

Matthew 5:3-4

Ted's "personal" application of S-O-A-P

**Scripture:** Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup>Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

**Ted's paraphrase:** Blessed is the person who is humble, desperate for God, and acknowledges his spiritual bankruptcy for he will be part of God's eternal Kingdom. And also blessed is the person who then looks at his sin (and the sin of others), takes it seriously, and mourns over it; for God will provide comfort.

**Observe:**

1. Mourn: (gk. Pen-theo) To be swallowed by sadness; to grieve; to feel emotional pain; to wail. This is intense. Interesting to contrast this feeling with the insensitivity spoken about in Eph 4:19.
2. Some believe that "poor in spirit" and "those who mourn" allude to the Messianic blessing of Isaiah 61:1-3. It's interesting to note that in Luke 4:17, Jesus says he fulfills Isaiah 61:1-3. Wow! God anointed Jesus to: preach good news to the poor; bind up the brokenhearted; proclaim freedom for the captives; free prisoners from darkness; and **comfort all who mourn**.
3. It is fairly clear from the context of Matthew 5:3-4 and Isaiah 61:1-3, that "those who mourn" are not primarily those who have lost a loved one, but those who mourn the loss of their innocence, righteousness, self-respect, confidence, relationship with God, etc.
4. If I mourn sin as God does, then I should be mourning **all** sin, not just my sin.
5. "They will be comforted"
  - a. Wow! Often times, when I sin (e.g. overeating), it's because I'm trying to comfort myself! This scripture states that we will be blessed if we wait for/rely on God's comfort.
  - b. Clear implication: God cares! He's compassionate
  - c. Many scriptures about Jesus' compassion. His healing passages tell us he's willing & able!
6. Good to remember: Scripture speaks about many "emotional" states other than mourning. (Ph 4:8, for example) Mourning is not meant to be an "all-the-time" thing.
7. Great parallel scripture is James 4:8-10: "Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup>Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup>Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." Question for self: Do I trust God enough to lift me up or do I try to do this on my own?

**Application:**

**1. Examine self:**

- a. How can I be more consistent with God's character?
  - i. Often I try to comfort myself instead of relying on God for my comfort. This "role reversal" leads to futility of thinking and sinful acts
  - ii. Q: Why do I not mourn more earnestly over my sin (and temptation?) and the sin of others? I can be insensitive. I dislike the pain of mourning. It takes time and effort. I'd rather forget about it and move on in my own way than surrender to God's plan.
  - iii. Where does repenting come in? IF I truly believe that God mourns my sin, then why would I continue to sin if I claim to love him? Why do I mourn sin less than he does? Because I love less.
  - iv. If I don't deliberately take the time to get in touch with the consequences my sin, then repentance as God desires will not be possible.
- b. Do I have sin in this area?
  - i. insensitivity and self-reliance are my sins I think; lack of surrener; avoiding the pain

- ii. Tricky: Balancing sensitivity to sin with still being joyful and peaceful. Jesus was the man!!
- iii. I need more Jesus in my life and less of me! More prayer, too. Fix my eyes...
- iv. Do I consider the great pain my sin causes and others? (Is 43:24) Eph 4:30
  - 1. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit because sin hurts me
  - 2. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit because sin hurts others
  - 3. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit because sin hurts God
  - 4. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit because He is Holy – and he hates sin

**2. Practical ways I can turn this passage into reality**

- a. Keep sin before me (Ps 51:3: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.)
- b. Ensure I repent: Time? (2 Cor 7: 8-11) Big question: how often?
- c. Not mourning the sin of others is a weakness of mine. Imitate Christ: (Eph 5:1)
- d. If more focused on sin, then I need to be mindful of having a Christ-like attitude or else! (Phil 2:5)
- e. IF Jesus was the bringer of comfort, then I must be as well. More Jesus, less me.

**PRAYER**

- *Forgive me...*
  - *Help me overcome my disdain of sadness*
  - *Help me to overcome focus on self*
  - *Help me be like your son: humble, faithful, compassionate, focused on pleasing you*
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**So....when should I grieve?**

**Times when we urgently need to face our sin:**

- 1. When we first consider making a decision to follow Jesus and look back over the life we have lived.
- 2. When we have been bitter and unforgiving with a brother or sister.
- 3. When we have been erratic, half-hearted in our relationships with others.
- 4. When we enter deliberate, habitual, unrepentant sin
- 5. When we are not fulfilling our God-directed family roles
  - a. Husbands aren't providing spiritual leadership to wife and kids
  - b. Husbands not loving wife; making her radiant
  - c. Wives not being submissive and supportive of husbands
- 6. When a pattern of sin is emerging in the Church
  - a. Ephesus: They forgot their first love
  - b. Pergamum: Hold to false teaching; sexually immoral
  - c. Thyatira: Tolerate unrepentant sinner (Jezebel)
  - d. Sardis: Wake up! You've soiled your clothes
  - e. Laodicea: Material blessings have blinded you of your spiritual poverty