

When Poverty and Mourning Bring Blessing

Matthew 5:1-4

I. "Blessed are the poor in spirit..."

- A. Review: Poverty of spirit is about how we see ourselves.
 - 1. Do we see ourselves as deserving God's acceptance and salvation?
 - 2. Or do we realize that, as sinners, we are worthy of judgment?
 - 3. The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9-14).
- B. Being poor in spirit is not a quality that is only related to salvation.
 - 1. It is a quality that we need to continue to have.
 - (a) It's remembering that I have been saved by grace.
 - (b) I am not saved because I deserve to be.
 - (c) I am saved because Jesus gave himself for me.
 - 2. Everything God does in our lives is by grace.
 - (a) In love, he blesses us in countless ways.
 - (b) But none of it is because of my righteousness.
 - (c) None of it is because I deserve it.
 - (d) I still deserve the judgment of God. But I'm accepted because of Jesus.
- C. We are unaware of much of our sin.
 - 1. Our sin is like an iceberg.
 - (a) We're only aware of the part that is visible.
 - (b) I'm not talking about what others see.
 - (c) We can't see much of our own sin.
 - 2. We need to believe what the Bible says about us.
 - (a) The Bible tells us that our sin is far greater than we know.
 - (b) We were "by nature objects of wrath."-Ephesians
 - (c) By our nature, the core of our being, not by our actions.
 - (d) The sin you see is just the evidence of the nature that you don't see.
- D. Don't confuse poverty of spirit with a poor self-image.
 - 1. If you have trusted Christ, your identity has changed.
 - (a) You are no longer a rebel who is separated from God.
 - (b) You have been embraced as a child God.
 - (c) You are accepted by God!
 - (d) Your identity is the beloved of God! Believe it!
 - 2. But remember, you have received that identity by grace.
 - 3. Tim Keller states the Bible's perspective this way:
 - (a) "We are far more sinful than we realize."

(b) "We are far more loved than we can possibly know."

II. "All spiritual growth is Gospel growth." -Tim Keller

- A. As we grow the Gospel becomes clearer to us.
 - 1. We become more aware of our sin and its subtlety.
 - (a) It's not just our actions. It's our thoughts and motives.
 - (b) We realize that we weren't good, or deserving, or righteous. Even now, as believers, we still fall short.
 - 2. We also recognize the effectiveness of Jesus' sacrifice.
 - (a) His sacrifice was beyond sufficient. It was perfect!
 - (b) The worth of the sacrifice overwhelmingly covers our sin!
 - 3. We grow as the truths of the Gospel go deeper into us!
 - (a) We are more grateful for grace!
 - (b) We experience more of the freedom of forgiveness/acceptance.
- B. Without poverty of spirit, you will be prideful.
 - 1. You will be harsh and critical of others.
 - 2. Why? Because you can't see how much grace you've received.
 - (a) Be especially careful of this if you come from a legalistic background.

III. "Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted."

- A. This beatitude is about grieving over our sin.
 - 1. As we grow in Christ, sin grieves us more.
 - (a) We realize its evil and destructiveness more.
 - (b) We realize that it hurts God ("grieves the Spirit").
 - (c) It hurts our relationship with God.
 - 2. We don't need to grieve over past sin.
 - (a) But we do grieve over present sin.
 - 3. The grieving is good. It helps us to change.
- B. We are comforted by the Gospel of grace!
 - 1. We remember the effectiveness of Jesus' sacrifice.
 - 2. "If we confess our sin...he is faithful... to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - (a) Confession is a discipline we need to practice.
 - (b) Some may say we don't need to confess; we are already forgiven.
 - (c) Confession is our response to conviction.
 - (d) Jesus said we need to do soul maintenance.
 - (e) John 13: "If you've taken a bath you only need to wash your feet." Confession is that washing.
- C. The mourning is good. It's us taking sin seriously.
 - 1. The comfort is received in response to the mourning.
 - 2. To be comforted by the Gospel requires faith.
 - (a) God says, "I forgive you." Do you believe it?