered, when we come to the end of ourselves - then we are blessed'

TO US - THAT JUST DOESN'T SOUND RIGHT!

It seems upside down to us!!!

But maybe the problem is that we've spent so much time looking at something upside down, that it seems right side up to us!

I WANT YOU TO CONSIDER THIS POSSIBILITY THIS MORNING:

The whole world has it wrong

Jesus has it right

THE TRUTH IS THIS MORNING - I KNOW THAT JESUS IS RIGHT!

And as crazy as it sounds - I know where Jesus is coming from when He speaks about the blessing of suffering!

The joy and the fruit that comes from those '6 word stories' that we can all speak of!!!

The blessing that Jesus is speaking of in Matthew 5:4 is a blessing that can only be found at the end of yourself!

Whenever things seem to be falling apart!

Whenever we mourn!

Whenever we are facing the hardest times and trials of life!!

IT MAY SOUND SURPRISING AND STRANGE - BUT IT IS OFTEN OUR SUFFERING THAT MAKES ROOM IN OUR SPIRIT AND IN OUR LIFE FOR US TO KNOW AND EXPERIENCE THE BLESSINGS OF GOD'S PEACE AND PRESENCE!

It is often in suffering that the presence of God becomes most real to us!

It is in suffering that the comfort of God can be most clearly felt!!

LET'S BE HONEST FOR A MOMENT:

How many of us would be honest for just a minute!

Here's the picture:

Life is going well

Everything is going smoothly

Everything is normal and calm in life

Barclay says this and it's true:

'When things are going well, it is possible to live for years on the surface of things, but when sorrow comes, we are driven to the deep things of life, and, if we accept it aright, a new strength and beauty will enter our souls'

HOW TRUE THAT IS!!!

You know when things are going well!

And life is normal - it becomes incredibly easy to float through life!

'ON SURFACE LEVEL'
Coasting through life - spiritually!!!

And I'm going to be real honest - whenever everything is going well:

I don't look to God as much as I should
I don't lean on God as often as I should
I don't deepen my walk and understanding of God as I should
I don't grow as much as I should!

ANYBODY ELSE HERE HONEST ENOUGH TO ADMIT THAT?

Whenever everything is going smoothly, and 'normal' - we tend to think that we can go through life in our own strength - and in those moments we don't look for as often, or feel as often - the presence and comfort of God!!!

BUT WHEN TRIAL HITS!

WHEN YOUR 6 WORD STORY BEGINS

WHENEVER THE 'MOURNING' STARTS

It is strange to say - but yet Jesus words are true - we experience the presence and comfort and reality of God in those moments - like no other!!!

Robert Browning Hamilton penned an incredible poem that captures the essence of the thought we are looking at here:

*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 she said
But, oh, the things I learned from her
When Sorrow walked with me!*

THATS TRUE, RIGHT?

There are some things that we can only learn through sorrow!

Through the trial!

Through mourning!

THAT WE COULD NEVER LEARN THROUGH AND IN THE 'GOOD TIMES'!!!

Friends - It was in my '6 Word Story' moments of life that I learnt some of the most important lessons of life!

I learnt more about God in those times than any other!

I learnt more about myself and what I was called to do with my life in those moments than any other!

AND I FELT THE PRESENCE AND COMFORT OF GOD IN THOSE MOMENTS - UNLIKE ANY OTHER!!!

And I can honestly say that I wouldn't be the person I am today - if it wasn't for the 'mourning' moment in life!!!

God used the mourning moments in my life to produce fruit that could never have come any other way!!!

There is an Arabian Proverb which says:

'All sunshine makes a desert'

What that means is this:

The land on which the sun always shines will soon become an arid place in which no fruit will grow! There are certain things which only the rains will produce, and certain experiences which can only come out of sorrow!!!

I CAN HONESTLY SAY IN MY LIFE:

It is in those moments - God becomes very real!

It is in those moments - His comfort becomes very clear!

It is in those moments - God uses my pain, my hard time, my 'mourning' to draw me closer and plunge me deeper in my christian life!

It is in those moments - God produces fruit and character in my life that could never have come any other way!!!

AND IT IS BECAUSE OF ALL THOSE TRUTHS - That in a strange, unwordly way of thinking - THERE IS A BLESSING IN 'MOURNING'

There is a blessing in the trial!

There is a blessing that can only come from those 'end of me' moments of life!!!

YOU WANT A BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF THESE TRUTHS:

Job!!!

Job is a case study of:

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

He is a man that shows us the strange and other-worldly blessing that comes out of, and through, suffering!!!

As we enter the book of Job - Job is a rich man, who has everything. He lived a life the world would call 'blessed'

Good family

Happy marriage

Wealth and possessions

BUT STORMS WERE HEADED JOB'S WAY!

Satan sought permission of God to test Job!

Satan was certain that once the bad stuff came, Job would hold it against God, and declare his religion invalid and useless!

Job had:

7 sons

3 daughters

7000 sheep

3000 camels

500 yoke of oxen

500 donkeys

Many servants

Bit by bit - Satan began to take it all away:

First His home and his family

A strong wind knocked down his house and killed his children

Job then lost his health - infested with sores all over his body

Lost his livestock and his wealth

Satan was betting that Job would lose faith in the midst of it all!

His wife's best advice was - Curse God and die!

TO SATAN'S CONFUSION - As you read through Job - He experienced God in a way he never had before!!!

Job 42:5 - *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.*

In other words:

My ears had heard of you before

But now - I see you!

Now - I know you!

Now - You are real to me!

HERE'S THE TRUTH THAT WE FIND IN SUFFERING FRIENDS:

There is a deep void that used to be filled with whatever we lost

And when it's gone - it leaves an aching cavity - AND GOD IS THERE TO FILL IT UP WITH HIMSELF!!!

Idleman says:

When we suffer, we mourn

When we mourn, we are comforted by 'the God of all comfort'

That is what God is called in 2 Corinthians 1:3:

2 Corinthians 1:3 - *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*

I love that name for God - THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT!!!

Friends it is in the midst of our deepest, hardest moments of mourning in life - THAT WE TRULY FIND THE TRUTH BEHIND THIS BEATITUDE!

That it is in those moments:

I experience God like never before

I experience His presence and His comfort

I experience His compassion

And through it all:

God uses my trial, He uses my '6 word story' to teach me more about myself than I ever knew before

And more about Himself than I ever knew before!

He uses my trial to produce fruit and character in my life - that could never never have been produced during the sunshine moments of life!!!

It is in our 'mourning' moments of life that we must realise that God writes come '6 word stories' of His own!!!

IN MY MOURNING MOMENTS GOD CRIES OUT:

'I will not waste your pain'

'I will not leave you alone'

'I feel every tear you cry'

'I will use this for good'

FRIENDS - IT IS AT THE END OF OURSELVES, IN THOSE MOURNING MOMENTS OF LIFE - That we have an opportunity to experience the presence and comfort of God like never before!!!

Idleman says:

'Maybe you have embraced some wonderful things and lost them. But there's no embrace like the divine One'!!

I want you to think about this for a moment:

There is nothing that life can throw at us, that God can't use to draw us nearer to Him'

There is an aching space and void left by what we've lost - but God lovingly, comfortingly, begins to fill up that space with Himself!

AND WE BEGIN TO SEE THAT HE ISN'T JUST FILLING THAT SPACE, BUT SPACES WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE HAD TO BEGIN WITH!!!

We all experience loss!

We all have those 'mourning' moments of life!

BUT AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS WE KNOW THAT OUR PAIN, OUR TEARS, OUR SORROW - ISN'T WASTED!

In fact our sorrow, our tears, our mourning - produces a blessing in our lives that seems completely illogical!!

AND IT IS A BLESSING AND HAPPINESS THAT CAN ONLY COME THROUGH SUFFERING!!!

It is when we go to the deepest, darkest, hardest moments of life - that we find unexpected blessings that we could never have found any other way!!!

CONCLUSION:

For me this morning - this isn't just words!!

I HAVE SEEN THIS TO BE TRUE IN MY OWN LIFE!

IN MY OWN TRIAL!

IN MY OWN SORROW!

IN MY OWN GRIEF!!!

I mentioned my friend that passed away!

That text I got which said:

'Gary died in a car crash'

THAT WAS PROBABLY THE HARDEST '6 WORD STORY' OF MY LIFE!!!

And yet if it wasn't for that '6 word story' I wouldn't be where I am today, or who I am today!!!

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THAT NEWS:

Grief

Tears

Aching sorrow

I went for a walk that morning thinking through it all!!!

I CAME BACK TO THE PLACE I WAS STAYING AT THE TIME, AND THROUGH TEAR STAINED EYES I OPENED THE BIBLE AT A RANDOM PASSAGE, AND BEGAN TO READ!!!

It was Psalm 61 and I truly believe that these were the words God spoke into my heart, my aching sorrow that morning:

Psalm 61:1-2 - *Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*

CRY UNTO YOU!

WHEN MY HEART IS OVERWHELMED!!!

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I!!!

FOR ME - THROUGH GARY'S DEATH - I came to know God like never before!
I truly felt His comfort and presence much clearer than ever before!!

AND GOD BEGAN TO USE THAT PAIN, USE THAT SORROW, USE THAT MOURNING - TO
SHAPE ME, TO MOLD, TO GROW ME!!!

And in a strange way - that mourning, that sorrow, that pain, that suffering - while it is still there,
and I still feel that aching sense of loss:

AT FIRST IT BROKE INTO MY LIFE LIKE AN UNWANTED INTRUDER
NOW - IT OVER TIME, SEEING HOW GOD USED THAT MOMENT IN MY LIFE
SEEING HOW GOD WORKED THROUGH THAT 'MOURNING' MOMENT

Strangely now - My grief is like a guest!
Something that God has used to draw me closer to Him
To know His presence
To feel His comfort
To see His hand using my suffering to strengthen and grow me!

**AND NOW - AS HARD AS IT WAS AT THE TIME, AND AS PAINFUL AS IT STILL IS TO LOOK
BACK ON HIS DEATH - I wouldn't change it!!!**

**It is those 'mourning' moments in life and how we respond to them - that defines who we
are!!!**

GOD IN THOSE MOMENTS - BECOMES:
VERY REAL
VERY CLOSE

And we can feel the comfort of God like none other!

**And God then promises us today, as He has done with me many times in the past - in His
own '6 word story':**

**'I will not waste your pain'
'But use it for your good'**

AND THAT IS THE PICTURE BEING TURNED UPSIDE DOWN!
THAT IS THE PARADOX OF JESUS TEACHING
THAT IS THE PARADOX OF THE BEATITUDES!
THAT IS WHY WE CAN SAY ALONG WITH JESUS THIS MORNING THROUGH TEAR-FILLED
EYES:

There is blessing in the trial
There is light in the darkness
There is a positive in the hurt
There is a happiness through sorrow!